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compliments...



Celebrating Moments, Cherishing Memories, Honoring Lives[®]

**Newington Memorial
Funeral Home**

20 Bonair Avenue
Newington, CT 06111
860-666-0600

**Burritt Hill
Funeral Home**

332 Burritt Street
New Britain, CT 06053
860-229-9021

**Fisette-Batzner
Funeral Home**

20 Bonair Avenue
Newington, CT 06111
860-233-6223

www.duksa.net



The Catholic Cemetery Association of the Archdiocese of Hartford, Inc.

Advanced Planning of your Cemetery needs is a loving gift that relieves your family of a difficult decision in the midst of their grief. Whether a Traditional Grave, Mausoleum, or Cremation, let our caring team of Family Service Advisors help you choose the best option for your family.

Advanced Planning—The Gift that Lasts an Eternity

Our gift to you - 5% discount on all space with this ad only
(discount applies to advanced planning purchases of space only)

With 30 Cemeteries, please call our main office at:
203-239-2557

For your nearest location please check our website at:
www.ccacem.org



For generations, we have been privileged to care for families through their darkest days. This is a sacred trust, one that is honored and revered by every member of our staff.

At Duksa Family Funeral Homes, we never forget that arranging a funeral is an infrequent and emotionally exhausting experience. Superior service at our funeral homes reflects the most important and fundamental value of all, total quality care for every family and their beloved deceased with integrity and respect at all times. This is our standard of care:

We Care for Families....

- *With integrity and honesty in all we do*
- *With compassion and kindness for all we encounter*
- *With a listening ear and an open heart*
- *With dignity and respect for the deceased*
- *With a generous and giving nature*
- *With a calm and creative manner*
- *Without judging or criticizing*
- *With a sincere appreciation for financial constraints*
- *Within the limits of state and federal regulations*

Whether it is discussing unique ways to create a meaningful service, explaining final resting place options, or anything in between, our dedicated team of licensed funeral directors and pre-planning specialists are trained to help create memorable experiences so that families can focus on healing and recovery.

If you have any questions after reading this book or are in immediate need of assistance, please do not hesitate to reach out to us at 860-666-0600.

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Our vision

A VISION...
A SHARED DREAM...
A CONTINUED LEGACY...

From 1952 until his death in 2002, Matthew R. Duksa, Sr., served families with the deepest commitment to quality care. A man of integrity and compassion, he built a strong reputation and thousands throughout central Connecticut have come to trust the Duksa name. Dorothy K. Duksa became a licensed funeral director shortly after their marriage, and throughout the years she has supported her beloved Matt, fostering community relations in order to grow the business.

At the passing of Matthew, Sr., the vision moved forward to that of a shared dream of Matthew R. Duksa, Jr. and his sister Diana Duksa Kurz, assuming management of the company. The legacy continues today with the addition of Matt and Dorothy's grandson James Kurz, a licensed funeral director, joining the business as a part of our management team.

Excellence has no limits and with eleven licensed funeral directors, a dedicated support staff, our daily mission is to not only meet the expectations of the families served, but to consistently exceed them. Together we all work in symphony to respect and honor your family's traditions and heritage as it were our own.

Please take comfort in knowing that we are always available to you before, during and after the services, to be a source of light and comfort.

Thank you for letting our family be of service to yours,

The Duksa Family



About us

We have years of experience caring for families, from all walks of life. Each family turns to us for many reasons, but mostly because they know we are leaders in our profession, dedicated to excellence in service.

We are funeral service professionals that utilize over 65 years of experience in our vocation to assist families and individuals plan and select services and merchandise that best suits their specific needs. All of the families we are blessed to serve are unique on many levels and it is our welcomed goal to see that every particular, special detail not only meets, but exceeds their expectations. We are a family owned and operated business since 1952, and as a team, we offer the sensitive service and direction needed to families before, during, and after funeral services: A true continuum of care.



We are proud to have received the National Funeral Directors Association's Pursuit of Excellence Award and have been inducted to their Hall of Fame for receiving this honor for over 10 years. In the funeral service profession, the NFDA Pursuit of Excellence Award is the pinnacle of achievement for those funeral homes committed to providing exceptional service to grieving families in the community, while adhering to the highest ethical and professional standards. Only 165 funeral homes from around the world received this prestigious recognition, placing Newington Memorial and Burritt Hill among an elite group of funeral service and cremation providers.



We are members by invitation of Selected Independent Funeral Homes and the National and Connecticut Funeral Directors Associations. Additionally, we received the UConn Family Business of the Year Finalist Award, and hold membership with the Academy of Professional Funeral Service Practice and the Cremation Association of North America.



Our staff's commitment to you

Our compassionate staff is committed to providing support, information, and direction as needed to all members of our community, their families, and friends who are dealing with loss and grief.



Dorothy K. Duksa
Owner & Licensed
Funeral Director



Diana Duksa Kurz,
CFSP
Owner & Licensed
Funeral Director



Matthew R. Duksa, Jr.
Owner & Licensed
Funeral Director



James S. Kurz, Jr.,
CPC
Executive Director of
Operations & Licensed
Funeral Director



Kenneth Pescatello,
CFSP
Director of Funeral Service
Operations & Licensed
Funeral Director



Casey Biega, CPC
Advanced Planning Operations
& Licensed Funeral Director



Alexander J. Scott,
CFSP, CPC, CCSP
Director of Public Relations
& Licensed Funeral Director



Todd J. Muller
Licensed Funeral Director
& Patient Care Specialist



Denise M. Verner, CCO
Licensed Funeral Director



Michelle Olson
Licensed Funeral Director



Richard F. Gileau,
CFSP, CPC
Licensed Funeral Director



Susan Corrigan
Office Manager



Marge Banach
Bereavement Support Services



Liz Palaia
Memorial Designer and
Graphics Specialist



Mary Corrigan
Receptionist

Several of our staff members carry special designations with their names. The CFSP is a prestigious designation from the Academy of Professional Funeral Service Practice that translates to a dedication, mastery, and proficiency as a Certified Funeral Service Practitioner. The CPC designation is from the National Funeral Directors Association which demonstrates a mastery of all facets of advance funeral planning as a Certified Preplanning Consultant. The CCO/CCSP designations again hail from the National Funeral Directors Association and demonstrates mastery in all facets of the cremation process. We all look forward to assisting you in any way we can to fulfill your unique and specific needs.

Where to start

When you first begin the process of designing a funeral, the decisions you will face might seem overwhelming. We will help you tackle the choices one by one, and make the journey one of love, healing, and life celebration. The process can be broken down into two stages: decisions regarding the service and how you would like to honor your loved one's life, and decisions regarding how you would like to care for your loved one's physical remains.

Crafting a service

Whether formal or informal, simple or elaborate, traditional or offbeat, a funeral provides an opportunity for family and friends to gather and support one another in taking the first steps of their healing journey. A funeral focuses on the significance of a life. It is designed to say, this life mattered, to all who were privileged to know your loved one. Remember, there are no specific constraints in planning a funeral. The design is yours. Ultimately, you will want to look back and treasure the service that you shaped and the meaning that it offered.

The value of a funeral cannot be underestimated. It is not about caskets and formalities. It is about healing and a healthy adjustment to life without your loved one in it. Focusing on the life of a loved one is best accomplished by personalizing a fitting tribute in such a way that all can heal by remembering moments and celebrating times.

A good funeral, a funeral that really honors the life of a loved one, that makes a difference to family and friends, is one that captures a life through a variety of expressive ways. A service may incorporate displays of personal items, music, photos, poetry, prayer or art in the celebration of a life well-lived. Clergy, a celebrant, family, friends and children can all share in the service. There are endless possibilities for what the service can be, and we are honored to go above and beyond to meet your personal and specific requests, and to offer ideas and suggestions to tailor the service to meet your needs.

Our staff is experienced in listening well, understanding and embracing the wishes of families of all beliefs, faiths, lifestyles and relationships. We are here to answer your questions and guide you through the decisions you will need to make. We will encourage you to take your time to figure out the most meaningful way to honor your loved one and incorporate the elements that you and your family find significant. You have one opportunity to get this right - let us help you make it perfect.

Caring for a Loved One's Physical Remains

There are a number of choices and decisions to be made regarding your loved one's physical body. We will offer suggestions, give advice and explain processes and regulations regarding viewing the body of your loved one and how you will choose to honor him or her.

You and your family will want to discuss viewing the body of your loved one. It may seem difficult, but most often families are pleased and relieved to see their loved one after remembering them throughout their illness or at the time of a last visit. Often, families who try to avoid viewing, leave too much to the imagination. In our experience, reality always offers much more peace and solace than imagination can ever suggest. Viewing a loved one gives reality to the death and is often the first step in a healthy grief journey. This may be especially important if the death is sudden and unexpected.

Keep in mind that preparation of the body for public visitation and viewing can take place prior to the burial or a cremation. Many people mistakenly believe that visitation is not possible if cremation is chosen. Cremation is another form of final disposition, and often it occurs after all services and ceremonies have taken place, just like a burial does.

If burial is chosen, you will need to select a casket and a cemetery, and choose between a ground burial or entombment in a mausoleum. If cremation is chosen, you may need to select a casket, an urn, and decide whether to bury, entomb, scatter or bring the cremated remains home.

How Do We Help the Children?

In our quest to protect our children and grandchildren from pain or sorrow, we often neglect to realize that the children's needs are as important as our own. Be honest with them and let them know what to expect throughout the funeral services. Bring them in to the funeral home to spend some private time. Invite them to take part in the funeral service, even if it is in a small way. Suggest that they make a drawing or write a letter to your loved one to place in the casket. We have many wonderful ideas to help your children through this process. Remember that they need to grieve too and you can be a big part of their healthy journey.

Families tell us over and over again, how grateful they are to have decided to include the children in the visitation and services.

Funeral arrangements

Whether you are planning for yourself or for a loved one, the funeral service is one of the most important elements of a person's final arrangements.

There is no one, right way to plan a funeral service - we truly believe that each funeral should be individual and memorable. And by providing you with the opportunity for personalization, the funeral service can reflect the uniqueness of the life it honors.

When planning your own funeral service, think about the way you want to be remembered. Perhaps you would like a traditional funeral aligned with certain religious or ethnic customs. Or, a celebration focusing on great memories made with family and friends may be your preference. Maybe it is a combination of both.

Regardless of whether you or your loved one have opted for burial or for cremation, the funeral service fills an important role. It will:

- Honor, recognize and celebrate the life of the deceased
- Allow friends and family to say their last good-byes
- Provide closure after the loss of a loved one
- Allow friends to console and support the family of the loved one



What is a funeral?

Burial Plans

When considering final arrangements for yourself or a loved one, one of the decisions you will make is whether you prefer a burial or a cremation.

Visitation, Wake or Viewing

Held the night before or immediately prior to the Funeral Service, the Visitation - also called a “Wake” or a “Viewing” - provides a way for friends and acquaintances to pay their respects and offer condolences to your family.

Funeral Service

A formal or informal ceremony or ritual prior to burial, a Funeral Service often provides a sense of closure to family and friends. Although your faith or culture may dictate some of the elements, you may want to personalize other aspects of the service. At a Funeral Service, a casket or urn is present.

Memorial or Tribute Service

At a Memorial or Tribute Service, a casket or urn is not present. Otherwise similar to a funeral or visitation, a Memorial Service gives family and friends a time to come together in your memory and celebrate your life.

Graveside Service

As its name implies, a Graveside Service may be held at the grave site, just prior to burial of a casket or urn. It usually consists of final remarks, prayers or memories. The service may occur after or in place of a Funeral Service.

Regardless of the service or services you choose to include in your Funeral Plan, you can personalize them in almost any way imaginable. For example, just consider the following questions:

- Where should the funeral be held? At your place of worship? At the funeral home? Outside?
- Who should officiate the service?
- Will your service adhere to the traditions of your faith or culture?
- Do you want a eulogy, and who should deliver it?
- What music should be played?
- What readings would you like?
- Is there a special poem you would like shared with the guests?
- Are there any special photographs or other memorabilia you would like displayed?



Cemetery Property

In addition to funeral services and the choice of burial or cremation, cemetery property, or “interment rights,” is another consideration when you are making final arrangements, either for yourself in advance, or for a loved one.

Burial

Most people are familiar with the concept of burial, or “interment,” but may not be aware of the variety of options that are often available. Many cemeteries offer one or more of the following:

- Ground Burial: burial of the casket below ground. A “vault” or “outer burial container” is required at most cemeteries
- Mausoleum, or Community Mausoleum: a large building that provides above ground entombments
- Private Family Mausoleum: a small structure that provides above-ground entombment of, on average, two to twelve decedents
- Companion Crypt: permits two interments or entombments side-by-side
- Private Family Estate: a small section of a cemetery, usually bordered by gates, shrubbery, or other dividers, that allows for ground burial of several members of the same family

A few facts about cremation:

- Connecticut state law requires a 48 hour waiting period before a cremation can occur
- If you choose cremation for your loved one, you can also have a visitation and a service
- You have numerous options for the final resting place
- You can place the cremated remains in a special urn to display at home
- You can bury an urn in a cemetery, allowing a permanent resting place where family and friends can visit
- You can place a portion of cremated remains in an urn and a portion in a columbarium niche, providing a permanent location where you can pay your respects
- You can scatter the cremated remains, depending on local laws and religious protocols



If Cremation:

- Would you like to have a visitation prior to a cremation?
- Would you like to use our chapel or a place of worship for a service prior to the cremation?
- What type of urn would you prefer (metal, wood, marble, ceramic, etc.)?
- What type of final resting place would you prefer for your loved one (choice of burial, above ground niches or scattering of cremated remains)?
- Would you like other members of the family to be with your loved one in the future? This determines the size of the resting place.

Decisions to be made regarding burial of an urn:

- What type of cemetery memorial do you prefer (bronze or granite marker set flush with the ground or an upright monument)?
- Would you like to protect your loved one's urn with a concrete vault?

Decisions to be made regarding above ground niches:

- Would you like the niche to be inside a building or outside?

Decisions to be made regarding scattering:

- Would you like to be present for the scattering?
- Would you like a memorial to be placed in the area if possible?

If Casket Burial:

- Would you like other members of the family to be with your loved one in the future? This determines the size of the plot.
- What type of memorial do you prefer (a marker set flush with the ground or an upright memorial)?
- What type of vault would you like to protect the casket and reinforce the grave?

If Casket Entombment:

- Would you like other members of the family to be with your loved one in the future? This determines the size of the space.
- What type of memorial offerings would you prefer?

Practical information

In addition to pre-planning your funeral, completing a Personal Information Form and giving a copy to the funeral home, your estate trustee, spouse and children will give you the peace of mind of knowing they will have all the information they need to properly handle your wishes and the details of your estate.

Do not put this form in your safety deposit box as these can remain sealed until after the funeral.

About cremation

Cremation is an alternative to earth burial or mausoleum entombment: it does not limit the funeral in any way. Should you choose cremation, you will still have the same options for memorialization that any other family has. Cremation can take place before or after the Funeral Service.

In this section, we have answered the most common questions we are asked about cremation. If you require further information, please contact us at any time.

What is cremation?

Cremation is a process of reducing the body to bone fragments by applying intense heat for a period of two to three hours. The cremated remains are removed from the cremation chamber. They are then processed into finer fragments and placed in a temporary container. The cremated remains weigh typically between three and six pounds. An urn may be selected for the final disposition of the cremated remains.

Do we need to buy a casket?

Connecticut State Law requires that at a minimum, the deceased must be placed into a rigid combustible container. Many options of caskets and containers are available to you.

Can we place personal mementos in the casket prior to cremation?

Many personal items may be placed in the casket; however, some items may need to be removed prior to the cremation process. All items left in the casket will be destroyed during the cremation. Your funeral director can advise you on which items may stay and which items must be removed from the casket.

Do we need to have a funeral if we select cremation?

Cremation does not limit the type of Funeral Service that may be chosen. The same options that apply to earth burial are available with cremation. Some of these choices include: casket type, location of the service and visitation, music selection, open casket and the display of personal mementos. Some families elect to have a complete service at the funeral home or place of worship. Others prefer to have a procession to the crematory, similar to that often done to the cemetery, for an earth burial.



Why plan ahead?

We are here to guide you.

You can take your time creating arrangements that best suit your needs and preferences, and all you have to do is fill out a form or meet with a member of our staff to put your plan in place. Anyone can create a plan, at any stage in their life, and you can make changes at a later date if you wish. It is always nice to let some decisions remain with your relatives.

It lets you decide how you would like to be remembered.

Creating your own unique life celebration allows you to make sure that your wishes and desires are respected upon your passing. However you decide to be memorialized, pre-planning and preparation gives you control over the personal decisions that must be made when a person moves on from this life. Planning can be meaningful for your family, as well, if you choose to include them in the process. It can help them to feel connected to you both in life and in death, knowing that your arrangements reflect exactly what you envisioned them to be. We recommend having a discussion with those important to you as well, so nothing essential to your wishes is left unattended.

It takes the burden off of your family and friends.

When a loved one passes, the family faces an overwhelming number of tasks and decisions, while struggling through grief and a range of emotions. By taking care of your arrangements before the time of need, you are relieving them of that burden, giving them more time and energy to focus on healing and remembrance. They will not have to ask themselves, "Am I making the right choices?" and can focus on what matters: saying goodbye and celebrating your life journey with those who cared about you most.

It gives you the ability to pre-pay, if you wish.

While pre-funding your funeral is certainly not required in order to pre-plan, pre-payment means that your funds will be set aside and protected against inflation and unforeseen increases in cost. Your family will not have to worry about payment, and can enjoy peace of mind knowing that everything has been taken care of. We would be happy to provide you with more information and help you arrange for pre-funding of your services. Take comfort in knowing consultations are provided with us FREE OF CHARGE.

What if I move?

Once you pre-plan with us, we store your record of your final wishes and decisions. Your plan is easily transferable to any funeral home in the United States, so it can be used wherever you choose to relocate. No matter where you live at the time of your passing, or which funeral home's services you decide to use, we will make sure that your plan follows you there.

Where do I start?

The first step is to review our Pre-Planning Checklist to help you consider all of your possibilities and gather all of the information you will need. You can use our online Pre-Planning Form to begin creating your personalized arrangements. You can also contact us to schedule a time to meet with a member of our staff to discuss your options and design your plan in person.

How would pre-arrangements help?

Pre-Planning is a loving gift you can make for your family and survivors that provides complete peace of mind to everyone involved.

Why should you make pre-arrangements for your funeral?

- You can plan together as a family, rather than alone (after the death)
- You help spare your loved ones from having to make difficult decisions
- It ensures your wishes are well-documented and carried out
- It ensures all your personal documents are organized and easy for your survivors to locate
- It helps control costs and reduces emotional overspending
- You can personalize your plan to reflect your unique personality

Here are some tips that may help you start the advance planning conversation with your loved ones:

Set a time to have the conversation. Schedule it as an appointment with your loved ones, whether you want to share your plans with them or ask them to make their plans to share with you.

Tell your parent or loved one that you want to ensure their final arrangements are done according to their wishes, and you need their help to make that happen.

To open the discussion to learn more details about your loved one's wishes, ease into the conversation with questions such as:

- “Have you ever thought about where you would like to be buried?”
- “What type of funeral would you like to have?”

Take advantage of funeral-related opportunities. Attending the funeral of a friend, family member or colleague or watching a movie or television show with funeral scenes may naturally prompt the discussion with your own loved ones. Talk about what you liked or did not like about the services you saw or attended.



Pre-planning checklist

There is a lot that goes into planning a funeral, but making those arrangements beforehand gives you time to consider all of your options and make sure that you are covering all of the necessary details. The following checklist will help you to make sure you have thought of everything when you begin creating your personalized plan.

Information you will need to assemble:

- **Vital Statistics**

This includes your father's name, your mother's maiden name, your level of education, and your social security number.

- **Affiliations**

This includes fraternal, service, church or union membership, along with any special recognitions you might have

- **If you are a veteran, you will also need to include:**

-Discharge papers, preferably form DD214

- **Employment histories**

This would include places that you have worked

Ways in which you can plan ahead:

General

- *Gather personal information for your obituary*
- *Choose a charity to direct donations to, if desired*
- *Make note of any special instructions you desire for your services and final disposition*

Funeral Service

- *Do I prefer burial or cremation services?*
- *Select a casket or cremation container*
- *Choose the location and type of service*
- *Decide whether you would like to have a viewing or visitation*
- *Choose floral arrangements*
- *Which photographs / memorabilia to display*
- *Consider any customs, traditions, or religious rites that are important to you and your family*
- *Choose the clothing you would like to be dressed in*
- *Select music and hymns, if desired*
- *Select a style for your stationery and memorial register book*
- *Arrange transportation for your physical remains and your family*
- *Brainstorm any additional ways you would like to personalize the services or pay tribute to your accomplishments, hobbies, personality, and life story.*

Participants

- *Choose a clergy member or officiator to preside over the service*
- *Select any musicians you would like to employ*
- *Select pallbearers*
- *Choose friends or family members to perform the eulogy, read scripture, or prepare a speech*

Cemetery

- *Choose a cemetery*
- *Select a burial or cremation plot, or a mausoleum, if appropriate*
- *Decide between above- and below-ground burial*
- *Select a memorial or grave marker and inscription*

Remember that there is no need to make all of the decisions right away, and that the purpose of pre-planning is to allow yourself to take the time you need when considering your options and making the choices that are right for you. For personalized assistance in creating your plan, consult one of our experts by contacting us to schedule a free one-on-one meeting.

Our Code of Good Practice

As funeral directors, our calling imposes upon us special responsibilities to those we serve and to the public at large. An important obligation is to provide information so that everyone can make knowledgeable decisions about funeral and cremation services.

In accepting our responsibilities, and as a condition of our affiliation with Selected Independent Funeral Homes, we affirm the following standards of good practice and hereby pledge:

- To provide the public with information about funeral and cremation services, including prices, functions and the responsibilities of funeral directors
- To make services available in as wide a range of price categories as necessary to meet the needs of all segments of our community, and to affirmatively extend to everyone the right to inspect and freely consider them all
- To quote conspicuously in writing the charge for every arrangement offered, and to clearly identify the services, facilities, equipment and merchandise included in such quotations
- To adhere to the highest standard of conduct in all aspects of business
- To afford an ongoing opportunity to all persons to discuss or arrange funerals in advance
- To ensure that pre-need contracts fully disclose those items which are guaranteed and those which are nonguaranteed, in terms that are clear and easy to understand
- To manage prepaid funds responsibly, ensuring that promises are honored and expectations are met, within the letter and spirit of the law
- To make no representation, written or oral, which may be false or misleading and to apply a standard of honesty in all dealings
- To furnish each family, at the time arrangements are made, with a written memorandum of charges and to make no additional charge without their approval
- To respect all faiths, creeds and customs, and to give full effect to the role of the clergy/celebrant
- To maintain qualified and competent staff, appropriate facilities and suitable equipment required for comprehensive funeral and cremation services
- To assure those we serve the right of personal choice in making service arrangements

We pledge to conduct ourselves at all times in a manner deserving of the public trust, and to provide a copy of this Code of Good Practice to the families we serve.

Honoring veterans

We are proud to do our part in honoring our country's veterans, and giving back to those whose sacrifice and patriotism define our great nation. Our duty is to provide you and your family with professional and dignified assistance during your time of need, and to support you in honoring your loved one for their dedication and selfless service.

We would be honored to help you make arrangements for any combination of traditional military tributes.

Traditional elements & honors

Military Funeral Honors:

- **Flag Presentation Service by the military**
- **The playing of Taps by a lone bugler or an audio recording**
- **Military honors firing party**

Other veteran benefits

In addition to coordinating honors related to the service itself, we can help you with the US Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to arrange for:

- **A Presidential Memorial Certificate.**
This is a certificate expressing the nation's recognition of the veteran's service. The veteran's name is inscribed and the certificate bears the signature of the president. Certificates are issued in the name of honorably discharged, deceased veterans. Contact us for assistance in applying for a Presidential Memorial Certificate, and we would be happy to guide you through the process.
- **Headstones or Markers.**
The VA provides headstones and markers for the graves of veterans anywhere in the world and for eligible dependents of veterans buried in national, state veteran or military cemeteries.
- **Memorial Plots.**
If an eligible veteran's remains are not available for burial, the VA will provide a plot and headstone or marker in a national cemetery for memorialization. If you wish to place the memorial in a cemetery other than a national cemetery, the VA will provide the headstone or marker but not the plot itself.
- **Burial in a VA National or State Cemetery.**
This includes the gravesite, opening and closing of the grave, a grave box, and perpetual care.

• **Reimbursement of Burial Expenses.**

For information on eligibility and the different levels of potential reimbursement, please review their Guide to VA Burial Allowances.

Additional resources

Please visit the following websites for detailed information about the options available for honoring service members and other aspects of military funerals:

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs website. Click on Veteran Services and look underneath the Burials & Memorials heading.
www.va.gov

Veterans' Funeral and Burial Benefits. Helpful information from Funeral Consumers Alliance.
www.cem.va.gov/burial_benefits

Honoring Those Who Served. An explanation of the various types of honors available for military funerals.
www.cem.va.gov/military_funeral_honors.asp





Helping a friend cope with loss

Above all, just listening and showing your concern, along with your presence will be of great help.

Before the funeral

1. Offer to notify family and friends about funeral arrangements
2. Help answering the phone and greeting visitors
3. Keep a record of everyone who calls, visits or has been contacted
4. Help coordinate the food and beverages, keeping track of gifts and food delivered
5. Offer to pick up friends and family at the airport and arrange lodging
6. Offer to provide transportation for out-of-town visitors
7. Assist the family with domestic chores and special errands

After the funeral

1. Prepare or provide dinner on a day that is mutually acceptable every week for as long as is needed
2. Offer to help with yard or household chores.
3. Feed and exercise pets.
4. Write notes offering encouragement and support
5. Offer to drive or accompany the family to the cemetery regularly
6. Offer to house sit so the family can get away or visit relatives out of town
7. Make a weekly run to the grocery store, laundry, or cleaners
8. Help with the "Thank You" notes and/or other correspondence
9. Anticipate difficult periods such as birthdays, anniversaries, holidays, and the day of death
10. Always mention the deceased by name and encourage reminiscing



Expressions of sympathy

Listen with your heart

Helping begins with your ability to be an active listener. Your physical presence and desire to listen without judging are critical helping tools. Do not worry so much about what you will say. Just concentrate on listening to the words that are being shared with you. Recap what was said to you in your own words to validate you understand their feelings.

Be compassionate

Give your friend permission to express his or her feelings without fear of criticism. Learn from your friend; do not instruct or set expectations about how he or she should respond. Never say, “I know just how you feel.” You do not.

Think about your helper role as someone who “walks with,” not “behind” or “in front of” the one who is mourning.

Avoid clichés

Words, particularly clichés, can be extremely painful for a grieving friend. Clichés are trite comments often intended to diminish the loss by providing simple solutions to difficult realities. Comments like, “You are holding up so well,” “Time heals all wounds,” “Think of all you still have to be thankful for” or “Just be happy that he/she is out of his/her pain” are not constructive. Instead, they hurt and can make a friend’s journey through grief more difficult.

Offer practical help

Preparing food, washing clothes, cleaning the house or answering the telephone are just a few of the practical ways of showing you care.

Understand the uniqueness of grief

Keep in mind that your friend’s grief is unique. No one person will respond to the death of someone loved in exactly the same way. While it may be possible to talk about similar phases shared by grieving people, everyone is different and shaped by experiences in their own unique lives.

Make contact

Your presence at the funeral is important. As a ritual, the funeral provides an opportunity for you to express your love and concern at this time of need. As you pay tribute to a life that is now passed, you have a chance to support grieving friends and family. At the funeral, a touch of your hand, a look in your eye or even a hug often communicates more than any words could ever say.

Share a favorite memory of the person who died

Relate the special qualities that you valued in him or her. These words will often be a loving gift to your grieving friend, words that will be reread and remembered for years. Use the name of the person who has died either in your personal note or when you talk to your friend. Hearing that name can be comforting, and it confirms that you have not forgotten this important person who was so much a part of your friend’s life.

Frequently asked questions

Why is having a funeral ceremony important?

Throughout human history, and around the globe, people have gathered together to acknowledge the death of a member of the community. No matter who the deceased was, a funeral ceremony is the one (and sometimes the only) opportunity for everyone to come together to acknowledge their death, recognize the community's shared loss and share the burden of grief.

What is the average cost of a funeral service?

The cost of a funeral service is wholly dependent on the specific services and products selected by the family member(s) responsible for making funeral arrangements. Your funeral director will thoroughly explain all options, ask the important questions about your family's budget restrictions; and otherwise do everything he or she can to provide you with a funeral, memorial service or celebration-of-life that meets your emotional and social needs, all the while staying in line with your financial expectations.

Is it necessary to have flowers at the ceremony?

Flowers create a background of warmth and beauty which adds to the dignity and consolation of the funeral service. "Necessary" may not be the right word; but there is no doubt flowers at a funeral or other end-of-life ceremony serve many valuable purposes, including a means of a visual expression of sympathy, love and respect or a means of lending support.

Who should be invited to a funeral?

A person's role at a funeral is two-fold: one, they are there to demonstrate support for the bereaved family. Two, funeral guests are there to tend to their own sorrow; to begin to come to terms, in the safety of a shared collective experience, with the death of someone they held dear. Generally, the service details are published in the newspaper or online,

and those who wish to attend will. It is customary to reach out to certain individuals by phone, email, or social media to ensure they are aware of the service details and express your desire for their presence.

What does the phrase "in lieu of flowers" mean?

You may have read this phrase in an obituary: "In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to...". Derived from the French phrase, "en lieu", strictly speaking "in lieu" means "in place"; so it can be said to be a directive sentence: "In place of flowers, contributions may be made to...". But it is important to realize that its use does not imply you cannot send flowers to the service; it is only meant to offer you a choice of ways to show your sympathy for the family and show your respects for the deceased. Many families will say "Memorial donations may be made to..." which allows other avenues for guests to show their expression of sympathy.

If one is requested, am I obligated to make a memorial donation?

Certainly not; it is important to never feel obligated to do anything in response to the death of a community or family member. Your actions (whether sending flowers, preparing a casserole and taking it to the family home, or making a donation) should always come from the heart.

What is involved in preparing the body for viewing at a visitation or funeral?

The preparation of the deceased can involve a number of different tasks performed by trained and licensed embalmers and restorative artists. The body is temporarily preserved by embalming, refrigeration, or a combination of the two. It is washed, dressed and otherwise groomed; then placed in the chosen casket for viewing. Should you wish to know more about the process, contact us.



Why do people view the body in the casket?

Human beings are interesting creatures. Sometimes we need to see in order to truly believe. It is a way of confirming the fact that, indeed, this individual has died. It is also an opportunity to say your “good-byes”. It may be a time where you can quietly share a prayer or a warm memory, reflect on good times and see a loved one finally at rest. This allows your relatives and friends an opportunity to bring them great comfort in their healing journey.

How long is a funeral service?

Simply put, “it depends on the service”. Just as no two movies or novels are the same length or cover the same emotional ground; no two end-of-life ceremonies are the same.

What is a Celebrant?

The Celebrant Foundation and Institute define Celebrants as “trained professionals who believe in the power and effectiveness of ceremony and ritual to serve basic needs of society and the individual. The Celebrant’s mission is to help the client create a ceremony that reflects his or her beliefs, philosophy of life, and personality.” A life-cycle Celebrant is especially valuable when a family has no religious affiliations or ties to a clergy person or minister who can officiate the funeral service. Involving a Celebrant in the funeral planning process has been found to enhance the funeral experience for all concerned. “The Celebrant comes to the table with no agenda,”

shares the institute’s website, “and no preconceived notion of what the ceremony should or must look like. Instead, through careful interviewing, the Celebrant elicits what is meaningful for each client.” If you think hiring a Celebrant is the right choice for your family’s situation, please contact us for more details.

Must I wear black to the funeral ceremony?

Black used to be the only color to wear to a funeral; but not anymore. Today things are less formal than they once were, and it is not totally uncommon for families to ask prospective guests to altogether avoid wearing black clothing. Should you have additional questions about funeral attire or etiquette, please contact us.

What else would you like to know?

This list of frequently-asked-questions was compiled through our professional experiences. But really, the thanks go to the hundreds of inquisitive, questioning families and individuals we have had the privilege of serving over the years: people who have asked the most commonly-asked questions you see here. If yours is not listed here, get the answer you need by calling us at 860-666-0600

What to do first - a checklist

Notify these people as soon as possible:

- ☐ The funeral home to arrange for us to bring your loved one into our care (usually this can be done within 1-2 hours although it may take longer to obtain a release from the hospital) and set an appointment with you to make further arrangements
- ☐ Relatives, executor/executrix and friends
- ☐ Employers (the employer of the deceased and relatives who will need time off)
- ☐ Insurance agents (life, health and accident)
- ☐ Religious, fraternal, civic and veterans organizations and unions, if applicable
- ☐ Lawyer and accountant

Secure the vital statistics of deceased

- ☐ Full legal name - other names must be identified by "also known as" (AKA)
- ☐ Home address and telephone number
- ☐ Name of business or employer's name, address and telephone number
- ☐ Industry and occupation
- ☐ Military Discharge Papers
- ☐ Date and place of birth
- ☐ Citizenship
- ☐ Father's name
- ☐ Mother's name and her maiden name
- ☐ Locate the Will

Pay for:

- ☐ Funeral and reception arrangements
- ☐ Cemetery and memorialization services
- ☐ Current and urgent bills (i.e. mortgage, rent, taxes, telephone, etc.)

Meet with the funeral home when you are ready to decide:

- ☐ Whether your loved one is to be buried or cremated
- ☐ Service details
- ☐ Whether a member of the clergy will be engaged for the service
- ☐ Casket selection
- ☐ Clothing that the deceased will be buried or cremated in
- ☐ Pallbearers, music, pictures, flowers, scripture or other readings
- ☐ If you would like a charity to receive donations in lieu of flowers

To my loved ones

I wanted to spare you as much anxiety, doubt and confusion as possible at the time of my death, so in this booklet I have suggested some arrangements in advance.

This booklet includes vital statistics, funeral service guidelines and cemetery requests, which are all important to the funeral director while assisting you to plan the details of my service.

I have also included some personal material for eulogies, obituaries and other remembrances.

Please accept these arrangements in the spirit in which they are given; with love, hoping to give you comfort and helping you to remember the times we shared. You may wish to give a copy of this booklet to Duksa Family Funeral Homes for safekeeping.

Signature: Date:

Witness: Date:

First person to be notified upon my death:

Name:

Address:

Telephone:

Relationship:

Notes:

Vital statistics about me:

Name:

Address:

City:

State: Zip Code:

Social Security Number:

Date of Birth:

Gender:

Place of Birth:

Occupation:

Employer:

Business/Industry:

Military Service:

Marital Status:

Maiden Name:

Name of Spouse:

Father's Name:

Mother's Name (and her Maiden Name):

My preferences for the service:

☐ Duksa Family Funeral Homes

☐ Place of Worship and Address:

☐ Other Location and Address:

Clergy or Officiant:or ☐ Funeral Home to Recommend

Name:

Contact Information:

Personal Items:

Eyeglasses: ☐ Remove ☐ Leave On

Jewelry: ☐ Remove ☐ Leave On

Clothing: ☐ Purchase at the time ☐ Selected

Music Selections:

.....

.....

Soloist:Organist/Pianist:

Favorite Genre or Artist:

Community Organizations or Clubs:

.....

Cemetery instructions:

Name of Cemetery:

Address:

City:

State:

Property, crypt or niche owned?

If yes, specify location written on Cemetery Purchase Agreement:

.....

Final Resting Place: ☐ Earth Burial ☐ Mausoleum

☐ Interment following Cremation ☐ Other

Marker or Monument:

Purchased: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Monument company name:

If no, inscription instructions:

Reception Location: ☐ Reception Room ☐ Place of Worship ☐ Other

☐ Reception to follow Cemetery

☐ Reception to follow Service

Notes:

Information for newspapers, a guideline:

Place of Death:

Date of Death:

Spouse, Widow or Widower of:

Married for (number of years):

Children, their spouses and their places of residence:

.....

.....

Grandchildren, their spouses and their places of residence:

.....

.....

Siblings, their spouses and their places of residence:

.....

.....

Education:

Clubs and Lodges:

Military Service:

Special Interests, hobbies and pets, etc:

Memorial Donations:

.....



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860-229-9021

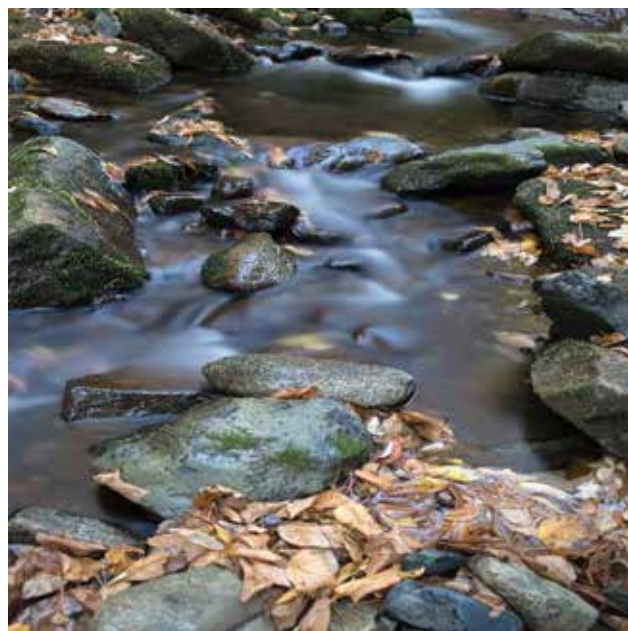
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