

What to expect when you meet with your funeral director

TIP SHEET 1

1. There's no need to rush the funeral – our experience tells us that it's important for families to take their time, think through decisions carefully, allow themselves enough time to plan how to personalise the ceremony and allow some of the initial shock and emotions to settle.
2. Allow for 1-2 hours to meet and talk with your funeral director to begin planning the funeral.
3. You do not need to make every decision in that first meeting however...
4. Day, time and place for the ceremony will usually be agreed to in the first meeting – family and friends are often anxious to know so that they can plan their time especially if they need to travel or take time off work
5. The funeral director will cover 3 broad areas with you:
 - the ceremony itself and all that needs to be organised
 - the documents that need to be completed, including the death registration
 - the costings and payment options
6. For the ceremony, you will discuss when and where it will be held, who will lead the ceremony, and all kinds of options like music, flowers, newspaper/internet notices, catering, videos and anything else you need to do to personalise the funeral. Your funeral director liaises with all of these service suppliers – you do not need to make contact yourself. This includes contacting the crematorium or cemetery and booking their facilities.
7. The funeral director will ask you if you want to see the person again and spend time with them some time before the funeral – what we call a 'viewing'. A viewing can be held privately, often the day before the funeral or can be part of the ceremony. (See Tip sheet 3 for more information)
8. It is normal for the funeral director to discuss the account and explain the cost of each item. Your Funeral Director will give you a fully itemised estimate of fees. The fees will only change if you change the details you have requested. Your funeral director pays all the suppliers on your behalf – so you will only receive one account.
9. Most families pay by credit card, cheque or cash on or before the day of the funeral. Most banks will allow you to access the deceased's bank account to pay for the funeral – your funeral director will be able to advise you how to do this.
10. Your funeral director will print a copy of the funeral arrangements for you to take with you so you both have a copy of what was agreed to.

What to bring with you when you meet your funeral director:

- Supportive family or friend
- Information for Death Certificate (see Tip sheet 6)
- Clothes for the deceased to be dressed in including perfume, make up or after shave if you wish. A current photo is also helpful – to assist with their presentation
- Credit card/ Eftpos card/Cheque book
- Prepaid funeral plan documents, if any
- Burial site reservation, if any
- A list of questions you may have