

Funeral Arrangement Checklist

There's a lot to consider when planning a funeral and in the midst of grieving a loss it can seem overwhelming. Some details may have been preplanned or the deceased may have left written instructions regarding their wishes. If not, here's a checklist to help cover many of the things you'll want to think about.

Main Service

- Select a funeral home.
 - Meet the director, select a location, date & time for the service, and discuss the type of ceremony desired respecting the religious, cultural or other wishes of the deceased.
 - Decide if a separate viewing, visitation, or wake for family and close friends will be held.
 - Request a number of death certificates. you may need a dozen or more.
 - Pay the funeral home for the estimated costs, or at least provide a deposit.
- Decide on burial vs. cremation and then either a casket or an urn.
 - If burial, ask if the funeral director if any municipal permits are necessary.
 - Select the clothes the deceased will wear (certainly for burial and sometimes even for cremation) and let the director know of any other preparation requests you may have such as glasses, jewellery or other notions desired.
- Select a cemetery, burial plot, or vault along with a headstone or plaque and what you want to have written on them.
- Choose on any articles to be displayed at the service such as photographs, personal mementos, and flowers.
- For the service, choose who will officiate or MC the service, deliver the eulogy, and any other speeches, scriptures, prayers or readings that may be given.

Main Service

- Select any special music to be played either recorded or perhaps with a pianist, organist or other musicians.
- Prepare any slide show or videos to be played.
- Choose any memorial folders, cards or items you'd like to hand out. The funeral home may provide this as a service for a fee.
- Contact anyone who you'd like to ask to be a pallbearer or honorary pallbearer.
- Write the obituary, and provide it to the funeral director and discuss if you want it posted in local publications. This can be a difficult and emotional task so this is a task that other family members can be asked to help with.
- Contact family, friends, coworkers or anyone that the deceased would want to have informed of his or her passing that may not be within the close family or usual circle of friends and colleagues.
- Select a charity, if any, that donations can be made to on behalf of the deceased.

Graveside Service (if desired)

- Determine the number of vehicles necessary to provide transportation for the immediate family members, pallbearers, and any clergy that the funeral home can provide.

Reception (if desired)

- Arrange a location for the reception.
- Ask the funeral director if they can arrange the catering. You may also choose to make your own arrangements through your church, fraternity or other organization or family and friends.

Reception

- If transportation is required to and from the reception for immediate family or anyone else arrange the required vehicles.
- If any additional speeches or if an open mic will be available for people to make their own speeches at the reception, make any arrangements necessary.

After the Service

- Finalize anything with the funeral home.
- Send out thank you notes to those who participated in the service or that helped with the preparations or contact them in person to show your appreciation.

Notes: