

General Permit Guidelines

A permit from the Division of Archaeology (Division) is required for any effort that undertakes ground-disturbing activities at a cemetery falling under the definitions presented in the Louisiana Unmarked Human Burial Sites Act (R.S. 8:671-681) and the Louisiana Historic Cemetery Act (R.S. 25:931-943). The permits apply to 1) any effort to identify the location of an unmarked and/or abandoned cemetery, 2) to disinter all or a portion of an unmarked/abandoned cemetery, or 3) if ground-disturbance will occur within 100 feet of a known cemetery. A permit is not necessary for 1) projects that only employ remote sensing techniques and will not include any ground-disturbing efforts for cemetery identification or delineation; and 2) individuals, families, or community organizations that may wish to clear and otherwise make visible an abandoned cemetery.

Permits will be issued by the Division upon submission of an accepted Scope of Work that addresses all of the stated criteria. The Permit will be signed by the property landowner, archaeological firm or other organization conducting the fieldwork, and the Division.

There are separate permitting processes provided for efforts to 1) identify but not excavate an unmarked cemetery or conduct ground-disturbing activities within 100 feet of a known cemetery, and 2) excavate and disinter some or all of an unmarked cemetery. A Permit Application Form for each permit is provided below.

These guidelines also outline the process to be followed in the event of the unanticipated discovery of human remains (see last section).

Definitions

Burial artifact – any item of human manufacture or use that is in an unmarked burial site or individual grave, including coffin and coffin parts, grave markers, and any item interred with the individual or included in the grave fill.

Qualified Professional Archaeologist – The professional archaeologist shall meet the Secretary of the Interior's Qualifications Standards for archaeology (48 CFR 44738-44739), hold a graduate degree in archaeology, anthropology or closely related field from an accredited institution, be a member of the Register of Professional Archaeologists or its successor entity, and possess demonstrated experience in cemetery identification and excavation as demonstrated by a thesis, dissertation, or previously completed cemetery study.

Qualified Professional Physical Anthropologist – The professional physical anthropologist shall possess a graduate degree in archaeology or anthropology, and possess demonstrated experience in osteological analysis of human skeletal remains and identification of fragmentary human skeletal remains as demonstrated by a thesis, dissertation or previously completed cemetery study.