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**Federal Wage System  
Job Grading Standards**



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**FEDERAL WAGE SYSTEM  
JOB GRADING  
STANDARD  
FOR  
CEMETERY  
CARETAKING,  
4754**



**Workforce Compensation  
and Performance Service**



# CEMETERY CARETAKING, 4754

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## WORK COVERED

This standard is used to grade nonsupervisory work involved in the maintenance upkeep of cemeteries, requiring the use of a variety of trade practices associated with occupations such as motor vehicle operating, gardening, tractor operating, laboring, and fork lift operating. Such work includes digging graves, setting and aligning headstones, erecting mourners' shelters, setting up casket-lowering devices, and maintaining the appearance of the surrounding grounds.

## WORK NOT COVERED

This standard does not cover the following work:

- Cemetery maintenance work requiring skill, knowledge, and experience predominately in a single trade. (See, for example, Job Grading Standards for [Gardening, 5003](#), [Motor Vehicle Operating 5703](#), [Fork Lift Operating, 5704](#), [Tractor Operating, 5705](#), and [Engineering Equipment Operating, 5716](#).)
- Cemetery management and administration work. (See [Cemetery Administration Series, GS-1630](#).)

## TITLES

Jobs graded by this standard are to be titled *Cemetery Caretaker*.

## GRADE LEVELS

This standard does not describe all possible grades for this occupation. Some jobs may differ substantially from the levels of skill, knowledge, and other work requirements of the grades described in the standard. Such jobs may be graded in accordance with sound job grading methods.

## NOTES TO USERS

Since Positions involving cemetery maintenance work are often mixed jobs, such work should be graded in accordance with OPM's mixed job policy. Therefore, if the highest skill and qualification requirements of the mixed duties are derived from a single occupation, the job should be titled and graded in accordance with the job grading standard for that occupation. Likewise, a mixed job is considered to be in the cemetery caretaker occupation when the highest skill and qualification requirements of the position are represented by two or more occupations. Because the application of trade practices from different occupations is an inherent requirement of positions titled and graded as "cemetery caretaker," the use of parenthetical titles such as (tractor operator) or (motor vehicle operator) will not be used.

At levels of work below grade 4, cemetery maintenance jobs generally entail Laborer duties. In those situations, the following two rules apply:

- (1) The position is titled and graded by the Cemetery Caretaking Job Grading Standard, 4754, if it is part of a career ladder progression structured to provide the employee with developmental experience and training in the cemetery maintenance field.
- (2) The position is titled and graded by the [Laboring Job Grading Standard, 3502](#), if the cemetery maintenance work is being performed on a continuing rather than a developmental basis.

The grading criteria and the mixed work examples that are presented at the 4,5, and 6 grade levels are intended to show some of the more common combinations of work. However, other combinations may also be found, depending on the work environment, and the skills and abilities of the employees. The examples are given to demonstrate the technique to be used in grading jobs that meet the criteria for inclusion in this occupation, as well as the technique to be used for grading jobs that do not meet the inclusion criteria.

Note that while this standard presents grading guidance at each of the grade levels for work in other occupations as it relates to the cemetery environment, the job grading standards covering those occupations should still be referenced thoroughly in making grade determinations.

**4754-2****CEMETERY CARETAKER, GRADE 2****4757-2**

*General:* This is a trainee level intended to provide the employee with the skills necessary to eventually perform grade 4 or higher cemetery caretaking work. At this level Cemetery Caretakers perform tasks requiring little or no special skill, experience, or training. Moderate physical effort is generally necessary in accomplishing the work, which may include tasks such as operating powered grass trimmers and light walking-type lawnmowers; setting up and removing chairs, greens, shelters, and casket-lowering devices from grave sites; and cleaning headstones with chemical solutions and brushes. In addition, grade 2 Cemetery Caretakers learn how to align and set headstones, dig and square graves, and perform other more difficult cemetery maintenance tasks similar to those described at the grade 3 level, while under close direction and guidance.

*Skill and Knowledge:* Manual skill is required to operate equipment such as powered lawnmowers and trimmers. Workers at this level have a basic familiarity with funeral arrangements so that chairs, lowering devices, and other burial items are set up properly. In addition, grade 2 Cemetery Caretakers acquire the knowledge and skill to perform higher level cemetery maintenance work.

*Responsibility:* Grade 2 cemetery caretakers receive specific instructions on how to perform their assigned tasks. They generally accomplish these duties on their own, receiving assistance from a higher graded employee or supervisor when needed. Completed work is checked by a supervisor or higher graded employee to see that it meets requirements. When learning new or more difficult work, grade 2 cemetery caretakers receive detailed instructions, with review as the work is being done and when it is finished.

*Physical Effort:* Grade 2 cemetery caretakers exert moderately heavy physical effort in performing tasks such as pushing lawnmowers, carrying equipment and supplies, and scrubbing headstones. They engage in strenuous labor similar to that described at the grade 3 level when learning to accomplish higher level work.

*Working Conditions:* Grade 2 cemetery caretakers work outside in all kinds of weather. They are subject to injuries such as severe cuts and back strain from lifting materials and operating equipment.

When learning to perform work such as that described at the grade 3 level, workers at this level have a greater risk of injury because of the size and power of the equipment being operated.



**4754-3****CEMETERY CARETAKER, GRADE 3****4754-3**

*General:* This is a trainee level intended to provide the employee with the skills necessary to perform grade 4 or higher cemetery caretaking work. In contrast to grade 2 cemetery caretakers, grade 3 caretakers perform tasks which require prior work experience or training, and heavy physical effort. For example, they dig and square graves and headstone holes with tools such as pneumatic tampers, picks, and shovels; they cut grass with heavy walking-type power mowers; they operate hand or gasoline driven pumps to empty water from open graves; and they set and align headstones. In addition, grade 3 cemetery caretakers learn how to operate garden-type tractors, fertilize plants, prepare seedbeds, and perform other cemetery maintenance duties, while under close supervision.

*Skill and Knowledge:* In comparison to the grade 2 level, grade 3 cemetery caretakers must operate and maintain bigger and more dangerous equipment, such as pneumatic tampers and large walking-type power mowers, requiring greater skill to handle the machinery, and more control to avoid accidents and property damage. Grade 3 cemetery caretakers must also be knowledgeable of cemetery practices such as the string lining technique and the use of a level in aligning and setting tombstones. In addition, grade 3 cemetery caretakers acquire the knowledge and skill to perform higher level cemetery maintenance work.

*Responsibility:* Workers at this level receive general instructions regarding the tasks to be performed. Unlike grade 2 caretakers, they are expected to complete most assignments without directions.

When learning new or more difficult work, instructions are specific, and review is provided as the work is being done and when it is completed.

*Physical Effort:* Grade 3 cemetery caretakers exert heavy physical effort in doing such tasks as operating pneumatic tampers, and lifting and aligning headstones weighing 92 kilograms (200 pounds), with assistance.

*Working Conditions:* Grade 3 cemetery caretakers risk more frequent injury and muscle strain than at the grade 2 level because of the larger and more powerful equipment being lifted and operated.

**4754-4****CEMETERY CARETAKER, GRADE 4****4754-4**

*General:* In contrast to lower graded workers who perform jobs requiring mainly manual skills and physical strength, grade 4 cemetery caretakers perform a variety of tasks, such as operating small tractors, and transplanting shrubs, which involve the application of basic trade practices from two or more occupations at the same grade level.

*Skill and Knowledge:* In addition to knowledge of routine cemetery practices, skill in the operation of power tools, and other abilities described at the grade 3 level, grade 4 cemetery caretakers must be proficient in performing basic techniques from different trades occupations. This entails more numerous procedures and practices to learn and apply and a demand for greater precision in performing those tasks. For example, they must be skilled in manipulating hand and foot controls to stop, start, and maneuver riding mowers and small tractors which tow pre-adjusted grounds maintenance equipment. They must know safety rules and regulations for moving vehicles. They must be skilled in evenly applying fertilizer, in preparing soil mixtures, and in planting seeds and shrubs. They must be able to spot obvious plant diseases and blights, and unusual or poor plant growth.

*Responsibility:* Grade 4 cemetery caretakers make more difficult decisions in performing such tasks as safely operating small tractors, and properly accomplishing gardening tasks, than grade 3 caretakers. For example, grade 4 workers must determine cornering radius, select gears, plant seeds at the proper depth, and mix fertilizer accurately, decisions which require greater judgment and more occupational information than at lower grade levels.

Workers at this level are assigned specific tasks to be done. They perform those assignments with little review or guidance while in progress. Completed work is checked for compliance to standard procedures.

*Working Conditions:* Grade 4 cemetery caretakers work outside in all kinds of weather. There is chance of minor injuries such as bruises, cuts, and scrapes.

*Physical Effort:* Work at this level requires some arm and leg movement to manipulate equipment controls. This work also involves frequent walking, pushing of carts and wheel barrows, bending, and stooping. Grade 4 caretakers occasionally lift heavy objects such as bags of fertilizer and grass seed.

<b>MIXED WORK EXAMPLES</b>	<b>TITLE, CODE, AND GRADE</b>
Tractor Operator, 5705-4 Gardener, 5003-4 Laborer, 3502-3	Cemetery Caretaker, 4754-4
Tractor Operator, 5705-4 Laborer, 3502-3	Tractor Operator, 5705-4

**4754-5****CEMETERY CARETAKER, GRADE 5****4754-5**

*General:* In contrast to the grade 4 level, where cemetery caretakers operate easy-to-manuever garden tractors with few controls or perform routine, specified gardening tasks, grade 5 Cemetery Caretakers operate larger and more complex equipment such as fork lifts and pick-up trucks, requiring the workers to manipulate a greater variety of controls and to be familiar with the more numerous parts and functions of the equipment. As at the next lower grade level, grade 5 cemetery caretakers apply trade practices in at least two occupations at the same grade level in performing their cemetery maintenance work.

*Skill and Knowledge:* Grade 5 cemetery caretakers apply practices requiring a fuller knowledge of more than one trade technique and method, and a greater need for accuracy, than at the grade 4 level. For example, workers at this level need more skill to handle the additional operating controls of equipment such as fork lifts and pick- up trucks; they need greater skill to maneuver these larger vehicles; they must be knowledgeable of State motor vehicle regulations if they are required to drive on public highways; they know the weight capacity of fork lifts and how to lower, raise, and tilt the forks; and they use greater skill in safely distributing the larger loads hauled by their vehicles.

*Responsibility:* Grade 5 caretakers operate larger, more powerful, and more dangerous equipment than at the lower level. Consequently, they must exhibit greater care and judgment in performing tasks such as safely handling heavy materials with forklifts, transporting personnel and supplies with pick-up trucks, and obeying traffic regulations while on public roadways. Caretakers at this level follow oral instructions or work orders indicating the task to be performed. Assignments are completed independently, with supervisory review to assure that job requirements are met.

*Physical Effort:* Moderate physical effort is needed to operate hand and foot controls of vehicles. Workers at this level occasionally lift objects weighing over 23 kilograms (50 pounds) when loading and unloading cargo.

*Working Conditions:* While operating vehicles, caretakers at this level drive in all types of traffic and weather and are exposed to the possibility of accidents. They work outside while loading and unloading cargo.

<b>MIXED WORK EXAMPLES</b>	<b>TITLE, CODE, AND GRADE</b>
Motor Vehicle Operator, 5703-5 Fork Lift Operator, 5704-5 Laborer, 3502-3	Cemetery Caretaker, 4754-5
Motor Vehicle Operator, 5703-5 Gardener, 5003-4 Tractor Operator, 5705-4	Motor Vehicle Operator, 5703-5



**4754-6****CEMETERY CARETAKER, GRADE 6****4754-6**

*General:* As at the next lower grade level, grade 6 cemetery caretakers perform a variety of cemetery maintenance tasks requiring the application of trade practices from two or more occupations at the same grade level. However, in performing duties such as operating a tractormounted auger, planning and carrying out gardening work, and operating dump trucks, grade 6 cemetery caretakers apply a more intensive and specialized knowledge of trade practices and use greater judgment in applying that knowledge than workers at the grade 5 level.

*Skill and Knowledge:* In contrast to the grade 5 level, grade 6 cemetery caretakers are required to apply specialized trade techniques in performing tasks such as operating attached power equipment, and performing a full range of gardening tasks. For example, workers at this level must be able to use a power take-off, extra forward speeds, and additional driving wheels in maneuvering and operating dump trucks; they must know how to operate field-type tractors with attached equipment, such as augers and movable dozer blades, which require skill in making multiple connections with the power take-off and hydraulic power lines, and in manipulating the tractor and attachment controls at the same time; and they use a more advanced knowledge of gardening practices in adapting to soil conditions, weather changes, and other gardening variables.

*Responsibility:* Grade 6 cemetery caretakers exercise more judgment and independence in determining the procedures for accomplishing cemetery maintenance tasks than workers at lower levels. For example, in using a tractor-mounted auger to dig grave stone holes, grade 6 workers must determine whether the ground is too hard or too rocky' to risk damaging the powered auger, and must judge when the hole depth meets specifications. In carrying out the installation's seasonal gardening schedule, grade 6 caretakers are responsible for observing the condition and growth of the cemetery's lawn, shrubs, flowers, and trees, and to take the action necessary to correct the problem. This includes determining how and when to transplant shrubs, to apply fertilizer, to plant grass, and to control the spread of plant disease, weeds, and other blights.

Workers at this level follow established trade methods and procedures in performing assignments. Completed work is checked to see that it meets acceptable standards.

*Physical Effort:* Grade 6 cemetery caretakers exert considerable effort in maneuvering large vehicles, such as dump trucks, and in hooking up heavy equipment attachments to tractors. The work also requires frequent walking, stooping, kneeling, and pushing of wheelbarrows in performing gardening work.

*Working Conditions:* Grade 6 caretakers work outside in all kinds of weather. In addition, when operating vehicles, they drive in all types of weather and traffic and are exposed to the possibility of accidents.

**4757-6**

**4754-6**

<b>MIXED WORK EXAMPLES</b>	<b>TITLE, CODE, AND GRADE</b>
Gardener, 5003-6 Tractor Operator, 5705-6 Laborer, 3502-3	Cemetery Caretaker, 4754-6
Motor Vehicle Operator, 5703-6 Tractor Operator, 5705-6	Cemetery Caretaker, 4754-6
Gardener, 5003-6 Tractor Operator, 5705-4 Laborer, 3502-3	Gardener, 5003-6

