

# **Funeral Arrangement Checklist**



## **Contact the deceased's legal representative**

When you contact the legal representative of the deceased, you will learn whether he or she has a prearranged funeral plan. If a plan exists, it will give direction on how to proceed with funeral arrangements.

## **Select a funeral home**

Select a funeral home and schedule time with a funeral director. A funeral director helps families plan, select disposition, budget and carry out funeral services.

## **Choose a service type**

Types of services include:

- Religious funeral service: A funeral typically held at a religious place of worship and involves prayers and rituals from the deceased's religious background.
- Military funeral service: A funeral service that can happen at the deceased family's request if the deceased was a part of a military organization, and it sometimes involves an honor guard participating in the funeral service.
- Fraternal funeral service: A funeral that incorporates aspects from the deceased's fraternal involvement.

## **Choose a location for the funeral service**

You may hold the service at a religious location, like a church, or you may select a place that held special meaning for the deceased.

## **Find and schedule a clergy member or officiant**

Clergy are ordained with a religious organization or church and perform pastoral services, while an officiant has no religious ties but is able to lead funerals.

## **Select a casket**

If burial was chosen, select a casket, which is a specially made box used to contain a deceased person's body, and decide whether it will be open or closed at the funeral.

## **Select a burial container and/or vault**

A burial container or vault is typically made of concrete and encloses a coffin to assist in preventing it from sinking.

## **Select accessories**

Choose clothing, jewelry, and glasses for the deceased.

## **Choose final touches**

Discuss cosmetology and hairdressing for the deceased with the funeral director.

## **Select a cremation container**

If cremation was chosen, select an urn or niche space and a cremation container.

- An urn is a large vase used to hold the ashes of a cremated body.
- A [niche space](#) is a recessed compartment in a wall where an urn can be placed.
- A cremation container is a casket that is usually made of all wood and is purchased for the funeral service that is later cremated with the body.

## **Arrange a cemetery plot**

- Find the cemetery deed or proof of ownership. A cemetery deed is a document that proves someone owns a grave and has the right to be buried in it in the event of their death.
- If the deceased hasn't purchased a plot, you will need to secure interment space and get an exact location of burial disposition. An interment space is where an urn or casket is buried in a cemetery.

## **Make grave arrangements**

Arrange for opening and closing of the grave at the cemetery.

## **Secure endowment care**

Endowment care is the general maintenance of an individual's gravesite in a cemetery.

## **Arrange the graveside committal service**

This service is a funeral ceremony held at the gravesite at a cemetery.

## **Reserve the cemetery chapel**

Secure use of the cemetery chapel for committal prayers, which are said at the graveside committal service, if applicable.

## **Choose a grave marker**

Better known as a gravestone, a marker is placed over the grave to mark where the deceased was placed.

## **Arrange the visitation**

Choose a time and place for the visitation service, which is a time when the family of the deceased makes itself available to friends and extended family members who want to express their sympathy.

## **Prepare obituary**

Provide information about deceased to newspaper to have an obituary created. An obituary is an article that announces a person has died and offers detailed biographical information.

## **Select speakers**

Decide who will deliver the eulogy, which is a speech or piece of writing that praises the life of a deceased person.

## **Select scriptures and/or readings for the service**

Choose text that has special meaning to the deceased or tells a story about him or her.

## **Gather items for a memento display or memorial board**

It's an opportunity to display personal possessions or photographs of the deceased to show others a glimpse of his or her life.

## **Choose forms of media**

Decide on memorial video production, pictures, music, etc.

## **Choose charities**

Select charitable contributions for memorials in memory of the deceased, if desired.

## **Purchase register book**

If you want to collect more than guests' signatures, you may also use memorial prayer cards, if desired.

## **Select pallbearers**

Family or friends can assist in carrying the coffin at a funeral.

## **Select music**

Schedule instrumentalists and vocalists and choose music.

## **Arrange flowers**

Find a florist, select floral arrangements, and designate transportation to funeral service.

## **Arrange transportation**

- Arrange a hearse to transport the body of the deceased from the funeral service to the cemetery.
- Arrange a car to transport close family members from the funeral, to the cemetery, and to the post-funeral reception.
- Arrange transportation and lodging for out of town guests.

## **Organize reception**

- Select a location for the post-funeral reception.
- Contact the church or a caterer to arrange food for the post-funeral reception.