

# Funeral Types and Details

A dignified alternative to traditional services is the graveside or tomb-side service. These types of services can greatly reduce overall costs. The underlying idea behind this type of service is that everyone attending the funeral meet at the place of burial or entombment at a specified time, where normally all services take place.

Normally there is no public viewing at the funeral home for graveside services, but sometimes the immediate family may be allowed private viewing for a short time before burial. Also, since there is no procession to the cemetery, motorcycle escorts are not an added expense. Floral arrangements should be delivered directly to the cemetery prior to funeral time or brought personally by family and friends attending the funeral. Your funeral director will be able to better assist you in coordinating this type of service.

## Cremation

Cremation is an alternative means of final disposition. It is not for everyone, but will comparatively reduce overall costs, saving the family additional expenses normally incurred with traditional burial, such as cemetery property, outer burial container, cemetery marker/headstone, charges for opening and closing the grave, motorcycle escorts, etc. Although you select cremation as your final disposition, you may still wish to have complete funeral services at the funeral home with private and/or public viewing. Many funeral homes offer cremation caskets designed specifically for these types of services. All services normally conclude at the funeral home and the cremation takes place privately.

## Motorcycle Escorts

Motorcycle escorts are normally required by local city ordinances to safely guide the procession through public streets on the way to the church and/or ceremony. Your funeral director will arrange for motorcycle escorts and can give you more information on their applicable fees.

## Death Certificates

As a service to the family, the funeral director will complete the death certificate application, secure the doctor's signature and cause of death, and obtain certified copies for the family. Your funeral director will give you an estimated time in which to expect the finalized copies. Having the documents listed below will help speed up this process:

- Copy of the deceased's birth certificate
- Driver's license
- Social security card
- Military I. D. (if applicable)
- Time of death
- Name and telephone number of the doctor signing the death certificate

## Obituary

Your funeral director will assist you with the appropriate format and biography of the deceased. Invariably, the more frequent errors appearing on obituaries involve the misspelling of names and the omission of formal titles (Rev., Deacon, Dr., etc.). Also, when proof reading the obituary before publishing, double check dates, days, times, and locations. Obituary notices can be very costly if you include a picture of the deceased or have to rerun the obituary due to an error.

# Funeral Planning Guide



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## General Information

The following information is provided for the sole purpose of assisting you with funeral planning and is intended for use only as a planning guide. It does not, in any way preclude or diminish the invaluable services that a licensed funeral professional may offer you and your family. Your personally selected funeral director will carefully guide you through the entire funeral process and may offer other options than those listed below to better suit your own personal and individual needs.

## Prior To Going To The Funeral Home

It may be helpful to have another family member or close friend go with you to the funeral home. You may wish to take the following information about your loved one:

- Full name – include nickname or other names used.
- Date and place of birth.
- Social Security number.
- Occupation.
- Father's name.
- Mother's maiden name.
- If a veteran, proof of military service.
- List of relatives and relationships.
- List of church, professional organizations, clubs and other organizations in which membership was held.
- The name and address of an organization of charity you want donations made to in memory of your loved one.
- List of individuals who may be available as pallbearers and/or individuals who may speak about your loved one at the service.
- The arrangements for food or a reception after the burial service.

You also may wish to bring the clothing in which your loved one will be buried.

## Embalming

In the United States, mortuary law is state regulated. Embalming is a normal policy of the local funeral home. It serves as a means of protecting the health of both funeral home personnel handling the deceased, and mourners attending funerals where there will be an open-casket public viewing of the deceased. The family may choose an immediate disposition, such as a direct burial or direct cremation, where embalming would not be necessary. Your funeral director will be able to further explain these options.

Most commercial air carriers require embalming for the transportation of human remains. You may wish to first consult with the funeral director on the receiving end to guide you on how to approach these matters. Often times the funeral director will contract with a local mortuary service and arrange for embalming and transportation of the deceased. This will save the family unnecessary duplicate service charges. Your funeral director will be able to advise you in these matters.

## Casket Selection

Your funeral director will assist you in casket selection and will explain the various casket styles and features. Casket selection is strictly a matter of personal choice, but will normally depend on price and the following factors:

- Means of final disposition (burial, etc.)
- Will the casket be used for public viewing?
- Type of materials used in casket construction
- Protective and non-protective casket features

Please note that caskets are also available to the public through independent distributors, i.e. casket stores.

## Outer Burial Container

Most cemeteries generally require an outer burial container to enclose the casket at the burial site. The purpose of this container is to prevent the grave

from collapsing in on-itself due to the heavy machinery used in maintaining the cemetery property. These containers also have protective and non-protective features, and are likewise priced based on the materials used in construction.

## Traditional Funeral

A traditional funeral normally involves arranged services for three events – visitation, funeral, and burial.

1. The visitation service normally takes place in the chapel or stateroom of the funeral home. However, the location may vary depending on the family's individual needs. An evening of visitation will allow family and friends the opportunity to be present with the deceased in an opened or closed casket setting. The family may wish to arrange for an evening vigil prayer service. Your funeral director will assist you in planning a suitable place and time for all services, depending on your family's individual needs.
2. The funeral service normally takes place in the funeral home chapel, the family's place of worship, or a suitable auditorium. For services taking place other than at the funeral home, you may choose to have family and friends meet at the time and place of the service. This will allow the immediate family some privacy at the funeral home for the final viewing of the deceased, prior to departing in procession for the place where services are being held.
3. Immediately following the funeral service, anyone going to the cemetery joins in procession to accompany the family to the place of burial for the final committal service. After the committal service and after everyone has departed from the cemetery, the funeral director oversees the final burial or entombment.