

Arlington County, VA
Memorial Plaque Policy
Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR)

Purpose

The purpose of the Memorial Plaque policy is to provide the public with an opportunity to recognize exceptional individuals that have made a significant public service contribution to Arlington County and its residents. This policy does not recognize financial contributions.¹

This policy applies to the installation of Memorial Plaques on County owned park locations, which must be approved by the Park and Recreation Commission (“Commission”) with final approval from the Arlington County Board. Memorial Plaques installed prior to the adoption of this policy shall be subject to applicable sections relating to maintenance and plaque relocation.

Policy Goals

1. To elevate the standards of eligibility for Memorial Plaque recognition.
2. To establish consistent and clear procedures for the Memorial Plaque program.

Memorial or Recognition Plaque Criteria

1. An individual must have been deceased for at least one year before a Memorial Plaque can be erected in their honor. An individual interested in placing a Memorial Plaque on a County facility or County owned park may begin the review process during this initial yearlong period.
2. The applicant must demonstrate the significance of the nominee’s public service contribution. The contribution must have been sustained, not a single act, and must have had a lasting impact on the Arlington community.

General Terms

1. The applicant is responsible for all costs to fabricate and install the plaque. The County will manage fabrication and installation in coordination with the applicant. Fabrication and installation costs will vary depending on the design and location of the plaque. Payment must be processed prior to application approval.
2. The plaque location must be approved by DPR and mounted to a stable surface

¹ Refer to the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) Collaboration and Donation Policy for ways to recognize financial contributions.

that is accessible for periodic maintenance. Plaques cannot be mounted to trees, shrubs, or other planted landscaping.

3. If the plaque is vandalized or damaged, DPR will repair or replace the plaque for the first ten years. After ten years, the applicant is responsible for all costs related to repair or replacement and must contact the DPR program liaison to coordinate replacement efforts and costs.
4. DPR will design the plaque in consultation with the applicant. The plaque can be no larger than 12 x 12 inches; and the inscription cannot include logos or web addresses. DPR will have final approval of all elements of the plaque.
5. DPR may relocate the plaque to a location of its choosing at any time and will make every effort to contact the applicant to discuss alternative locations. The applicant is responsible for providing updated contact information to DPR.
6. Applicants may not request through this policy to name a County facility in the nominee's honor.
7. If the application is approved by the County Board, then the applicant should expect installation approximately six months from the date of approval. If installation will take longer than six months due to, for example, location constraints or elaborate mounting, then the applicant will be notified and given an updated estimate for completion.

Memorial or Recognition Plaque Design

Please refer to the Memorial Plaque template featured in the online Memorial Plaque form.

1. Material: Bronze
2. Shape and Size: No larger than 12 inches by 12 inches.
3. Thickness: 0.25 inches
4. Text Font: Times Standard, Semi Bold
5. Text Size: Will vary depending on the amount of text and size of the plaque.
6. Background: Leatherette with Brushed Surface; 2025 Black Painted
7. Mount: Will vary depending on location.

Application Process

1. The applicant may access the Memorial Plaque Policy and application on the County's website.
2. An appropriate level of community support must be demonstrated, please submit one of the following:
 - a. Approval/endorsement by the local civic/neighborhood association; or
 - b. Signatures of Arlington County residents; or
 - c. Endorsement by other community or civic organizations.

3. DPR staff, including the program liaison and Park Area Managers, among others, will review the application. The DPR program liaison may request a meeting at the proposed plaque location or at County offices to discuss the plaque design, inscription, location, and materials necessary for mounting. After this meeting, DPR will provide the applicant a cost estimate to cover the plaque fabrication and installation costs. Payment for estimated costs must be submitted before the review process can proceed.
4. The program liaison will present the application and plaque design to the Park and Recreation Commission for consideration. The applicant, or a designee, must attend this meeting to help answer questions from the Commission. If the Commission determines that the application meets the criteria and warrants further review, then the DPR program liaison will seek comment from other organizations, as needed, during the organizations' regular public meetings.
5. The DPR program liaison will present the application and plaque design to the Historic Affairs and Landmark Review Board (HALRB) for consideration. The applicant, or a designee, must attend this meeting to help answer questions.
6. The DPR program liaison may also seek input, when appropriate, from the Neighborhood Conservation Advisory Committee (NCAC), the appropriate neighborhood Civic Association(s), and the Arlington Beautification Committee.
7. The DPR program liaison will summarize input received from various advisory groups and commissions and present the summary to the Commission at its next public meeting for consideration and approval. The applicant, or a designee, must attend this meeting to help answer questions from the Commission.
8. The DPR program liaison will present the application to the County Board for final approval. The County Manager will also present a separate recommendation to the County Board that takes into account the recommendation from the Commission. If the matter is added to the Consent Agenda, then the applicant does not need to attend the County Board meeting as there will be no questions to answer. Otherwise, the applicant will need to attend the Board Meeting.
9. If the application is approved by the County Board, then the DPR program liaison will notify the applicant of next steps.