

All County Funeral Home & Crematory

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How do I obtain Death Certificates?

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How do I obtain Death Certificates?

Our staff will assist you in obtaining any required certified copies of the death certificates. Death certificates are available through the Vital Statistics office of the county in which the death occurred. The original death certificate form originates in our office and is then delivered to the certifying physician by hand. As soon as the death certificate is completed by the physician and approved by the Medical Examiner, it is delivered to the local Vital Statistics office where it is officially filed. After it is filed, the Vital Statistics office will provide CERTIFIED COPIES of the death certificate. Each county sets a fee for each certified copy. The certified copies that you request will be sent directly to you from the Vital Statistics office, or will return the certified copies to our office for your retrieval.

Can I make copies of the Death Certificate?

No, you are not supposed to use photocopies in lieu of certified copies of the death certificate. The certified copy of the death certificate is printed on special safety paper and has a raised seal. Photocopies are not usually allowed.

How many Death Certificates will be needed?

The number of Death Certificates you require will depend on your individual circumstances. Death Certificates are normally required to settle the affairs of the deceased, therefore, the number required will be dependent upon the quantity and status of these assets. We will assist you by providing a list of common instances where death certificates are required. In certain cases, you may

wish to consult with your legal advisor on this topic.

Who should notify Social Security when death occurs?

We will send the initial death notification to Social Security. Anytime a death occurs, Social Security must be notified. We will send the initial notification of death to the local SSA office (SSA Form 721) to inform them of the death. We then encourage the family to call Social Security at their earliest convenience to determine if benefits will need to be returned to Social Security and to determine if the survivor qualifies for any Survivor Benefits from Social Security. For more information on this subject, please visit the Social Security Administration web site.

What Veteran benefits are available to me?

Veterans may be eligible for several different benefits. Any honorably discharged veteran is entitled to certain benefits upon death, but may not always be eligible for monetary benefits or reimbursements, we encourage you to speak with a local county Veterans Services representative, or call the Veterans Administration directly. Each honorably discharged veteran is entitled to be buried in a VA cemetery (space permitting) and veterans who choose cremation may even elect to have their ashes placed in Arlington National Cemetery, if desired, In addition, the next-of-kin of an honorably discharged veteran will be eligible to receive a burial flag in their memory. We will assist you in obtaining a flag and can provide the forms necessary to apply for burial benefits.

Does Social Security or the VA reimburse final arrangements?

Social Security does not pay for final arrangements. While some survivors may be eligible for a survivor benefit, it will only be sent to the survivor and cannot be assigned by a funeral home or cremation service. For more information, visit the Social Security Administration web site.

Are Obituary Notices required?

Obituary Notices placed in newspapers are OPTIONAL and are not required. If you wish to remain private and be selective of who is notified of a death, you are not required to publish a public obituary notice.

Who places the Obituary notice?

Our staff will assist you with the placement of any desired obituary notices. In some cases, the newspaper may only accept a notice if it is submitted by the funeral home or cremation service. **IMPORTANT: MANY NEWSPAPERS NO LONGER OFFER FREE OBITUARY NOTICES!**

Be very careful when placing an obituary notice or requesting us to place a notice for you, there may be additional charges from the newspaper for the notice. We will always inquire about any additional charges and communicate with you about those charges BEFORE placing a notice on your behalf. Contact us directly for more information.

What Is the standard amount of time to complete the cremation process?

In Florida, it can take several days to complete the cremation process. Since cremation is irreversible, there are several safeguards in place to insure that a cremation is not performed prematurely. Florida law requires a mandatory 48 hour waiting period from the time of death as a minimum waiting period. In addition to this waiting period, the law requires that the Death Certificate be completed and signed by the certifying physician AND approved by the Medical Examiner in whose jurisdiction the death occurred. While physicians normally sign the death certificate as quickly as their busy schedules allow, it may take a few days sometimes to get the Death Certificate through this certification process. Although this certification process before cremation does require some time, it also insures that cremations are not performed before any questions about the cause of death have been adequately answered.