

## **RESOURCES: INFORMATION about and ASSISTANCE for MARYLAND AFRICAN AMERICAN CEMETERIES**

Black History Month 2026 Conference, panel presentation on Preserving African American Cemeteries

### **State of Maryland**

**Current Maryland Cemetery Law** <https://cpmbs.org/maryland-laws-and-regulations/>

**Report on Historic African American Cemeteries** by MD Commission on African American History & Culture and MD Historical Trust, June 2022 to Joint Chairmen; Survey and Recommendations

<https://mht.maryland.gov/Documents/home/2022-Historic-African-American-Cemeteries-JCR-Report.pdf>

**Maryland Inventory of Cemeteries and Burial Sites Workgroup Report**, December 2025

<https://mht.maryland.gov/Documents/home/Cemetery-Workgroup-Final-Report.pdf>

### **MD General Assembly, annual session January-April**

3 bills passed 2025: Abandoned Cemetery Fund created, MD Inventory, Statute of Limitations increased

**4 bills filed 2026: SB233 and HB892** (protects cemeteries with court intervention if needed when sold or transferred for another use) and **SB234 and HB893** (enables government to take title to an Abandoned cemetery and transfer it to descendants or nonprofit)

[www.cpmbs.org](http://www.cpmbs.org) for details and updates *also* <https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/search/legislation>

### **Cast of Helpful Characters and Programs**

**Maryland Commission on African American History & Culture** -- with MHT, manages African American Heritage Preservation Program (AAHPP) to identify and preserve buildings, communities, and sites of historical and cultural importance to the Black experience. Annual appropriation from MD General Assembly of \$5m enables competitive grants from \$10,000 to \$250,000 <https://africanamerican.maryland.gov/grantsprogram/>

**Maryland Historical Trust** -- State government agency in Dept of Planning; keeps inventory of historic sites and partners with MCAAHC preservation grant program <https://mht.maryland.gov/Pages/about-MHT.aspx>

**Office of Cemetery Oversight** -- State agency in Dept of Labor; tracks non-religious operating cemeteries and resolves issues <https://labor.maryland.gov/license/cem/>

**Preservation Maryland** -- state-wide nonprofit, advice and Heritage Fund grants available <https://preservationmaryland.org/our-work/mdheritagefund/>

**Coalition to Protect Maryland Burial Sites** --state-wide nonprofit, promotes preservation and protection of all burial sites, cemeteries, and grave yards in Maryland, advises re best practices

[www.cpmbs.org](http://www.cpmbs.org) see Resources and County pages *also* Principles of Practice for Historic Cemeteries and Gravestone Preservation <https://cpmbs.org/principles-of-practice/>

**Trader Foundation for Maryland Burial Sites** -- state-wide nonprofit, offers small grants to assist all cemeteries [www.traderfoundation.org](http://www.traderfoundation.org)

**Maryland Cemetery Legislative Advocates** -- organized after COVID to coordinate cemetery priorities and legislation in the Maryland General Assembly

## Programs in Montgomery County, Maryland

**Montgomery Preservation, Inc.** -- County-wide nonprofit that preserves, advocates, promotes all historic resources; sponsored *MoCo Cemetery Inventory Revisited* project 2018 + two County cemetery protection laws  
[www.montgomerypreservation.org](http://www.montgomerypreservation.org)

**Montgomery County Burial Sites Inventory:** maintained by Montgomery County Planning Board, c 350 sites  
[www.montgomeryplanning.org/planning/historic/montgomery-county-burial-sites-inventory/](http://www.montgomeryplanning.org/planning/historic/montgomery-county-burial-sites-inventory/)

## About Abandoned Cemeteries

**Abandoned is defined in current Maryland law: Business Regulation Section 5-805** thusly:

(A) In this Section, "Abandoned Cemetery" means a Cemetery for which --

(I) 1. The Organization established to engage in the operation of the Cemetery

Has been terminated

Has been subject to Administrative Dissolution by the State, or

Has otherwise ceased to exist; and

2. Title has not been Conveyed.

(II) There is no property owner listed in the records of the State Department of Assessments & Taxation;

(III) The property has been condemned; or

(IV) No person who is legally responsible for the property can be found and Legal Ownership of the property cannot be determined.

## **Examples of Abandoned African American Cemeteries:**

**Dove Family Cemetery, near Seven Locks Road** -- #305 in Montgomery County Burial Sites Inventory

**Martin Family, in Lincoln Park, Rockville** -- # 249

**Waters Slave Cemetery, in Germantown** -- #330 has SDAT number; flat fieldstone markers are downhill; early map shows "site of a Negro graveyard;" current owner uncertain

**Friends of Halfway AA Cemetery near Hagerstown, Washgtn Co** [www.halfwayafricanamericancemetery.org](http://www.halfwayafricanamericancemetery.org)

My lists: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Examples of successful African American Cemetery projects:**

**Morningstar Tabernacle No. 88, in Cabin John, Montgomery Co** -- [www.friendsofmoseshall.org](http://www.friendsofmoseshall.org)

**Laurel Cemetery Memorial Project, in Baltimore** -- <https://laurelcemetery.omeka.net/>

**Pleasant View Historical Association in Quince Orchard, MoCo** -- [www.pleasantviewsite.org](http://www.pleasantviewsite.org)

**Sugarland Ethno-History Project near Poolesville, MoCo** -- [www.sugarlandproject.org](http://www.sugarlandproject.org)

**Haiti Cemetery, in Rockville, Montgomery County** -- <https://haiticemetery.org/>

My lists: \_\_\_\_\_