

# *What do you do when a Loved one dies?*



We have outlined the most frequently asked questions that seem to worry people most when a death occurs. Please read through at your leisure. We are available at any time to answer any of your questions, please refer to our contact us page for our details.

## ***What do I do if a death occurs in a Hospital or Nursing Home?***

Contact your Funeral Director and he or she will advise you on what needs to be done and will make all the necessary arrangements.

## ***What do I do if a death occurs at home?***

The first thing to do is to call your Doctor. Then we suggest you call your Funeral Director before any further arrangements are made and they will advise on what to do next.

## ***What happens if the Doctor is unable to provide a Death Certificate?***

In cases of sudden and unexpected death, whether it's deemed to be accidental or from an unknown cause (eg. when there has not been any recent consultation with a Doctor), your local Doctor may feel unable to provide a death certificate and the Coroner then becomes involved. Ring your Funeral Director and they will advise. Although the Coroner may deal with one particular Funeral Director, you do not have to use the Coroner's Funeral Director. You can still have your personal choice of Funeral Directors.

## ***How can my Funeral Director help me?***

We are available 24 Hours - 7 days a week to assist you.

As Funeral Directors, our first role is to assist and advise you in any way we can when a death occurs. It is our responsibility to transfer the deceased to the mortuary and make all the funeral arrangements in conjunction with the Clergy or Celebrant of your choice.

We collect all the necessary certificates and send them to the appropriate authorities, arrange special certificates necessary for cremation, lodge death and funeral notices in the press, attend to Registration of Death and we contact Social Security and / or Department of Veteran Affairs.

In addition we make all the necessary payments such as cemetery or cremation fees, advertising, clergy or celebrant fees, floral arrangements and if needed refreshments following the service. We also liaise with R.S.L., Masonic Lodge and other organisations if required.

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## **Arranging the Funeral - where do I start?**

Your Funeral Director is the person who starts the arrangement process; be guided and helped by them. The following are some guidelines and information to assist:-

### **Burial or Cremation**

The wishes of the deceased may already be known. Otherwise it is up to you and the family to decide. The choice is yours. Costs differ slightly with cremation often costing less. Cremations are usually done in Ballarat following a Funeral Service in your home town although the Ballarat Crematorium has a well-appointed chapel.

### **Styles of Funerals**

You may wish to have a service at a Church or our Chapel followed by the cortege proceeding to the cemetery for the interment. When cremation is the option usually a church or chapel service is held and the cremation takes place privately later. Clergy, Celebrants or family friends can be used to officiate at Funerals and it is common to have Masonic Lodge and R.S.L. Services at the graveside if applicable. Some families prefer to just have a Graveside service at the cemetery or a Crematorium Chapel service. Refreshments quite often follow the service and these can be arranged with church groups etc.

### **The viewing**

People often feel that to view their loved one before the funeral helps and it is very important to them. This is a personal choice but we recommend it. We have private facilities for families where we arrange viewing. Children should be considered also.

### **Choosing a coffin or a casket**

A casket is rectangular and usually more expensive whereas a coffin is shaped being wider at one end. We have a range of both on display at our premises. The choice is made by you as to what suits your needs.

### **Embalming**

Health Regulations require that all cases being transported overseas must be embalmed. With modern transport facilities these days it is not always needed for interstate transfers however on some occasions it may be required. (We can advise you)

## **Should Children attend Funerals?**

Open discussion within the family about death and the funeral is healthy, children then seem to be better prepared and better able to understand. Consider letting them take part and attend if they wish.

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## **What are the costs of a Funeral?**

The expenses for a funeral can be put into three main groups.

Firstly, there are the Funeral Director's professional fees or service charge, which in our service is one complete fee. This fee makes available our personnel (on call 24 hrs), our services and facilities, covers mortuary costs and the use of our hearse. It also provides for administration work such as preparing and inserting press notices, registration of the death and arranging cemetery, crematorium, clergy, floral tributes and all services in accordance with your wishes. No additional administration fees are charged, nor are viewing fees or out of hours transfer or arrangement fee.

Secondly, the cost of a coffin or casket can range from the low hundreds up to thousands of dollars. We keep a range in stock for you to choose from as to what meets your requirements.

Thirdly, there are the disbursement costs or cash payments the Funeral Director makes on behalf of the family and which are out of his control and not included in the professional fee - eg: Crematorium or cemetery charges, doctor's certificates, floral tributes, clergy or celebrant fee, organist, soloist, press notices, certified copy of Death Certificate and others. GST is now payable on all funeral costs

## **Who can help me with grief?**

Should you or any member of the family have the need, we can put you in contact with a reputable counsellor. There are also support groups that meet regularly. Most clergy can be of assistance when a counsellor is needed. Professional Counsellors have set fees that they charge. We have a small library of books on our premises which we lend out when needed.

## **How can I make it easier for my loved ones when the time comes?**

One of the most important things to do is to make sure you have a valid and up-to-date will. It must be easily located or instructions as to its whereabouts left with someone close to you. We have a Personal Record Folder which can assist you in this area. Make sure all your family history is documented so as to be available when needed.