

Funeral Planning Checklist Organization can help you feel grounded during the funeral planning process. Below is a checklist to assist you:

Notify Authorities

- ▶ Call 911 or your local emergency number to report the death if outside of a hospital or nursing home.
- ▶ Notify Close Relatives and Friends

Call Those Needed for the Planning Process

- ▶ Set up a time to meet with the funeral director.
- ▶ Discuss who will be responsible for funeral expenses for billing purposes (*this may be divided amongst several family members.*)

Gather Information for Death Certificate

- ▶ Social Security number
- ▶ Date of Birth
- ▶ Place of Work (name, address and occupation)
- ▶ Full names of the deceased's parents

Decide whether or not to embalm the body

The law requires bodies that are not embalmed be buried sooner than bodies that are embalmed. A funeral director can help guide you through the much of this planning process.

- ▶ Have you considered organ donation

Clothing & Jewelry

If a traditional burial, clothing and jewelry will need to be decided upon. If cremation is in the plans, then this step is not necessary.

- ▶ Clothing: You can bring these when you meet with the funeral director to make the plans.
- ▶ Jewelry: Anything that the deceased particularly liked or wished to be included, such as necklaces, earrings, watches, tie tacks or cuff links should be included. Special pins would include (*but are not limited to*) union and association membership pins.

Consider the type of burial

- ▶ Cemetery plot ____
If one has been previously purchased, bring the deed to the plot with you to the funeral home when you make your plans. If there is a plot but you don't have the deed in your possession, the funeral director can contact the cemetery overseer to arrange confirmation. Otherwise a plot will need to be purchased. The funeral director will assist you with this or you can make arrangements yourself.
- ▶ Vault ____
Choose a vault. Your funeral director will describe the various types available.
- ▶ Mausoleum ____
See Vaults and Mausoleums

Select the casket or container

- ▶ Wood ___
- ▶ Metal ___
- ▶ Cardboard (cremation) ___
- ▶ Urn ___

Open or closed casket

Decide whether it will be opened or closed casket. *Note: Some clergy persons insist that the casket be closed for the memorial service. If you have a specific wish for the casket to remain open during the service, be sure to specify this when selecting a clergy person to deliver the eulogy.*

- ▶ Open ___
- ▶ Closed ___

Funeral services

If you plan to have a funeral service, you need to consider when and where the service will be conducted.

When

- ▶ Before burial or cremation ___
- ▶ After burial or cremation ___

Where

- ▶ The funeral home ___
- ▶ Church/Temple/Mosque ___
- ▶ At the graveside ___
- ▶ Other _____

Special Ceremonies

Some Fraternal Orders and the Military may provide special ceremonies for the funeral service.

- ▶ Check with the local branch of the service the deceased was enlisted in or the Fraternal Order for more information.
- ▶ Seating arrangements for the funeral service
- ▶ The funeral director should be aware of the relationships of people attending to seat them appropriately.

Compose the Obituary

- ▶ Vital statistics
- ▶ Memberships and associations
- ▶ Hobbies
- ▶ See *Writing an obituary*

Publishing an obituary

Decide on which newspapers or other publications will be used to place the obituary notice. Consider where that person grew up and where they lived most of their life.

- ▶ Local ___
- ▶ Regional ___
- ▶ Internet ___

Flower arrangements

Decide on the type of flower arrangements to be provided by the family. Relatives and other well wishers may also need to be advised as to your desired floral selections.

- ▶ Casket Spray ____
- ▶ Lid arrangements ____
- ▶ Standing spray ____
- ▶ Matching baskets ____
- ▶ Specialty pieces (floral hearts, crosses, and bible) ____
- ▶ See Floral Selection Guide

Pictures or photo album

Consider setting up pictures or a photo album to remind well wishers and family of good times or special events in the life of the deceased.

- ▶ Other props
The family or funeral director may wish to setup props that reflect the interests of the deceased.

Eulogies

Decide who will deliver the eulogy

- ▶ Clergy ____
- ▶ Friend ____
- ▶ Combination ____
- ▶ Video eulogy ____
- ▶ Other _____
- ▶ See Writing a Eulogy

Special Recognition

Consider special recognition for accomplishments of the deceased.

- ▶ Athletic ____
- ▶ Political ____
- ▶ Religious ____
- ▶ Scientific ____

Memorial cards (optional)

- ▶ Choose from funeral home offerings ____
- ▶ Have unique cards printed ____
- ▶ Print your own ____
- ▶ See Memorial Cards

Pall bearers

Arrange for pall bearers. Usually 4 to 6 men are needed.

- ▶ Ask friends or relatives (usually not next of kin)
- ▶ Ask funeral home to arrange for this service.

Music at calling hours or funeral

- ▶ Generic funeral home selections _____
- ▶ Favorite recordings of the deceased _____
- ▶ Other soothing instrumentals _____

Grave site transportation

Consider who will provide transportation for the family to the grave site. Transportation of the deceased is usually provided by the funeral home.

- ▶ Friends and Family ____
- ▶ Funeral home limo ____

Grave marker

A temporary marker may be selected if a permanent marker has not been purchased or engraved.

- ▶ Engrave present stone ____
- ▶ Purchase new stone ____
- ▶ Veterans plaque - Veterans may be eligible for a marker plaque.
- ▶ Special insignias - A member of a service or charitable organization may be eligible for special insignia to be fixed to the marker.

Wake or special gathering

Decide if there will be a wake or other gathering to celebrate the life of the deceased. Consider where and when to hold this gathering.

- ▶ Where _____
- ▶ When _____
- ▶ Food _____
- ▶ Drink _____

Accommodating out of town relatives

Consider how to accommodate relatives.

- ▶ Assist with travel plans _____
- ▶ Airport pick up _____
- ▶ Lodging _____