



**Tablelands Regional Council
Local Law No. 7
(Human Remains and Cemeteries) 2019**

Tablelands Regional Council

Local Law No. 7 (Human Remains and Cemeteries) 2019

Contents

Part 1 Preliminary.....	1
1 Short title.....	1
2 Purposes and how they are to be achieved	1
3 Relationship with other laws.....	1
Part 2 Disturbance of human remains buried outside a cemetery	1
4 Prescribed activity	1
5 Activities that do not require approval	1
6 Additional criteria for the granting of a permit.....	1
7 Conditions that must be imposed a permit	2
8 Conditions that will ordinarily be imposed on a permit	2
9 Spillage of waste, contaminant or other material.....	2
Part 3 Burial or disposal of human remains outside a cemetery	3
10 Prescribed activity.....	3
11 Activities that do not require approval.....	3
12 Additional criteria for the granting of a permit	3
13 Conditions that must be imposed on permits	4
14 Conditions that will ordinarily be imposed on permits	4
Part 4 Disturbance of human remains in a cemetery	4
15 Prescribed activity.....	4
16 Activities that do not require approval.....	4
17 Additional criteria for the granting of a permit	5
18 Conditions that must be imposed on permits	5
19 Conditions that will ordinarily be imposed on permits	5
Part 5 Burial or disposal of human remains in a cemetery	6
20 Prescribed activity.....	6
21 Activities that do not require a permit.....	6
22 Additional criteria for the granting of a permit	6
23 Conditions that must be imposed on permits	6
24 Conditions that will ordinarily be imposed on permits	7

Part 6	Erection of a memorial, vault or columbarium	7
25	Prescribed activity	7
26	Activities that do not require a permit	7
27	Additional criteria for the granting of a permit	7
28	Conditions that must be imposed on permits	8
29	Conditions that will ordinarily be imposed on permits	10
Part 7	Local Government Cemeteries	11
30	Application of this part.....	11
31	Preparation of graves by local government.....	11
32	Transport of body.....	11
33	Funerals to be conducted by an undertaker.....	11
34	Records to be maintained	12
35	Closure	12
36	Maintenance	12
37	Repairs or removal by local government.....	12
38	Conduct in a local government cemetery.....	13
39	Removal of persons	13

Part 1 Preliminary

1 Short title

This local law may be cited as *Local Law No. 7 (Human Remains and Cemeteries) 2019*.

2 Purposes and how they are to be achieved

- (1) The purpose of this local law is to regulate the appropriate treatment of human remains in a befitting and respectful way.
- (2) The purpose will be achieved by regulating the handling of human remains through permits which can be conditioned to require befitting and respectful treatment of remains.

3 Relationship with other laws

This local law is:

- (a) to be read in conjunction with *Local Law No.1 (Administration) 2019* which contains provisions and definitions that apply to all local laws;
- (b) is made under the powers in Chapter 3 of the LGA; and
- (c) otherwise in addition to, and does not derogate from, laws regulating land use planning and development assessment.

Part 2 Disturbance of human remains buried outside a cemetery

4 Prescribed activity

- (1) Disturbance of human remains buried outside a cemetery is a category 1 prescribed activity.
- (2) To obtain a permit an application must be made to the local government on the approved forms required under *Local Law No. 1 (Administration) 2019* and this local law.

5 Activities that do not require approval

Nil.

6 Additional criteria for the granting of a permit

- (1) The local government must assess the application against the additional criteria.
- (2) The additional criteria are:
 - (a) whether the human remains have been buried for not more than three (3) days or not less than twelve (12) months.

- (b) written agreement of the owner, and anyone else with a registered interest in, the land on which the remains are buried;
- (c) a written statement of the reasons for the proposed disturbance;
- (d) the expressed wishes of the deceased and the deceased's family; and
- (e) a written statement of how and when the remains are proposed to be disturbed.

7 Conditions that must be imposed on a permit

The following types of conditions must be imposed on a permit:

- (a) The disturbance of the human remains must only be carried out by a recognised undertaker; and
- (b) The permit must:
 - (i) stipulate the day on which the disturbance of human remains must be performed; and
 - (ii) stipulate the hours between which the disturbance of human remains must be performed.

8 Conditions that will ordinarily be imposed on a permit

The following types of conditions will ordinarily be imposed on a permit requiring the permit holder:

- (a) give notice to the local government of the disturbance of human remains to enable an authorised person to enter the land and inspect the grave at any time either before or after the disturbance;
- (b) remove all markers or means of identification on or around the grave if the human remains are removed from the grave and dispose of appropriately; and
- (c) provide the local government with confirmation of the disturbance of human remains within 14 days of the event.

9 Spillage of waste, contaminant or other material

- (a) Any spillage of waste, contaminant or other material must:
 - (i) be cleaned up immediately; and
 - (ii) not be cleaned up by hosing, sweeping or otherwise releasing the waste, contaminant or material into any stormwater system or other waters.
- (b) The permit holder must take specified measures to:
 - (i) prevent harm to the health or safety of persons who may be involved in, or effected by, the undertaking of the prescribed activity; and

- (ii) prevent personal injury, property damage or loss of amenity resulting from the undertaking of the prescribed activity.

Part 3 Burial or disposal of human remains outside a cemetery

10 Prescribed activity

- (1) Burial or disposal of human remains outside a cemetery is a category 1 prescribed activity.
- (2) To obtain a permit an application must be made to the local government on the approved forms required under *Local Law No. 1 (Administration) 2019* and this local law.

11 Activities that do not require a permit

- (1) A person does not require a permit to scatter ashes outside a cemetery following the cremation of the human remains.

For this section 11(1), 'scattering ashes' includes:

- (a) casting cremated ashes into the wind;
- (b) digging a shallow trench to bury ashes and covering the ashes with soil;
- (c) pouring ashes onto soil and raking the ashes into the ground;
- (d) disposing of cremated ashes (which may include a water-soluble urn) into a waterway, lake or sea; or
- (e) aerial scattering from a private aircraft.

12 Additional criteria for the granting of a permit

- (1) The local government must assess the application against the additional criteria.
- (2) The additional criteria are:
 - (a) evidence of the identity of the deceased person and the applicant's relationship (if any) with the deceased;
 - (b) the expressed wishes of the deceased and the deceased's family;
 - (c) whether there is a special family, personal or historical association between the deceased person and the place at which it is sought to bury the body of that person; and
 - (d) whether there is written agreement of the owner, and anyone else with a registered interest in, the land on which the remains are to be buried or place of disposal of the remains on the land.
- (3) The following criteria may be considered in deciding whether or not to grant a permit:
 - (a) a written statement of how and when the remains are proposed to be disposed of or buried; and

- (b) the nature of the ceremony (if any) to be conducted at the time of the burial.

13 Conditions that must be imposed on permits

The following types of conditions must be imposed on a permit:

- (a) The permit holder, its contractors or agents are required to give notice to the local government of the preparation of the grave to enable an authorised person to enter the land and inspect the grave before the burial;
- (b) minimum depth of graves for adults and children;
- (c) minimum length and width of graves for adults and children;
- (d) minimum depth between the top of a coffin and the surface of the ground;
- (e) minimum clearance between the sides of a coffin and the sides of a grave;
- (f) maximum number of bodies which may be buried in a single grave;
- (g) the name and contact details of the undertaker or other person performing the interment or inurnment;
- (h) the day on which the interment or inurnment must be performed; and
- (i) the hours between which the interment or inurnment must be performed.

14 Conditions that will ordinarily be imposed on permits

The following types of conditions will ordinarily be imposed on a permit where applicable:

- (a) the permit holder, its contractors or agents supply the Global Positioning System (G.P.S) coordinates of the grave to the local government, so that the details of the deceased person can be placed on the property record; and
- (b) the permit holder, its contractors or agents to erect a marker or means of identification on or around the grave and stipulate the information required to be recorded on it.

Part 4 Disturbance of human remains in a cemetery

15 Prescribed activity

- (1) Disturbance of human remains in a cemetery is a category 1 prescribed activity.
- (2) To obtain a permit an application must be made to the local government on the approved required under *Local Law No. 1 (Administration) 2019* and this local law.

16 Activities that do not require approval

Nil.

17 Additional criteria for the granting of a permit

- (1) The local government must assess the application against the additional criteria.
- (2) The additional criteria are:
 - (a) whether the human remains have been buried for not more than three (3) days or not less than twelve (12) months;
 - (b) written agreement of the owner, and anyone else with a registered interest in, the land on which the remains are buried;
 - (c) a written statement of the reasons for the proposed disturbance;
 - (d) the expressed wishes of the deceased and the deceased's family; and
 - (e) a written statement of how and when the remains are proposed to be disturbed.

18 Conditions that must be imposed on permits

The following types of conditions must be imposed on a permit where applicable requiring the permit holder:

- (a) remove any monuments on the existing grave and dispose of appropriately;
- (b) ensure that the coffin, body, ashes or other remains disinterred are removed under the supervision and to the satisfaction of the local government;
- (c) ensure that the grave is opened and closed in accordance with the directions of the local government; and
- (d) ensure that exhumation is carried out by a recognised undertaker.

19 Conditions that will ordinarily be imposed on permits

The following types of conditions will ordinarily be imposed on a permit where applicable to:

- (a) regulate the manner of preparation of the grave;
- (b) stipulate the day on which the disturbance of human remains may be performed; and
- (c) stipulate the hours between which the disturbance of human remains may be performed.

Part 5 Burial or disposal of human remains in a cemetery

20 Prescribed activity

- (1) Burial of human remains or inurnment in a local government cemetery and the erection of a memorial vault or columbarium are a category 1 prescribed activity.
- (2) To obtain a permit an application must be made to the local government on the approved forms required under *Local Law No. 1 (Administration) 2019* and this local law.

21 Activities that do not require a permit

Nil.

22 Additional criteria for the granting of a permit

- (1) The local government must assess the application against the additional criteria.
- (2) The additional criteria are:
 - (a) evidence of the identity of the deceased person and the applicant's relationship (if any) with the deceased;
 - (b) evidence of the applicant's authority to dispose of the body of the deceased; date of interment or inurnment;
 - (c) cemetery of interment or inurnment;
 - (d) provision of an allocated plot;
 - (e) name and contact details of the recognized undertaker or other person performing the ceremony;
 - (f) a written statement as to who will conduct the burial or inurnment; and
 - (g) a written statement as to details as to how the proposed burial of human remains, inurnment or erection of a memorial is to be undertaken.

23 Conditions that must be imposed on permits

The following types of conditions must be imposed on a permit where applicable:

- (a) minimum depth of graves for adults and children;
- (b) minimum length and width of graves for adults and children;
- (c) minimum depth between the top of a coffin and the surface of the ground;
- (d) minimum clearance between the sides of a coffin and the sides of a grave;
- (e) maximum number of bodies which may be buried in a single grave;
- (f) the name and contact details of the undertaker or other person performing the interment or inurnment;
- (g) the cemetery of the interment or inurnment;

- (h) the allocated plot for the interment or inurnment;
- (i) the day on which the interment or inurnment must be performed; and
- (j) the hours between which the interment or inurnment must be performed.

24 Conditions that will ordinarily be imposed on permits

The following types of conditions will ordinarily be imposed on a permit where applicable:

- (a) the time and place of service;
- (b) the arrival time at cemetery;
- (c) the dimensions of the coffin or casket; and
- (d) the specifications of the proposed memorial.

Part 6 Erection of a memorial, mausoleum, vault, columbarium or full grave slab

25 Prescribed activity

- (1) The erection of a memorial, mausoleum, vault, columbarium or full grave slab is a category 1 prescribed activity.
- (2) To obtain a permit an application must be made to the local government on the approved forms required under *Local Law No. 1 (Administration) 2019* and this local law.
- (3) This Part applies only to local government cemeteries identified in Subordinate Local Law No. 8 (Local Government Controlled Areas and Roads) 2019 Schedule 1 (4).

26 Activities that do not require a permit

Nil.

27 Additional criteria for the granting of a permit

- (1) The local government must assess the application against the additional criteria.
- (2) The additional criteria are:
 - (a) construction details of any memorial, mausoleum, vault, columbarium or full grave slab to be erected;
 - (b) the proposed location of the memorial, mausoleum, vault, columbarium or full grave slab;
 - (c) details of the finish proposed to any memorial, mausoleum, vault, columbarium or full grave slab, including wording to be used;
 - (d) evidence of the applicant's relationship (if any) with the deceased; and

- (e) for a memorial whether the ashes or other remains are placed in a mausoleum, columbarium, vault or full grave slab.

28 Conditions that must be imposed on permits

- (1) The following types of conditions must be imposed on a permit where applicable:
 - (a) approval of the design and materials of construction of the memorial, mausoleum, vault, columbarium or full grave slab (as a separate approval to any approval required under the *Building Act 1975* or any other law);
 - (b) the maintenance and repair of the memorial, mausoleum, vault, columbarium or full grave slab by a person other than the local government;
 - (c) any inscription plate to be erected in a cemetery to be of uniform quality and construction as prescribed by the local government; and
 - (d) the demolition and removal of the memorial, mausoleum, vault, columbarium or full grave slab by the local government if it falls into a state of disrepair; and
 - (e) any work performed on any memorial, vault, mausoleum, columbarium or full grave slab must be undertaken by a registered builder or stonemason recognized by Master Builders Australia.
- (2) For mausoleums the following types of conditions must be imposed on a permit where applicable
 - (a) Mausoleums shall be constructed of clay brick or other similar materials; and
 - (b) Size shall be restricted to 3.600 metres long x 3.600 metres wide.
- (3) For vaults – inground and aboveground the following types of conditions must be imposed on a permit where applicable:
 - (a) Vaults at council cemeteries identified in Subordinate Local Law No. 8 (Local Government Controlled Areas and Roads) 2019 Schedule 1(4) shall be constructed to the following dimensions for each site

LAYOUT	must be able to be constructed in the plot or plots identified by the local government.
WALLS	minimum of 150mm concrete blocks or similar material with steel reinforcement placed at 600mm centres for vaults cast in-situ, or 100mm thick concrete for an approved pre-cast vault design.
FLOOR	minimum of 150mm thick concrete with steel reinforcement for vaults cast in-situ, or 100mm thick concrete for an approved pre-cast vault design.
LID	minimum of 100mm of concrete in thickness with steel reinforcement.

- (b) For vaults cast in-situ, all inside surfaces shall be plastered prior to any coffin being placed therein, and all external surfaces above ground are to be plastered after interment. For pre-cast commercially manufactured vaults, openings for placement of the coffin shall be appropriately sealed or plastered after interment;
 - (c) All vaults shall incorporate a concrete skirt of no less than 75mm thickness, graded towards the adjacent.
 - (d) Where a vault is constructed immediately adjacent to an existing vault, the area between both shall be joined by concrete of no less than 75mm in thickness;
 - (e) Plot number as detailed by Council shall be inscribed at the foot, right hand corner of the concrete skirt;
 - (f) Double above ground vaults are permitted only in the designated vault section. Any existing vault must have engineering certification to ensure it is capable of being extended vertically, prior to approval of any application to install a second vault;
- (4) For full grave slab the following types of conditions must be imposed on a permit where applicable:
- (a) Slab Dimension for a single grave shall be 1200mm wide x 2400mm long overall to tiles or any other surface finish. The slab shall be constructed horizontally with the maximum dimension above ground level of 400mm. A concrete skirt 200mm wide, together with a minimum thickness of 75mm, shall be constructed around the total perimeter of the slab to facilitate mowing. The total width of the slab shall not exceed 1600mm. Where the slab adjoins an existing slab, the skirt will be adjusted, extended or otherwise as necessary to join to the skirt of the existing slab;
 - (b) Headstones may be erected on the slab;
 - (c) Plot number as detailed by Council shall be inscribed at the foot, right hand corner of the concrete skirt; and
 - (d) Slabs shall be constructed within eighteen (18) months of the interment.
- (5) For columbarium the following types of conditions must be imposed on a permit where applicable:
- (a) Bronze plaques only will be permitted on the Columbarium to ensure that quality standards are maintained;
 - (b) Ashes must be contained in urns of no greater dimension than 120mm wide x 150mm high x 260mm long, unless placing ashes in the Atherton Columbarium Wall constructed of brick where the urn is to be no bigger than 110mm wide x 75mm high x 180mm long;
 - (c) The size of plaques vary in each cemetery as follows:
Malanda, Millaa Millaa and Yungaburra

- (i) Single: 203mm x 229mm;
Atherton
 - (i) Single: 205mm x 160mm;
 - (ii) Double: 165mm x 229mm; and
 - (iii) Detachable Niche Plate: 140mm x 70mm.
- (6) For memorials the following types of conditions must be imposed on a permit where applicable:
- (a) For a lawn plaque on a beam:
 - (i) Bronze memorial plaques are placed onto concrete beams at the head of the grave;
 - (ii) Standard size memorial – 381mm x 216mm bronze plaque to be placed on the left hand side of the numbered beam. The plot number must be inscribed onto the bottom right hand side of this plaque; and
 - (iii) An additional plaque is to be placed above the existing plaque if a second interment.
 - (b) For a headstone on a beam
 - (i) The memorial in this section features a headstone attached to a common beam. The maximum dimensions for a headstone in this section is 1200mm wide x 300mm deep x 1200mm high; and
 - (ii) Headstones are to be erected on the slab, back to back, centrally to the grave, in a vertical configuration.
 - (c) For a headstone in the Angels Rest Children’s Section:
 - (i) The stone shall be a standard size – 600mm long, 500mm high and 150 mm thick maximum;
 - (ii) Headstones are to be erected on the slab, back to back, centrally to the grave, in a vertical configuration; and
 - (iii) A support base (level beam) shall be a maximum height of 150mm, and maximum thickness of 200mm and a maximum length of 900mm.
 - (iv) Erection of a cross, attached to the headstone, will be approved to a maximum thickness of 50mm.
 - (v) A two metre wide access strip will be incorporated between beamstone sites.

29 Conditions that will ordinarily be imposed on permits

The following types of conditions will ordinarily be imposed on a permit where applicable:

- (a) ashes or other remains must not be placed in a columbarium, vault or grave unless contained in a sealed receptacle;
- (b) ashes or other remains in a columbarium or vault must have a memorial identifying the deceased affixed to or adjacent to the niche in which they are placed;
- (c) the placing of flowers and tokens on graves or memorials including the prohibition of artificial flowers; and
- (d) the number of vases, usually restricted to one per plaque.

Part 7 Local Government Cemeteries

30 Application of this part

This part applies to all local government cemeteries.

31 Preparation of graves by local government

- (1) When an application under section 20 has been approved, the local government must use its best endeavours to have the required grave dug and available for use at the required time.
- (2) Notwithstanding subsection (1), the local government may, at the time of receipt of the application or at any later time, advise the person responsible that, by reason of weather, ground condition, difficulty of excavation or any other reason:
 - (a) the grave will not be ready until a later hour in the day proposed for the burial or a day later than that proposed for the burial; or
 - (b) the burial must take place in another grave plot or at another local government cemetery.

32 Transport of body

A person must not bring a body into a local government cemetery for burial unless it is:

- (a) brought in for the purpose of burial pursuant to an approval under this local law; and
- (b) contained in a coffin of sound construction with an identifying name plate.

33 Funerals to be conducted by an undertaker

- (1) All funerals in a cemetery must be conducted by an undertaker or as stated in a permit.
- (2) The next of kin and legal personal representative of the deceased must ensure that subsection (1) is complied with.

34 Records to be maintained

- (1) In respect of every cemetery, there must be made and retained by the local government records of:
 - (a) the names of all deceased persons buried or whose ashes or other remains are interred in the cemetery;
 - (b) the date of interment;
 - (c) the specific place of interment within the cemetery; and
 - (d) any dealing with the body, ashes or other remains of the deceased person after interment including disinterment.
- (2) Records made and retained pursuant to subsection (1) must:
 - (a) not be destroyed or otherwise disposed of without the written approval of the local government;
 - (b) be kept at:
 - (i) some part of the cemetery to which they relate; or
 - (ii) another specified place approved by the local government; and
 - (c) be open to inspection by the public on payment of a prescribed fee at all times when the place at which the records are kept is attended by some person.
- (3) The owner of land used as a cemetery (other than a local government cemetery) must ensure that this section is complied with.

Maximum Penalty - 50 penalty units.

35 Closure

The local government may close a local government cemetery to further burials or the placement of further ashes.

36 Maintenance

The local government may maintain a local government cemetery including all graves and memorials therein in such manner and to such extent as it thinks fit.

37 Repairs or removal by local government

- (1) The local government may repair or remove any grave or memorial:
 - (a) if the repair or removal is necessary for public health or safety;
 - (b) which in the opinion of the local government is in a state of disrepair; or
 - (c) which in the case of a memorial has been placed on the wrong grave site.
- (2) The local government:

- (a) is not required to but may replace or reinstate a grave or memorial dealt with under subsection (1) including the placement of the memorial on the correct grave site; and
- (b) If there is no immediate danger to the public, the local government must, before removal of a memorial under subsection (1), give reasonable notice of its intention to remove the memorial to members of the deceased's family whose identity and whereabouts are known to the local government.

38 Conduct in a local government cemetery

A person in a local government cemetery must comply with a reasonable direction given by the local government.

39 Removal of persons

- (1) An authorised person may direct any person found committing an offence against the local laws in the cemetery to leave a local government cemetery forthwith.
- (2) Failure to comply with a direction given under subsection (1) is an offence.
Maximum Penalty - 20 penalty units.

CERTIFICATION

This and the preceding 13 pages bearing my initials is a certified copy of Tablelands Regional Council *Local Law No. 7 (Human Remains and Cemeteries) 2019* made in accordance with the provisions of the *Local Government Act 2009*, by Tablelands Regional Council by resolution dated 2019.

Justin Commons
Chief Executive Officer
Tablelands Regional Council