



Erie County Parks, Recreation & Forestry

Commemoration Program Policy and Procedures

Effective April 2023

Erie County Parks, Recreation & Forestry acknowledges that many park areas have special meaning to our patrons and their loved ones. The Parks Department receives requests for installation of memorials and commemorations within the parks each year. The policy below outlines the manner in which the Erie County Parks Department responds to commemoration requests from our patrons.

Memorial Policy

1. The only type of commemoration which will be allowed on Erie County Parks property is the (a) commemorative tree(s).
2. Installation of any physical amenity other than a tree for the purpose of a commemoration will not be approved and will be removed by Parks staff (*effective April 2023*). Examples of commemorate items which will **not** be approved include but are not limited to the following: benches, picnic tables, plaques, stone sculptures, trail signs/names, signs, etc.
3. Installation of *new* commemorative plaques, signage, or wording upon amenities already in place will be removed.
4. Physical commemorative items which were approved and installed on Parks property prior to the effective date on this policy will be allowed to remain and will only be removed if deemed damaged or unsafe to the public.
5. Members of the public may not plant trees within the Parks on their own. Members of the public are welcome to assist Parks staff with planting of Commemorative Trees.
6. Commemorative Trees may only be planted by Parks staff as per the procedure outlined below.

Commemorative Tree Program Procedure

1. The Erie County Parks Department will offer a Commemorative Tree Program for the purpose of offering the public an opportunity to commemorate individuals, dates or events.
2. The Commemorative Tree Program is the only way in which an individual may be commemorated within Erie County Parks.
3. The Parks Department will accept monetary donations (as per the Donation Policy) for the purpose of installing (a) Commemorative Tree(s).
4. Each Commemorative Tree will be planted for a donation of \$500. Donations will be held in the Parks Donation Trust Account (unrestricted).
5. Individuals who wish to commemorate someone through the Commemorative Tree Program must complete the Commemorative Tree Application on the Parks website.
6. Once approved, the applicant will be notified and must submit payment via cash or check. The tree will not be ordered until payment is received.
7. Donations may be made by check or cash. Checks can be made out and mailed to the following:
Department of Parks, Recreation & Forestry - 95 Franklin Street, Room 1260 – Buffalo, NY - 14202.
8. Individuals donating to the Commemorative Tree Program will be asked to sign an agreement on the terms and conditions of the program.
9. Parks staff will coordinate the tree planting date and time with the donor. Donors and their families are welcome to assist in the planting of the Commemorative Tree.
10. Tree planting requires a seasonal window. Tree planting will only take place in optimal conditions as weather permits in accordance with the Tree Planting Policy.
11. Parks staff will work with the donor to identify the desired location and species of the Commemorative Tree. The Erie County Forester will grant final approval for the location and type of tree planted, as per the Tree Planting Policy.
12. If there is a special anniversary or date by which you were hoping to have the tree planted, please submit your application as far in advance as possible. The Parks Department makes no guarantees about meeting such deadlines.
13. Commemorative Trees will not be marked by any signs, plaques, or other structures.
14. The Commemorative Tree and individual or event being commemorated will be listed on the Parks website in a designated section of the site. Donors will be allowed to provide text and/or links for the Commemoration Description.
15. The Parks Department will do everything possible to preserve Commemorative Trees, but reserves the right to treat, trim, or remove a tree, should that be necessary. The Parks Department also reserves the right to determine all other maintenance needs for Commemorative Trees, including treatment, mulching, and mowing, among other needs.
16. Donors may not treat, decorate, trim, alter, or otherwise interfere with a Commemorative Tree once planted. All Park Rules and Laws apply to Commemorative Trees and donors.