

# Funeral Home, Cremation, and Cemetery 101

Presented by Lakewood Cemetery



LAKEWOOD

CEMETERY • CREMATION • COMMEMORATION

# *About Me*

- Kelly Leahy, Director of Family Services at Lakewood Cemetery in Minneapolis.
- Serve as vice-president of the Twin Cities Association of Cemetery Officials
- Mortuary Science (BS) degree from the University of Minnesota
- Prior to starting her career with Lakewood, Kelly was as a funeral director with funeral homes in the Twin Cities and Western Wisconsin for 12 years.



# *What we'll cover today...*

- What is the difference between a funeral home and a (direct) cremation provider?
- Different methods of cremation
- Different types of cemeteries
- What can I do with ashes?
- Costs associated with end-of-life care
- What are the advantages of pre-planning?
- What are the first calls when a death occurs?
- How can I help my loved ones feel prepared?



## *What is the difference between a **funeral home** and a **cremation provider**?*

A **funeral home** typically offers a full range of services related to the planning, preparation, and handling of funerals. This can include:

- **Traditional Burial *and* Cremation Services**
  - Transportation of deceased, legal paperwork, permits and notifications, body preparation and/or cremation
- **Funeral / Memorial Service Planning**
  - sites for viewings and/or services, casket sales, obituary writing & submission, coordination of printed materials, flowers, catering, etc,
- **Cemetery and/or Church Coordination**
- **Grief Support / Aftercare**

Funeral homes provide comprehensive services, often managing everything from the initial contact to the final burial, depending on the family's wishes.

A **cremation provider** specializes in the cremation process. These businesses offer:

- Cremation Services
  - Transportation of deceased, legal paperwork, physical cremation, urn sales
- Minimal Service Facilities and/or Coordination ("Direct Cremation")
  - Not all cremation providers have service offerings and/or spaces for viewings, ceremonies or gatherings.
- Lower Costs

A cremation provider is focused on the cremation process, with fewer services related to the ceremony, burial, or memorial, often at a lower price point.

Both **Funeral Homes** and **Cremation Providers** are licensed in Minnesota as *Funeral Establishments* and all employ Licensed Funeral Directors. Therefore, the use of the term "funeral home" tends to encompass all of these providers.



# Types of "cremation"



## Cremation

*Most common and accessible; Also called flame-based cremation*

Uses high heat over the course of several hours to reduce the body to bone fragments. These fragments are finely processed into a uniform consistency, often referred to as ashes or cremated remains.

Cremation is often selected for its simplicity and flexibility, allowing families to not have to hurry into making a decision about what to do with the remains.



## Aquamation

*Also called water, green or flameless cremation, resomation, or Alkaline Hydrolysis*

Uses water, alkaline chemicals, heat, and sometimes pressure and agitation to accelerate natural decomposition.

The remains appear pure white in color rather. Because this process uses water, the remains are allowed to dry before any further processing is done.

This process results in approximately 32% more cremated remains than flame-based cremation and may **require a larger urn.**



## Terramation

*Also called Natural Organic Reduction (NOR) or Human Composting*

Transforms human remains into nutrient-rich soil through a combination of natural decomposition, air, water, and organic material over several weeks. The body is placed in a vessel with organic materials like wood chips and alfalfa straw, which help to accelerate the decomposition process.

In May 2024, Minnesota became the 11th state to legalize this practice, with the legislation taking effect on July 1, 2025. The infrastructure to support and guide local services (funeral homes and cemeteries) is still developing.

As of March 2025, this service is **not yet available locally**. However, Minnesota residents can still utilize NOR services by collaborating with established providers in other states (WA, CO, OR)

# Examples of Local Providers – Burnsville area

## Funeral Homes:

- Ballard-Sunder Funeral & Cremation
- White Funeral Home
- Washburn-McReavy
- Huber Funeral Homes & Cremation Services
- Morris Nilsen Funeral Chapel

*All these FHs offer cremation options and resources; all twin city funeral homes will serve the entire metro area*

## Cremation Providers:

- Cremation Society of Minnesota\* (Edina)
- Scott County Cremation (operated by Ballard-Sunder)
- National Cremation Society (Richfield) - also affiliated with Neptune Society

*\*Cremation Society also offers traditional viewings/visitations and spaces for services*

## Aquamation:

(Green/Water/Flameless Cremation)

- There is facility available directly to funeral homes – you can ask any funeral home if they partner or can coordinate for you.
- Bradshaw Funeral Homes and Cremation Services (Stillwater) is currently the only owner and direct provider of aquamation in the Twin Cities.

**Terramation:** (Natural Organic Reduction (NOR), “human composting”)

- Currently not available locally – legislation set to take effect July 1, 2025
- Interra Green Burial by Mueller Memorial (St. Paul) - partners with a provider in WA state.

# *Types of Cemeteries*

**Non-profit:** Operate with a goal of serving the community with any surplus reinvested into cemetery operations and charitable causes.

**For-profit:** Aimed at generating a financial return for owners and shareholder

**Municipal:** Owned by a city or county

**Veteran/Military:** Owned and operated by the federal government – via Department of Veteran Affairs

**Religious Cemeteries:** Typically owned and operated by a church, synagogue or mosque. ("Graveyards" are next to a church.)

**Green or Natural Cemetery:** Emphasizes environmentally friendly and sustainable burial practices

**Traditional (Ground Burial) Cemeteries have two primary styles:**

Lawn Cemeteries: with rows of gravestones or monuments

Memorial Parks: Flat markers instead of upright monuments





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- Do you want your remains physically present at the site?



# Considerations when choosing a memorial site

- Casket or urn? (burial or cremation?)
- In-ground or above ground?
- Indoors or outdoors?
- Do you want to be near other family or community members?
- Would you like an upright monument or sculpture?
- How much personalization would you like?
- Do you want your remains physically present at the site?
- Remains “sealed up tight” or “back to nature”?

## *If I choose cremation, why would I place my ashes at a cemetery?*

Choosing to use a cemetery can offer several benefits, both for the individuals who have passed and for the loved ones they leave behind.

- Cultural or Religious Significance
- Permanent Memorialization
- Peaceful Environment
- Community Support
- Long-Term Care of the Site

Cemeteries can provide both practical and emotional benefits, offering a space for remembrance, support, and long-term care, which can help individuals and families through the grieving process.



# Selecting Property - Cremation





# Selecting Property - *Cremation*

Earth Burial





# Selecting Property - Cremation



# Selecting Property - Cremation



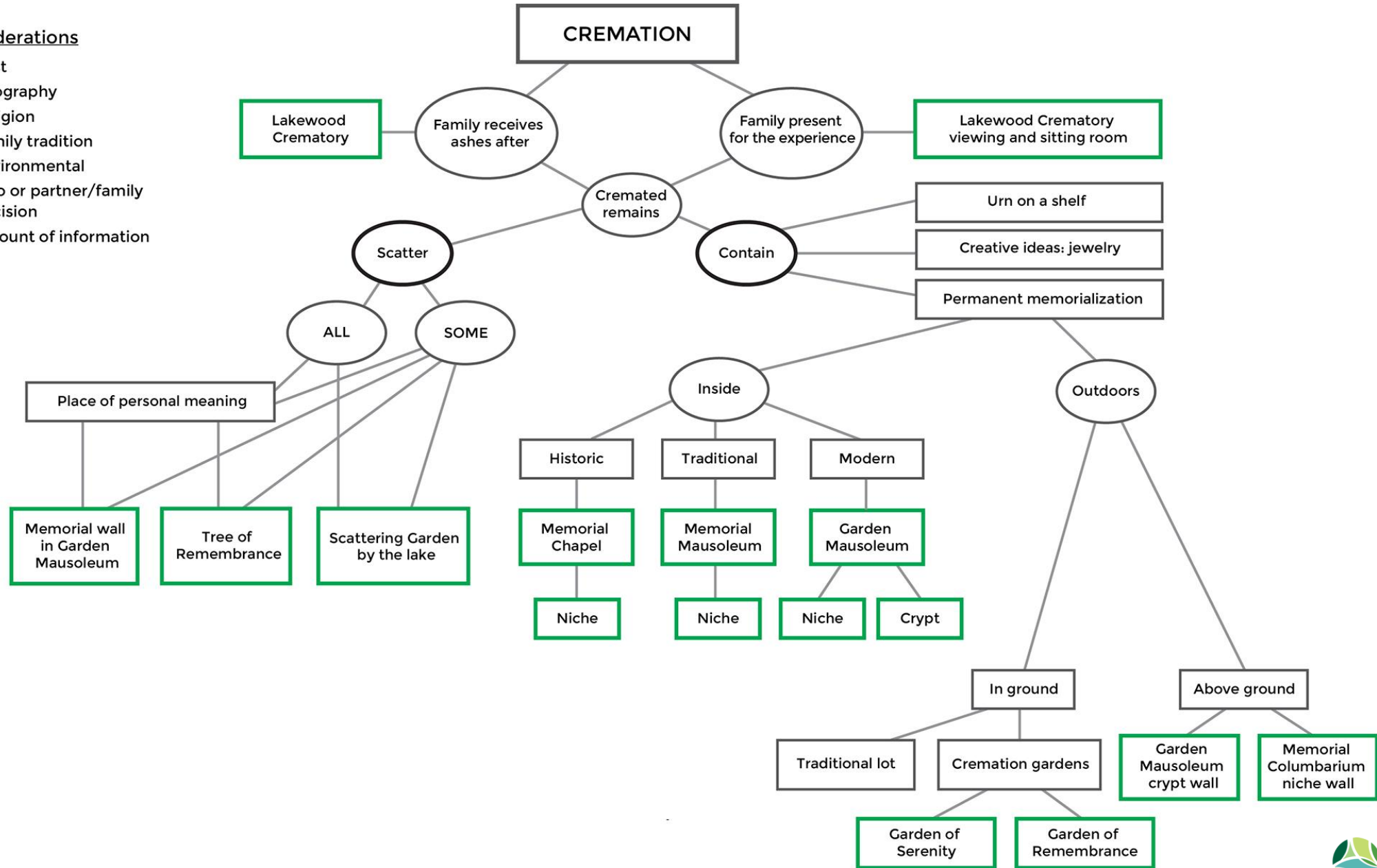


# Selecting Property - Cremation



Considerations

- Cost
- Geography
- Religion
- Family tradition
- Environmental
- Solo or partner/family decision
- Amount of information





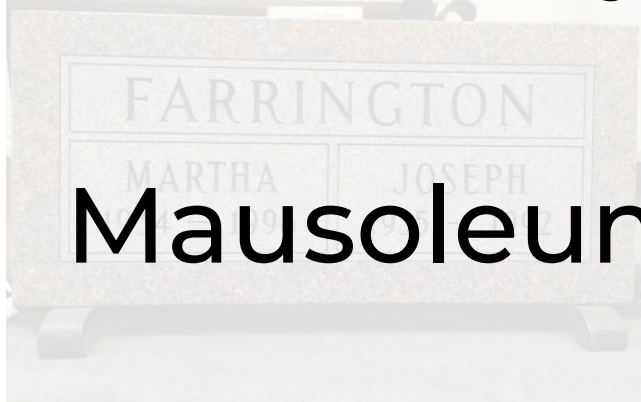
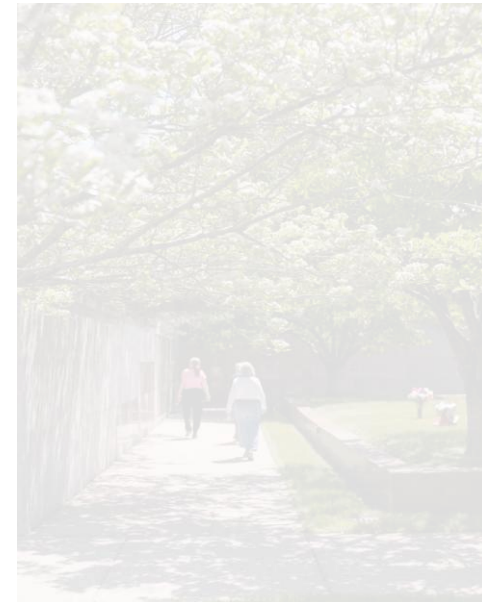
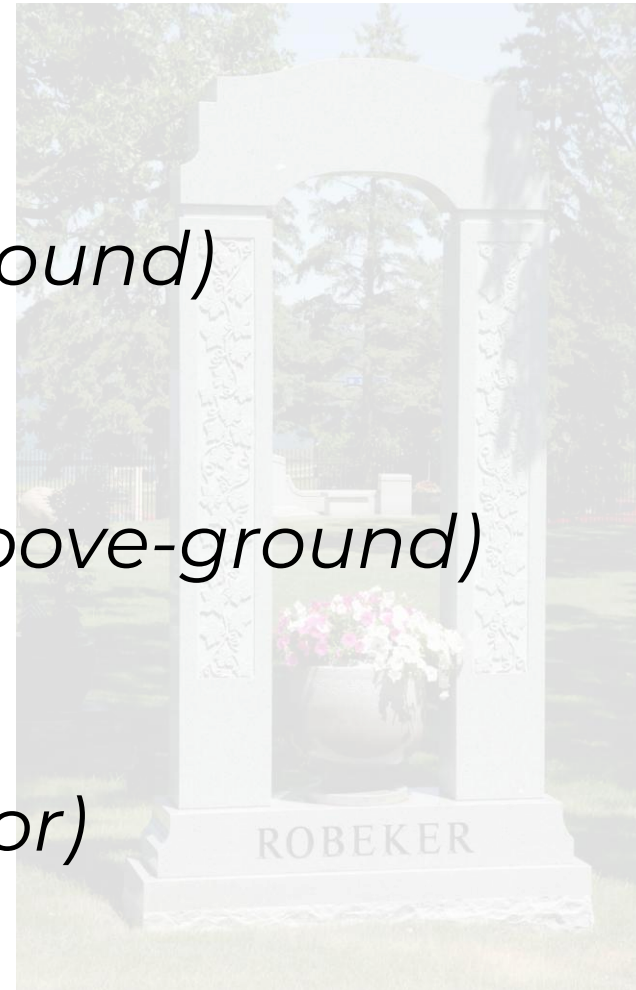
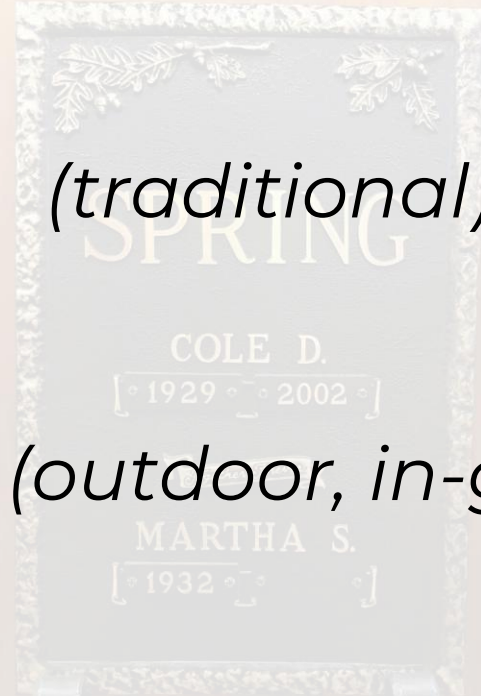
## Selecting Property - *Casket*

**Earth Burial** *(traditional)*

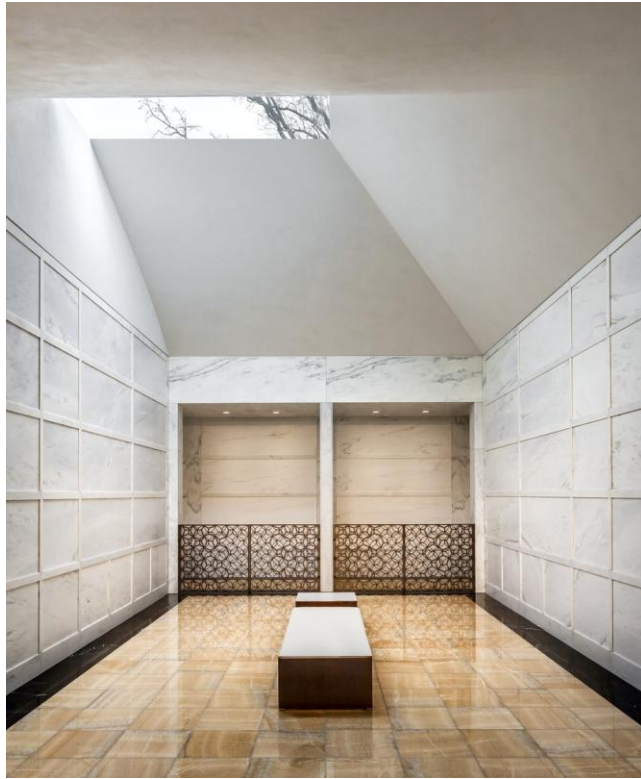
**Lawn crypt** *(outdoor, in-ground)*

**Garden crypt** *(outdoor, above-ground)*

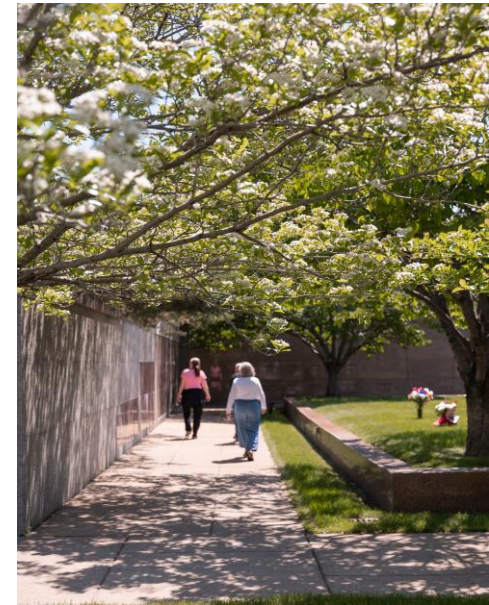
**Mausoleum crypt** *(indoor)*







# Selecting Property - *Casket*





# WHAT ARE THE COSTS INVOLVED?

Funeral costs can vary widely based on the type of service chosen, the funeral home's pricing, and additional merchandise or services selected.

Overall, the median funeral cost in the U.S. is approximately \$7,848 for a viewing and burial, and \$6,970 for a funeral with cremation:

## **In the Twin Cities:**

Traditional Full-Service Burial: \$8k – 15k+

Cremation with a Service: \$5k – 10k+

Direct Cremation (no services): \$1k - \$4k+

## **Cemetery Costs** (per Lakewood): \$750 to \$100k+

Average cost is \$8k - per couple

Single grave range is \$2,395 to \$11,995+; average is \$3k-5k per grave

Lower cost options start with communal sites (such as scattering): \$750 - \$1,495+

Monument lots (multiple graves & upright stones) start at \$40k and can go into the six-figures +placement/burial, markers/stones, ceremony/reception space rental, celebrants, etc. – there is a wide variety of options and costs.

It's essential to contact funeral homes and cemeteries directly to obtain accurate and current pricing tailored to your specific needs and preferences.

# *Pre-planning vs at-need arrangements*

## **Pre-Planning**

Preparing end-of-life wishes before there is an urgent need.

- Puts you in control of decisions
- You can make choices together with spouse or family
- Purchase at today's prices
- Pay by installments over time with no interest

## **At Need Arrangements**

When a death has occurred, and decisions must be made.

- Next-of-kin or legal representative makes all decisions
- Payment due immediately





# Aspects of pre-planning

- Creating a health care directive, will, and trust\*
- Determining and recording your wishes for a funeral or memorial service
- Determining and planning for a permanent memorial site
- Choosing a funeral home/cremation provider and cemetery
- Financially planning for end-of-life matters
- Gathering and keeping your personal information in a safe place for access by your family/executor



*\* I am not an attorney or financial planner*

A close-up photograph of two hands clasped together in a supportive grip. The hands are positioned centrally, with one hand resting on top of the other. The skin tones are natural, and the lighting is soft, highlighting the texture of the skin and the interlocking fingers. The background is a blurred blue and white striped fabric, likely a hospital gown or bedsheet. The overall mood is one of care and support.

What to do when a  
death occurs

# *First steps when a death occurs*

- 1. Report the death** – varies on where the death occurs:
  - a. If a death happens **at home** (private residence):
    - Registered with or on Hospice? There will be a nurse line, or sometimes they are already on site.
    - Any other situation will necessitate a 911 call
  - b. If the death happens **at a nursing home, care facility or hospital** – staff will assist the family in next steps;
  - c. Accidents or unexpected deaths often have medical examiner/coroner involvement.
  
- 2. Contact the funeral home/cremation provider.** Only a licensed person may transport the body to a mortuary or crematory.
  
- 3. Set an appointment will be set to meet with a funeral director**
  - a. review and move forward with pre-planned arrangements
  - b. OR the family begins the process of making decisions and planning services
  
- 4. Meet with clergy and/or a cemetery,** as needed.



# *How can I help my loved ones feel prepared?*

Talk about your end-of-life wishes!

- This can be tough but find a time when everyone is relaxed and comfortable and share your goals and plans. As difficult as it is, talking about it now helps to avoid issues when the time comes.
- Share how they can access things like online accounts/information, bank information, safes, or any other important documents.
- Make sure they have contact information for your funeral home provider, lawyer, or anyone else who knows your end-of-life plan.



QUESTIONS?



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