

HCC Scattering Garden Services

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)



General Information

Q: What is the Scattering Garden?

A: Also known as the **Congressional Grove Columbarium**, this designated area features an obelisk within a gated, landscaped space. Cremated remains may be scattered in the mulched areas by appointment, with HCC approval, and in line with DC burial codes and regulations.

Q: How do I schedule and purchase a scattering?

A: Email staff@congressionalcemetery.org or call the office to schedule an appointment with the Interment/Burial Department.

At the appointment, you will:

- Discuss the details of the service requested at HCC
- Finalize payment of scattering fees
- Schedule and secure the scattering date
- Signature from next of kin allowing cremated remains to be scattered
- Provide HCC with a photocopy of the death certificate and cremation certificate (required)

Scatterings are scheduled Monday–Friday, 10am–2pm and must be coordinated with HCC staff. Scheduling may take up to two weeks. We are only able to schedule scattering up to three months in advance.

Q: Should I bring the cremated remains to the appointment?

A: No. Remains should only be brought on the day of the scheduled scattering. HCC will not accept cremated remains prior to the service.

Q: Can I pre-pay for a future scattering?

A: No, space cannot be reserved. Scatterings can only be scheduled and purchased after cremation and once the family has the remains.

Q: Can we choose where in the garden the remains will be placed?

A: No, HCC determines placement. The mulch and soil are periodically refreshed, and individual remains are not marked or distinguishable.

Q: How can we memorialize a loved one?

A: Families may purchase a Memorial Brick through our website for placement in the garden *after* the scattering. Specific brick placement cannot be requested. congressionalcemetery.org/brick-sponsorship/

Scattering Options & Costs

Scattering Only – \$500

- Small, intimate gathering (about 10 attendees)
- Family may lead a short prayer or remembrance, but the main portion of the ceremony is scattering the remains
- Vehicles exit after about 30 minutes
- HCC can scatter remains received by mail (prior approval required, please contact HCC for more information)

Scattering with Small Outdoor Service – \$1,000

- Outdoor service held at the garden gates, includes 6–10 chairs
- Families provide their own officiant, clergy, or service leader
- Gathering, service, scattering, and vehicle exit within 1 hour

Scattering with Chapel Service – \$1,500

- Includes chapel use (seats 40, climate-controlled by HCC Staff, podium & microphone, walk to scattering garden after service)
- Families provide their own officiant, clergy, or service leader
- Gathering, service, scattering, and vehicle exit within 1 hour

Q: What's included with each option?

- K9 Closure (required for vehicle entry)
- Staff directing guests upon entry and overseeing the scattering
- Preparation of the scattering space
- Use of a 25" × 25" table with cloth at the scattering garden

Q: Can we just scatter remains in the garden?

A: No. All interments must be recorded and documented in compliance with District burial codes and regulations.

Note:

- All mail-in cremated remains must have a confirmed scattering date and be paid in full before shipping. Shipping USPS Priority Express is required for HCC to receive mailed cremated remains. Contact our office with any questions or to coordinate shipments.
- Garden soil and mulch mixed and refreshed periodically – not removed; individual remains are not identifiable.

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Arrival, Directions, & Parking

Q: How do we access the cemetery?

A: Enter and exit through the E Street gates, next to the gatehouse. Pedestrian gates are located on either side of the large gate.

Q: Is parking available?

A: There is no on-site parking lot. Limited two-hour street parking is available outside the gates. Vehicles may enter the grounds up to 30 minutes before an interment. Please follow staff directions and instructions once inside the cemetery gates.

Q: Is public transportation nearby?

A: Yes. Stadium-Armory and Potomac Avenue Metro stops are a 5–10 minute walk away.

Q: When should attendees arrive?

A: Vehicles may enter up to 30 minutes prior to the service start time and will be given further instructions by HCC staff. Pedestrians may wait under the main gate canopy or walk to the meeting site. We suggest families wishing to set up a few small items in advance arrive within the 30 minutes prior to service start time

Q: How should we park inside the cemetery?

A: Park to one side of the road, directly behind the vehicle in front of you, to allow access for cemetery and emergency vehicles. HCC staff will direct parking—please ask for assistance if needed.

Q: Can we drive directly up to the Scattering Garden?

A: No. Vehicles will park at the intersection of Prout and Congress Streets. The stone walking path to the garden is about 100 yards with a downhill slope; the return walk includes a moderate incline. Golf cart assistance may be available for guests with limited mobility.

Q: Can I drive in to visit the garden after the funeral?

A: Vehicle access is restricted due to our frequent events and K9 Program. Cars cannot drive down to the site on the stone walking path. Call the office for vehicle access information before your visit. Pedestrian visits are permitted during normal cemetery operations. Please check our event calendar for funeral and event closures.

During the Scattering

Q: What should we expect?

- Staff will be at the entrance to give parking or walking instructions
- Services last 30–60 minutes, depending on option chosen
- HCC representative oversees scattering
- Family may scatter remains, or staff can do so upon request
- Staff finalize the space with mulch
- Attendees depart near the end allotted time for the service
- Vehicle exit signs posted for proper traffic flow

Q: Where are the restrooms?

A: Near the gatehouse, behind the small garage. No restrooms are attached to the chapel or near the garden.

Q: Can we bring flowers or decorations?

A: Fresh, cut flowers are welcome on the day of and after the scattering. Permanent or synthetic memorials (plaques, stones, items, plastic/fabric flowers, plantings) are not permitted inside the scattering garden.

Q: Can we explore the grounds afterward?

A: Yes. However, touring the cemetery in a vehicle is not permitted; self-guided walking tours are available at the main gate and online: congressionalcemetery.org/self-guided-tours/

Q: Can we bring our dog to the interment service?

A: Yes. However, a signed [K9 Waiver](#) is required for all dogs on HCC grounds if you're not a current member and *all dogs (including members) must remain on leash*. Limit 4 non-member waivers per interment service.

Additional Notes

- For services requesting the use of the chapel for a luncheon or refreshments, contact us via email for more information and fees.
- Services are held rain or shine unless HCC deem conditions unsafe.
- Rescheduling requires advance notice; dates may be limited.
- The cemetery is not ADA-accessible, and all grounds should be navigated with caution.
- Office Hours: Monday-Friday; 9am – 5pm; closed all federal and DC holidays