

Kowhai Programme

Support for patients, families & carers

Funeral Planning

Arranging a funeral is an intensely emotional time following a death. One option, which can take some of this pressure away, is to plan the funeral in advance.

The following information has been collated to assist you with your planning.

Useful information

Most people get assistance from a local funeral director to arrange a funeral and provide assistance with registration of death.

It is, possible to arrange a funeral yourself, as long as the legal requirements are complied with. The 'Births, Deaths and Marriages' section of the Internal Affairs website www.dia.govt.nz has information about these requirements.

There are also services available that offer assistance to plan your own funeral which are discussed later.

There is no fee for death registration, but there is a small fee for the death certificate.

Funeral director services

A funeral director will guide you through the following:

- Transport of the body
- Registration of death
- Meeting the legal requirements for burial or cremation (including bookings for a cemetery or crematorium, and filling the necessary forms for cremation).
- The embalming, care and presentation of the deceased's body
- Placement of death notices and/or funeral notices in the paper
- The funeral service
- Recommending and arranging the minister or celebrant and the organist/music
- Flowers
- Catering facilities for after the funeral
- Support services for bereaved families and friends
- Applications to government agencies for funeral grants

The average cost of a funeral in New Zealand is around \$8,000 - \$10,000 for burial and around \$4,000 - \$6,000 for direct cremation.

You can choose what you want to do yourself and what you want the funeral director to do.

It is a good idea to get quotes from different funeral directors, and compare services and fees.

Whether you arrange the funeral yourself, or with the help of a funeral director, you can consider the following options for saving money:

Caskets:

- The cheapest casket is made of plain, untreated pine or painted/unpainted plywood or custom wood.
- DIY kitset (approximately \$300)

You can ask that the body is not to be embalmed (if burial or cremation will not be in two to three days, you can ask for the body to be packed in ice or refrigerated until the funeral is ready)

Funeral service:

- Use flowers/plants from your garden or ask friends/family to bring them
- Ask people to bring a plate
- Organise the catering yourself
- Organise the services sheets yourself/family or someone you know
- Organise the photo slides/music yourself/family or someone you know
- Transport the body in your own vehicle
- Omit the recording of the funeral, or ask a family member or friend to do it
- You can choose not to have a funeral service, or to conduct one yourself e.g. in your home

Burial or cremation?

- It costs more to buy a burial plot near a large city than in a rural area
- Cremations are less expensive than burials because you don't have to worry about the cost of a burial plot (though you can choose to bury the ashes in a plot which does incur a fee)
- You don't have to go through a funeral home if your loved one is to be cremated – you can go directly to a council crematorium

Things to consider when planning a funeral

Place of funeral service:

- Do you have a preferred funeral director?
- Would you like a religious or non-religious service?
- If yes, what religion?
- Where would you like your funeral service to be held?
- Are there any particular people you would like to carry your coffin (be pallbearers)?

Content of funeral service:

- Do you have a favorite quote?
- Do you have a favorite poem?
- Would you like any readings from scripture?
- Are there any particular songs you would like played?
- Do you want any particular theme for your funeral?
- Do you have any other wishes?

Flowers or donations:

- Would you rather people give a donation to your favorite charity than send flowers?
- What are your preferred charity/charities?

Before the funeral:

- How would you like to be dressed?
- What would you like to be buried with? (You need to check on items for cremation as some objects cannot be cremated).
- Would you like people to view your body?
- Where would you like your coffin to be taken before the funeral?
 - Taken home
 - Taken to place of service
 - To remain at the funeral home
- Any other requests?

The funeral:

- Do you want people to be able to view your body?
- Consider the options of hearse that your funeral home offers.
- Do you have any preferred funeral route?
- Any preference to the type of coffin?
 - Cardboard
 - Wicker
 - Custom wood
 - Natural wood
 - Shroud
 - other
- Any preference for the memorial?
 - Headstone
 - Plaque
 - other
- What would you like written on your headstone?

The venue:

- Venue for service
- Venue for post-funeral gathering (if different from the service)
- Details of any pre-paid funeral plan

Useful information

Funeral Directors Association of New Zealand
<https://www.fdanz.co.nz/>

This website provides the following information:

- Find a local funeral director
- What to do when someone dies
- How and why to organise a funeral
- Plan ahead for your funeral
- Request a funeral estimate

Donation of body to the Otago Medical School

Bequest Administrator
Department of Anatomy
University of Otago
PO Box 913
DUNEDIN 9054

Ph: (03) 479 7131

Free ph: 0800 580 500

www.anatomy.otago.ac.nz/body-bequests

Exit Caskets

Caskets for affordable funerals.

www.exitcaskets.co.nz

Phone: 027 455 9973

A simple cremation service is one of the most affordable options for a funeral in NZ, and an Exit Casket meets specifications for this, as well as for burial. If you want to organise a funeral yourself Exit Casket will assist you.

DIY Funeral Website www.diyfuneral.co.nz

This website has the aim to assist and guide you through all the steps of planning a funeral to help you create a special and affordable funeral. It assists with:

- Pre-planning your funeral
- Guide to planning a funeral
- Funeral planning organiser
- Demystifying the paper work
- Information for the registrar
- Transport
- Caskets and coffins
- Casket freight options

Philip Tomlinson self-published a book called "Arranging a Funeral – What You can Do Yourself – a NZ Guide"

Can be purchased for \$10.99 (approx.)

