

## **WHAT TO DO WHEN A DEATH OCCURS**

1. Contact relatives
2. Locate deceased's letter of direction, prepaid funeral contract, insurance policy, and/or will.

## **INFORMATION NEEDED TO FILE A DEATH CERTIFICATE**

- Full name of deceased
- Occupation
- Date of birth
- Place of birth
- Social Security number
- Residence address
- Spouse's name (maiden name)
- Father's name, mother's maiden name
- Place of burial or disposition
- Discharge papers (if veteran)

## **STEPS TO TAKE TO EASE THE BURDEN OF FUNERAL PLANNING PRIOR TO DEATH**

1. Advise your family and loved ones of your wishes by recording your wishes.
2. A spouse, next of kin, or legal representative generally can make arrangements for disposition of the deceased.
3. You may prearrange your service with your funeral director. A suggested order of service follows.

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Prelude  
Family Processional  
Scripture Reading  
Obituary  
Prayer  
Special Music  
Message/Prayer  
Hymn of Faith  
Family Recessional  
Postlude  
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## **AVAILABLE METHODS OF DISPOSITION**

Human remains can be buried, entombed, cremated, or donated for scientific study.

A family can bury its own dead on their private property without using a licensed funeral director. A statement of death and a death certificate are legally required. Generally, local ordinances or deed restrictions prohibit private burials within city limits. Check with local zoning authorities for applicable laws.

A body cannot be cremated immediately following death without a waiver. Texas law prohibits cremating any dead human body within 48 hours after death. *The County Medical Examiner or a Justice of the Peace may waive this time requirement.*

Cremated remains may be disposed of or kept in a number of ways.

- privately scattered
- interred in a cemetery
- placed in a niche in a columbarium
- kept by the family in their home

## **HOW TO SELECT A FUNERAL DIRECTOR**

If you need a funeral director, the reference of a relative or friend who has been served satisfactorily is one way to make a decision. The best way to know in advance whom you would select is to visit the funeral home, examine the facilities and ask about prices. Consider all alternatives and consult several different firms/organizations to compare costs. Be prepared to ask questions concerning all aspects of the funeral arrangements.

## **HOW TO LEARN ABOUT FUNERAL COSTS**

Funeral establishments are required to give current retail price information by telephone. By law, any consumer entering an establishment and making inquiries must be presented a general price list, which the consumer may keep, itemizing the costs of funeral services and the merchandise for sale from a funeral director. These retail prices, appearing on a printed list, must specify at least the charges for the following items, provided they are available for purchase through the establishment:

1. Forwarding or receiving remains, to or from another funeral home and a list of services provided for the stated prices
2. The price range for direct cremations
3. The price range for immediate burial
4. Embalming
5. Other preparation of the body
6. Use of facilities and staff for viewing, funeral, memorial service, and/or graveside service
7. Hearses
8. Limousines
9. Casket
10. Outer burial containers, such as vaults, grave liners, and boxes. Such outer enclosures are not required by law, but may be required by the cemetery.

### **IMPORTANT NUMBERS TO KEEP ON HAND**

- Trust & Estate Attorney
- Funeral Director
- Employer
- Accountant/Tax Preparer
- Investment Advisor
- Life Insurance Agent
- Bank(s)
- Social Security Administration: 800.772.1213
- Veteran Affairs: 800.827.1000