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A QUICK GUIDE  
TO FUNERAL  
SERVICE

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**EMPIRE**  
*Mortuary Services*





## WHY DO I NEED A FUNERAL HOME?

Only a licensed funeral home staffed with trained and licensed funeral directors knows how to best take care of both the deceased and the family left behind. Your funeral director can help you understand what can and cannot be done with the body, as well as help you determine what kind of service will best suit your family.

## WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF A FUNERAL?

When someone dies, a void is created in the lives of those who knew that person. The funeral provides a safe place to express sadness, to receive and give comfort, to acknowledge the loss, and show respect for human life. It is the critical first step in a healthy grieving process. Since the beginning of time, there has never been a tribe or culture that did not understand the importance of a ceremonial close to human life.

## IF I DON'T BELONG TO A CHURCH, SHOULD I STILL HAVE A FUNERAL SERVICE?

Yes; we all touch the lives of those around us. We share interests, activities, and ideologies. We all love and are loved. There is no other you. Your life should be celebrated. Your funeral director can help put together a service that expresses your unique life.

## WHAT IS A MEMORIAL SERVICE?

A memorial service takes place after burial or cremation. The body is not present. A memorial service may take place weeks or even months after death. Some religions require that the body be buried or cremated very soon after death, necessitating a memorial service. A memorial service may also be held when family is far flung and needs more time to come together or when the burial will take place in a distant location.

## HOW MUCH WILL A FUNERAL COST?

A lot less than the average wedding, which comes in at \$29,200.00 according to The Knot! Average funeral costs in North America are between \$7000.00 and \$10,000.00 depending on where you live. The best way to keep cost in budget: talk openly and honestly with your funeral director through the entire process. Share your budget. Talk with your family about what is important to each of them so that you pay for only what you need. Finally, be wary of low-cost claims ... they are almost never the real full story.



## WHY DO WE EMBALM?

Embalming slows down the deterioration of the human body. During the embalming process, the funeral director / embalmer will restore coloring, set facial features and otherwise make the body presentable for family members to view. An embalmed body will more closely resemble the person before the ravages of the disease or accident that took the life. Family is comforted by a last impression of Dad as they knew him rather than as he looked at death.

## WHAT IS CREMATION?

Cremation is a process where heat is used to quickly decompose the body to its basic elements. Cremation has been practiced for thousands of years. Cremation takes place in a retort, cremator, or cremation chamber. The cremation process takes from 2 to 3 hours. The time varies based on the size of the body and heat capacity of the cremation chamber. Typically, the chamber reaches between 1500 and 1900 degrees during the cremation process. The body is reduced to bone fragments and ash, referred to as cremains. Once cremation is complete, the dried bone fragments are processed in a machine called a cremulator. The cremulator breaks down larger pieces of bone. When the process is complete, there will be between three and seven pounds of white substance that resembles coarse sand. The remains will then be packaged or placed in an urn according to the family's request.



## WHAT IS BURIAL?

Ground burial provides a permanent resting place. The body is enclosed in a casket. The casket is made of wood or metal. The cost of the casket is determined by the material and workmanship of the casket. The casket is placed in a grave liner or vault before burial. Most cemeteries require the use of a liner or vault to maintain the integrity of the grave and insure the ground is level.

## WHY DO PEOPLE VISIT THE CEMETERY?

When one of our own dies, the love we had for that person does not end. We miss the connection: a chat over morning coffee or that Sunday afternoon phone call ... there is a pull to connect. So, we go to the cemetery. There we pray, ask questions, share how we are doing, ask for help. We leave little tchotchkes or flowers. And then we feel better.

## IF I AM CREMATED, HOW CAN MY LOVED ONES SATISFY THAT NEED TO REMEMBER?

That's a good question, and something that everyone planning a cremation for a loved one or themselves should discuss with their funeral director. There are many choices. Cremated remains can be buried in a cemetery or scattered in a place with special meaning where family can go to remember. Small amounts of remains can be incorporated into jewelry pieces that can be worn always.





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CALL US WITH  
QUESTIONS

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