
SUBJECT: BURIAL POLICY

ADOPTED DATE: SEPTEMBER 20, 2010

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Burial expenses will be paid in accordance with current state statutes as found in the North Dakota Century Code, Chapter 23-06-03..."The County Board of Commissioners may negotiate with interested funeral homes regarding cremation expenses and burial expenses but the total charges for the services may not be less than one thousand five hundred dollars. Burial costs will be reimbursed at the current rate as established by the Cass County Social Service Board, less any amount left by the deceased and any family member contribution to defray expenses."

Inasmuch as it is impossible for us to make our regulations known to all potential clients of funeral homes, it is the responsibility and obligation of the funeral director to determine the need for financial assistance and to make referrals to this agency when appropriate. The Cass County burial policy ensures that all bodies of deceased poor individuals are disposed of according to state health statutes. **This policy does not pay for nor prohibit the provision of a family service.**

It is the intent of the Cass County Social Service Board that a burial request that is received after interment cannot be honored, unless a family is unable to contact the agency because of weekend/holiday or other emergency.

It is the policy of the Cass County Social Service Board that cremation will be the method of caring for the body of the deceased. Consideration could be given to strongly expressed religious convictions of the decedent or the decedent's family.

In the event funds are available from the family or the deceased (including but not limited to death benefits from Social Security, VA, personal account or any other type of insurance-regardless of the named beneficiary), it will be considered a resource to be applied on the burial costs. Collection of resources will be the responsibility of Cass County Social Services.

Family members will be allowed to pay up to \$600 for items not associated with the funeral home costs such as flowers, vocalist, or clergy.

The County Burial Application requests information from kindred of the first degree (spouse, adult children and parents). This information is used to determine the kindred's ability to be responsible for the burial costs. As according to North Dakota Century Code, they are responsible for those expenses and will be required to participate in those costs if they are able. The Responsible Relative Affidavit form asks questions about income and resources from the family members. A separate affidavit will be asked of the parents, each adult child and spouse of the deceased. Information on the application may be verified at the discretion of the county.

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The current income levels for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program will be used as a guide when determining the family's ability to contribute towards the expenses.

Reimbursement Policies:

It will be the intent of the Cass County Social Service Board that if any service for an eligible deceased person is over the designated limit, the Cass County Social Service Board will not participate in the costs of that service.

Funeral homes may not allow any upgrading or additions to services for county-funded cremations/burials.

The Cass County Social Service Board will not participate in any arrangements where the deceased, or surviving family member, has entered into a signed agreement with the University of North Dakota's Deeded Body Program as funding is available to funeral homes through that program.

The Cass County Social Service Board will not reimburse for any additional transportation request for out-of-county burials. Family members may use the county cemetery (Springvale) at no fee for county burials.

Costs of cremation will be reimbursed at the current rate as established by the Cass County Social Service Board.

This policy will be reviewed annually or at the formal request of the majority of the Cass County funeral directors.

HISTORICAL REFERENCE DATE: FEBRUARY 5, 1996