



People's Memorial
A s s o c i a t i o n
Funeral Advocacy & Education since 1939

Indigent Cremation Program Guidelines

RCW 36.39.030 states, “*The board of county commissioners of any county shall provide for the disposition of the remains of any indigent person including a recipient of public assistance who dies within the county and whose body is unclaimed by relatives or church organization.*” **Indigent decedents without kin or other responsible party should be referred to the county.**

RCW 68.50.160 states: “*The liability for the reasonable cost of preparation, care, and, disposition devolves jointly and severally upon all next of kin... and upon the estate of the decedent.*”

The Indigent Cremation Program was established to help families pay for simple cremation only to the extent that there are funds available in the Indigent Cremation Account with People's Memorial Association (PMA). Compensation will only be provided for simple cremation of the decedent and release of the remains in the basic urn to the next of kin. *This program will not provide funds for burial of either cremated remains or full-body burial. Should the family request additional products or services beyond certified copies of the death certificate, all funding assistance will be disallowed.*

- 1) The cremation arrangements must be handled by a funeral home contracted with PMA.
- 2) The decedent must be a member of PMA. A contracted funeral home may, at their discretion, allow the next of kin to apply for membership after the body of the decedent has been taken into their care. Next of kin is expected to pay the \$50 membership fee.
- 3) The next of kin must complete a PMA financial application which includes information regarding the financial situation of both the decedent and the next of kin or other responsible party. If no next of kin can be identified, then the “most responsible party” shall complete the financial application to the best of their knowledge. *If no next of kin or responsible party claims the body of the decedent, the case shall be referred to the local county indigent cremation program.*
- 4) **A professional who is familiar with the family's situation must submit a letter to PMA, stating their relationship to the family/decedent, and affirming they believe the decedent nor their next of kin have sufficient financial resources to pay for simple cremation without putting at risk the basic necessities of food and shelter.** A professional in this situation would be defined as a healthcare provider, social worker, religious leader, landlord, guardian, or other person who is not related to the decedent and has had sufficient dealings with the family/decedent to be familiar with their situation.

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- 5) The funeral home will submit the financial assistance documents to PMA. The program administrator will review the application packet. A determination will be based upon current DSHS poverty standards as to whether or not they believe the situation warrants financial support. Situational issues may be taken into account.

If the program administrator determines that the situation warrants assistance, the Responsible Party shall be asked to pay 25% of the member price of direct cremation, any and all related taxes and fees, plus the cost of membership in PMA if the decedent is not already a member.

At the current member price of \$755.00 for a simple cremation, PMA will provide assistance, at a maximum, in the amount of \$566.25. No additional expenses will be covered.

Payments made from the Indigent Cremation Fund will only be made directly to the contracted funeral home once a statement of goods and services is submitted by the funeral home and approved by the PMA program administrator.

The PMA Indigent Cremation Fund shall not discriminate due to race, nationality, religion, gender, age, gender identity, sexual orientation, or marital status of the decedent or survivors.

People's Memorial Association reserves the right to deny funding based upon any reason other than that the decedent or next of kin are members of one of the protected classes mentioned above.

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