

To: SDFDA Members & Friends

Unfortunately due to the COVID-19 restrictions/recommendations, we have been forced to CANCEL the 2020 Spring District meetings. At this time, we do not plan to reschedule them.

The new CDC guidance recommends that *"for the next 8 weeks, organizers (whether groups or individuals) cancel or postpone in-person events that consist of 50 people or more throughout the United States."*

The CDC suggests that funerals can still take place under the 50-person limit. For funerals taking place, they suggested limiting attendance to select family and livestreaming the service for those who cannot attend. They further advised that those who are ill and are at-risk (e.g., elderly, immune-compromised) should be encouraged to stay home. Funeral homes should also urge attendees to follow recommended healthy habits such as social distancing, hand hygiene, covering cough and sneezes, etc.

The White House released "The President's Coronavirus Guidelines for America - 15 Days to Slow the Spread." Among these guidelines are that people *"Avoid social gatherings in groups of more than 10 people"* for the next 15 days.

It would appear this would impact funerals/viewings in that they would be limited – perhaps to immediate family only – for the next 15 days. Funeral directors could continue to offer livestreaming as an option for these services/viewings and, perhaps, recommend the family hold a larger memorial gathering at a later date.

Ultimately, funeral homes have to determine how they will best balance the important guidance they are receiving from federal, state and local public health officials with the needs of their families.

The CDC has not, as of this writing, updated their mass gathering guidance, which suggested canceling events of more than 50 people over the next eight weeks.

Eight weeks will take us right up to our convention dates. We are determining whether or not we will be forced to cancel the state convention on May 6-8. But for now, please keep the dates of the state convention on your calendar. We will keep you informed as the situation progresses.

Stay informed and stay well!

Tammy Kerr, Executive Director

South Dakota Funeral Directors Assn.