

GardenHill Funeral Director Services, Inc.

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Meeting With the Funeral Home

Within the first 24 hours of a death occurring, you will need to meet with a funeral home to begin the final arrangements. This will be a difficult time for you and your loved ones. The funeral home staff will be there to guide you in making decisions and help make this difficult time a little bit easier.

Who Will Go With You?

One decision that will need to be made when a death has occurred is who will go with you to the funeral home. Do you have a list of people that are available within the first 24 hours to make the final arrangements?



Who Will Make the Decisions?

Deciding on your loved ones final goodbye will be challenging but not impossible. The funeral home will help you in providing the answers to questions you may have. They will help you understand what is involved in planning a funeral and be there to support you in any way that you need. Something you will need to think about is who will be making the decisions? Will it be you? Will it be someone with you at the funeral home?

Who Else is Involved in the Arrangements?

Does the deceased have children, friends, family that would like to be a part of arranging the funeral? Do you know how the deceased felt about funerals or what their final wishes were? You and your loved ones know the deceased best and your funeral home will work with you to help in celebrating a life lived.

Do you have the information gathered for the paperwork?

When a death occurs, it is a legal matter that requires paperwork. To better prepare yourself for the arrangement at the funeral home, it may be helpful to gather documents needed. Below are a list of documents needed when a death has occurred:

- Account Statements of the deceased
- Life Insurance Policies
- Beneficiary Designations
- Deeds for Real Estate

- Automobile and Boat Titles
- Stock & Bond Certificates
- Pre-nuptial Agreements
- Post-nuptial Agreements
- Loans
- Leases
- Copies of Bills (utility, cell phone etc.)
- Last Will and Testament and any Codicils
- Revocable Living Trust
- Tax Returns

If you need assistance, please contact us.

The Service Details

Now that you have thought about burial versus cremation for your loved one, it is time to think about what you would like the service to look like and represent.

The Location of the Service

Is there a special place that your loved one would like to have their final goodbye? There are many options to holding a service for the deceased. It can be held in a funeral home, in the community, really the options are endless. This is where you can rely heavily on the funeral director to help create a memorable service.

Pallbearers

Pall Bearers are the people you have probably seen who carry the casket at the service, if there is a casket present. Have you thought about who will hold this responsibility?

Who Will Be Officiating the Service?

You can choose to have a minister officiate the service or a celebrant. The difference between the two are religious and non-religious. Some find it offensive to speak of religion if the deceased did not have religious beliefs. The choice is yours for who you would like to officiate the service.

Other Decisions to Be Made

There are a number of other decisions that will need to be made for the service. You will need to decide which flowers will be used, the type of music to be played, if there will be transportation to and from the service for friends and family, if there will be people speaking of stories or memories of the deceased, if there will be a eulogy, and any other special services that may reflect the life of your loved one.

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Funeral Etiquette

Are you uncertain about what to do at a funeral? Have you wondered what options are available if you can't attend a funeral? This section teaches you everything you need to know to help you do the right thing before, during and after the service.



What to Do

Offer Words of Condolence

Offering comforting words to the family is usually the easiest thing you can do. It's also something the family will appreciate and remember. If you're attending the service, offer your condolences in person or share a story or special memory about the deceased. If you can't be there, send a card or share your message using social media, text, etc.

Sign the register during the visitation

When you sign the register at the funeral home, be sure to list your name and your relationship to the deceased. The register is something the family will have forever, and they will appreciate knowing who you are and how you knew their loved one in years to come.

Send a gift to the family

Appropriate gifts include flowers, a donation to a charity (oftentimes the family will have a preferred charity), food or a service. You can send your gift to the family's home or the funeral home. Please ensure you include a signed card with your gift so the family knows who sent it.

Stay in touch with the family

Depending on your relationship with the family, you may choose to stay in touch in person, by telephone or online. The grieving process can be long and difficult. You will serve the family well by letting them know you're there for them.

What to Wear

Historically, people wore black to a funeral. Today it's acceptable to dress in a wider range of colors and clothing styles. A good rule of thumb is to dress as you would at church or a job interview.

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Benefits of Pre-Planning

Choose the way you'll be remembered

How do you want to be remembered? Maybe you had a long career in the military that you'd like to celebrate. Maybe you love animals and would like to encourage donations in your memory to your local humane society. When you pre-arrange your funeral, you put your wishes on paper so that your loved ones will know exactly how to celebrate your life and honor your memory.

Make it easier on your loved ones — emotionally and financially

Did you know that there are more than 70 details that need to be tended to in the first 24 hours after a death? Are your loved ones ready for all that responsibility?

When you pre-arrange, you make those first 24 hours easier for your loved ones. You also save them money. The stress of making last-minute funeral arrangements often causes people to make unnecessary purchases. By taking care of the arrangements yourself, you free them from spending more than they need to.

Protect yourself and your family from rising funeral costs

Like most things, funeral costs tend to rise every year. That means that a funeral today will probably cost less than the same funeral three or four years from now. Paying for your funeral now will save your loved ones money when you pass on.

Let your family know your final wishes

Pre-arrangement takes the guess work out of funeral planning. When you pre-arrange your funeral, everyone benefits. You know that your wishes will be carried out and your loved ones know exactly how to honor you.

What do you need to pre-arrange your funeral? See our Pre-Arrangement Checklist.

Pre-Planning Checklist

So, you're thinking about making your final arrangements? This checklist will help you make sure every detail is tended to.

The who, what, when, and where of your funeral

- Prepare a list of people who should be contacted in case of a medical emergency or death
- Write an obituary or write down information needed for an obituary
- Decide where the obituary should appear
- Choose the type of service you would like (burial or cremation)
- Choose Your Details:
 - Cemetery lot location
 - Casket type/Cremation urn type
 - Vault/Sectional crypt
 - Type of service: religious, military, other
 - Your pallbearers
 - Your music selection
 - Your flowers
 - Readings at service and who will read them
- Choose the charity, church, or organization you would like donations to be made to
- Choose your funeral and visitation location

Now that you've figured out the details, it's time to make sure they're carried out. This list will help you assign responsibility for each task on the previous list.