

How to Choose a Funeral Home

**Straightforward Answers
That Can Make the Decision Easier**



Sound decisions are based on good information. This is especially true when planning your own funeral or that of a family member or friend.

The funeral profession has changed quite a bit in recent years.

Large corporations have bought what have been locally owned, independent funeral homes. Alternative providers offering only limited types of funeral arrangements as well as retail casket stores are appearing in some areas and on the Internet. Some people now prefer different kinds of funeral services, or perhaps no funeral ceremonies at all. Whatever your preferences, it is important that the funeral home you choose is one that can provide the information, guidance and options that will help meet your emotional, spiritual, cultural and economic needs. The following outlines basic information that will help you choose a funeral home that is right for you.

Funerals Today

In recent years, people have begun to view funerals differently. Many incorporate nontraditional elements. Whatever your preferences may be, it's important to select a funeral home that can offer many different options and that will work with you to create a tribute that is as unique as the person being remembered.

Reputation: A Funeral Home's Most Important Asset

People choose a funeral home for different reasons, such as the following.

Convenience: Which one is closest to my home?

Previous Experience: Which one has my family always used?

Reputation: Many of my friends recommended this funeral home.

While these are good points to think about, there are several additional considerations to take into account when evaluating a funeral home. Based on your particular needs, the following are some questions to review.

Size of the Funeral Home

Is it spacious enough to accommodate your particular needs? Are there separate rooms available?

Appearance/Environment of the Funeral Home

Is it a comfortable atmosphere for gathering family and friends together without being intimidating?

Is it neat and clean? Is there ample seating, adequate lighting and climate control?

Exterior of the Funeral Home

Is the building well maintained? Are there convenient parking options? Is it accessible?

Selecting a Funeral Director

Is he/she pleasant and knowledgeable? Are you able to build a rapport and establish trust? Does he/she instill confidence in his/her ability to help with and support your decisions? Are you able to freely ask questions? Does he/she listen to your ideas and concerns in order to make suggestions?

Other Funeral Home Staff

Are staff members courteous and professional? Are they willing to help with any questions or requests?

Making Arrangements

The process of making funeral arrangements should start with a conversation about your questions and concerns. The first words from a funeral director should NOT be, "You want a traditional funeral, right?" or "How much insurance is there?" Instead, the funeral director should seek information about the deceased and your family that will help him/her to make useful suggestions. You should feel free to ask questions about other funerals conducted to get ideas. If your questions are met with resistance or negative comments or you just don't feel right, remember you can change funeral homes.

Types of Funeral Providers

All funeral homes are not created equal and some may be quite different from what you expected. In general, there are three categories of funeral providers from which to choose.

Full Service Providers

Can handle any service request at any time and offer everything from facilities to vehicles to merchandise. Services range from simple to elaborate. This is what most people think of as a funeral home.

Specialized Service Providers

Offer services similar to a full service funeral home but on a more limited basis. Specialized Service Providers often occupy "storefront" type locations.

Limited Service Providers

Typically arrange direct cremations or immediate burials, usually without ceremonies. You should verify that merchandise selection and services are adequate for your situation.

Independent vs. Corporation

"A funeral home is a funeral home. They all do the same things about the same way, so it doesn't really matter which one you choose...right?" Wrong. There can be quite a difference in funeral homes, and the elements that make the difference can't always be seen from the outside.

We believe one important consideration is knowing who owns the funeral home. In recent years, some large corporations have bought what once were locally owned, independent funeral homes. Independently owned funeral homes frequently have been a part of their communities for generations, and depend on the people in their communities. They have the flexibility, creativity and willingness to do what it takes. And, they offer it all at a very competitive price.

We are proud to be independently owned. If you aren't sure whether the funeral home you are considering is, we encourage you to ask.

Dollars and Sense

Depending on your choices, the total costs of a funeral can be several hundred to several thousand dollars. Thoroughly review the funeral home's general price list. Review the written statement listing the charges that apply to your selections. Don't be afraid to ask questions.

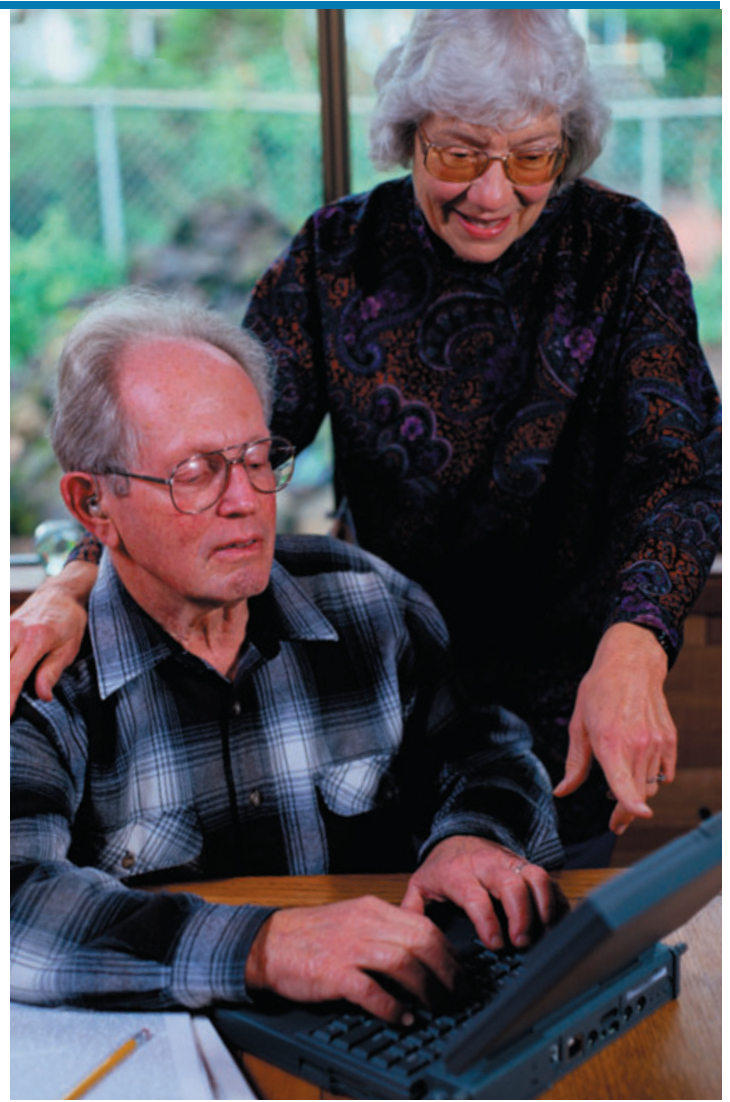
Typically, charges for a funeral service fall into three different categories.

- 1. Services and Funeral Home Charges** (Professional service charges, embalming, visitation/viewing, vehicles)
- 2. Third-Party Fees**, also known as cash advances (Cemetery/crematory, monument, newspaper notices, clergy)
- 3. Merchandise** (Acknowledgement cards, casket, vault, urn)

Ultimately, you control the cost of a funeral by the choices you make. Your funeral director should assist you in creating a service that meets all your needs, including your budget. Many people today plan their funeral arrangements in advance. Pre-arranging offers peace of mind by not only outlining service details but addressing funding questions as well. Contact us for more information on pre-arrangement.

Making the Choice

We welcome the opportunity to serve you and your family in your time of need. We would be honored if you choose us as your funeral home.



We hope the information provided has been helpful. We are committed to assisting you with all your cremation and funeral service questions and needs. Please don't hesitate to contact us for a complete brochure or more detailed information on this and other topics.