

COVID-19: Funeral and Mortuary Science Guidance

CURRENT AS OF MARCH 28, 2020

Essential Providers

- Workers performing mortuary services, including funeral homes, crematoriums, and cemetery workers; including workers who coordinate with other organizations to ensure the proper recovery, handling, identification, transportation, tracking, storage and disposal of human remains are essential workers during COVID-19 response, pursuant to the Governor's Executive Order 20-2020; and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, and the CISA Guidance on the Essential Critical Infrastructure Workforce.
- Funeral homes, crematories, and morticians are essential providers and authorized to perform within their scope of duty to take charge and remove deceased persons from the place of death, prepare a deceased person for final disposition in any manner, and make arrangements, provided that such arrangements comply with the Emergency Executive Order 20-2020, the March 19, 2020 Funeral and Mortuary Science Guidance; and the MDH Guidance on social distancing.

Emergency Executive Order 20-20, Directing Minnesotans to Stay at Home

- Beginning Friday, March 27, 2020 at 11:59 pm through Friday, April 10, 2020 at 5:00 pm, all persons currently living in the State of Minnesota are ordered to stay at home in their current place of residence.
- Individuals may leave home to attend funerals, whether at a place of worship, funeral home, burial site, or other similar location, provided that the gathering consists of no more than 10 attendees. The space utilized must allow for social distancing (six feet spacing between people). Venues should make accommodations for remote attendance, if possible, for others. Individuals who are at high risk from COVID-19 are strongly encouraged to attend remotely.
- Funeral homes are authorized to meet with families to make arrangements for final disposition, but should do so by telephone or remotely when possible. If funeral homes must meet with families, they should do so provided they practice social distancing consistent with the Department of Health and CDC guidance.
- Private viewing for the purpose of identifying the decedent by the person or persons with the right to control final disposition as described in Minnesota Statutes, section 149A.80, is acceptable provided that the viewing is consistent with the Department of Health and CDC guidance on social distancing.
- Electronic or digital signatures are acceptable as long as they follow the guidelines in Minnesota Statutes, chapter 325L.

COVID-19 Funeral and Mortuary Science Guidance

- The COVID-19 Funeral Guidance issued on March 19, 2020 is effective until Friday, March 27, at 11:59 pm. The COVID-19 Guidance for Infection Control remains in place during the duration of the COVID-19 response.

Ultimately, funeral homes and providers must comply with these guidelines in order to reduce the spread of the coronavirus, while meeting the needs of grieving families.