

# Funeral Arrangements

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### Funeral Arrangements – Burials, Cremations

For those in our mission that are below the poverty line the various counties in the mission may offer help with cremation costs. They will not pay burial costs. To obtain help each county has a designated mortuary which they work with. These mortuaries would gather information on income and number in a household to assess if assistance would be available. The mortuaries within the mission are:

- Salt Lake County – **Wiscombe Mortuary** [385-528-1804](tel:385-528-1804); Salt Lake County Health Department [385-468-4100](tel:385-468-4100)
- Ogden County – **Leavitt Mortuary** [801-394-5556](tel:801-394-5556); Ogden/Weber Health Department [801-399-7100](tel:801-399-7100)
- Davis County – **Lindquist Mortuary** [801-394-6666](tel:801-394-6666) (Layton); ask which mortuary to go to. Davis County Health Department [801-525-5000](tel:801-525-5000)
- Utah County – **Premier Funeral Home** [801-960-9150](tel:801-960-9150); Utah County Health Department [801-851-7005](tel:801-851-7005)
- Tooele County – currently they do not have a designated mortuary. Any mortuary should be able to assist but ask first. Tooele County Health Department 435-277--2301

If the person you are helping lives in another county contact the County Health Department for further information.

This article may answer questions for you and the member you are serving.

### Rules and Regulations on Funerals, Burials and Cremation in Utah

*By Tim N*

Even though many rules and regulations on funerals and cremation are standard among states, some of them are specific. Should you live in [Utah](#) or need to organize a funeral in the state of Utah, the next guide is going to provide you with all the information you need for staying square with the law.

### What's the procedure to follow for obtaining a death certificate in the state of Utah?

You have five days from time of death to file with the local registrar for a death certificate. You have to do it before the burial, cremation, or shipping of the body outside the state will take place.

Most of the time, the cremation organization, the funeral home, or the person responsible for the deceased's remains makes the preparation and also application for obtaining the death certificate.

There are many situations when a copy of the death certificate will be needed. Should you be the person taking care of the deceased's personal affairs, official transcripts will be requested. Every time you're going to ask for benefits in the name of the dead, you will also have to present a certified copy of the death certificate. Payable-on-death accounts, Social Security benefits, or life insurance procedures are only some of the many situations to note.

### How many copies of the death certificate will be needed?

It's why you want the organization/person asking for the death certificate to also request copies of the document at the time of death. At least ten certified copies will be necessary if you're the executor of the estate.

If the time of death has passed, you can still ask for copies of the death certificate. Go to the Utah Department of Health and download a mail-in order form. You can also give them a call or check online for the information you need for obtaining the death certificate copies.

Make sure you have a photocopy of a form of identification; a photo issued by the government will do. A certified copy will cost you \$30, whereas additional regular copies cost just \$10.

### Can anyone ask for a death certificate in Utah?

As long as they can present a substantial and legitimate interest in the certificate, anyone may ask for the death certificate in the state of Utah. Here are the categories of persons who may have an interest:

- The spouse, adult child, parent, sibling, legal guardian, grandparent and adult grandchild
- The named legal representative of the deceased. It can also be the legal representative of any of the persons noted above.
- A government agency with official business
- A person is needing to present the certificate for deciding a personal/property right. A copy of the life insurance policy with the person as a beneficiary is an example.
- A person with a court order
- Agencies or persons are developing medical/statistical research when the registrar has released consent.

You can obtain more detailed information at [Utah Code § 26-2-22](#).

## Who has the legal right of filing in the death certificate in Utah?

A health care professional responsible with the care for the deceased must fill in the medical certification. Unless the death cause isn't natural, he/she will have 72 hours for completing the certificate.

When the health care professional isn't present nor agrees, the physician performing the autopsy may also fill in the medical certification. He/she can only do it if they can access medical history. Additionally, death shouldn't be investigated by the medical examiner.

If the medical examiner has to look into the case, he/she only has 72 hours for filing in the medical certification. Should the physician/medical examiner need more than 72 hours to establish the cause of death, he/she has to provide the funeral director the reason for the delay. Until the medical examiner/health care professional approves, the body cannot be released.

## What's the law on embalming the body in Utah?

In the state of Utah, if the burial/cremation doesn't take place within 24 hours of death, embalming or refrigeration is required.

## Do you intend to ship the body?

Should the body be shipped by a regular carrier, the body must also be embalmed and put in a sealed casket. A metal container designed for sending a body can also be used.

If it's not possible to embalm the body, the body has to be carried in an approved and airtight container.

## How to get the permit for transporting the body?

Before moving the body for final disposition, you must obtain the burial-transit permit from the local registrar. For instance, if the person has died outside the home, you need the license for bringing the body home for care. If the person dies at home, you also need the permit for moving the body to the location where the burial/cremation takes place.

The body has to be placed in a container so that no odors of fluids escape. You have to do it only if you have no funeral director to make the arrangements.

## Refrigeration

Refrigeration or dry ice may preserve the body for a short amount of time. If you're planning to prepare the body at home for cremation or burial, there's plenty of resources to check. The [National Home Funeral Alliance](#) is the main resource for more details. When a contagious illness was the cause of death, specific steps need to be followed.

## Is the casket required in the state of Utah?

For most people, the casket is the most significant investment for a burial. It makes perfect sense since a casket comes with prices ranging from \$1000 to \$20,000. The funeral homes usually have a high markup on the caskets, so buying the casket online could be a good idea.

## Burial

If there's going to be a burial, the casket isn't required by law in Utah. This doesn't mean that the cemetery of your choice doesn't have any regulations, though. Most cemeteries have specific rules on the containers accepted for burial.

## Cremation

There are no laws in Utah requesting you to use a casket in the case of cremation. According to federal law, the crematory or the funeral home should instruct about the alternative containers. Pressed wood, unfinished wood, cardboard, or fiberboard are the common materials used for cremation caskets and alternative containers.

## Is there any law obliging you to purchase the casket from the funeral home?

No. The federal law obliges the funeral homes to take caskets that you have purchased elsewhere. It would be the same if you built the coffin. With online retailers offering caskets with affordable prices, it makes sense why so many customers purchase caskets online.

## Do you have to hire a funeral director in Utah?

Utah doesn't require you to hire a certified funeral director for taking care of the funeral. When you don't work with a funeral director, a dispositioner will have to be involved in the funeral preparations.

Here's who may qualify as "dispositioner":

- The next of kin for the deceased, but only if no other person was named. The next of kin has to make the preparation when the designated person cannot/will not address the funeral arrangements.
- A person authorized by the deceased in a "written instrument" for taking care of the final dispositions

## What's the best way to select a funeral home in Utah?

Should you decide to go with a funeral home, you need to make sure that you're selecting the best option for you and your family. Remember that no laws in Utah oblige you to hire a funeral director; it's simply more comfortable to leave the funeral to the professionals.

As for options, there are at least 150 funeral homes and mortuaries functioning in the state of Utah. Are you planning a conventional funeral? Do you want to have cremation instead? What's the budget you have in mind for the funeral?

Asking recommendations from friends and family is an efficient strategy for selecting the funeral home. When you have some specific requests, you should contact the funeral home directly. Even if a reliable funeral business in your local area is ideal, you may still want to check the options outside the local community.

### **What's the typical spending for a funeral in Utah?**

In the state of Utah, the average spending for a funeral is \$7,045, without the cemetery fees included. Most of the time, the expenses for a traditional funeral in Utah begin at \$2,500 but can go up to \$20,000. The numbers are provided by the Funeral Consumers Alliance of Utah and don't include the costs for the cemetery plot and the casket. The kind of casket you use, the grave marker, and the cemetery plot will add up to the final expenses.

### **What are the prices for caskets and cemetery plots?**

You may pay anything from \$200 to \$3,000 for a casket, and anything from \$850 to \$3,000 for a cemetery plot. It's the funeral home's responsibility to offer you the general price list (GPL) where the funeral merchandise and service spending is noted. The "Funeral Rule" emitted by the [Funeral Trade Commission](#) obliges the funeral homes also to offer you a copy of their GPL when quoting you a price.

You should compare prices if you have time before hiring the funeral home.

### **Is it legal to have a home burial in Utah?**

No state laws in Utah forbid you to have a home burial. However, some local governments may carry specific regulations on private funerals.

You have to check with the county/town clerk for the specific area laws you must follow before you bury a body on private property or create a family cemetery. If you're planning to bury the body on private property, you need to draw a map of the property, indicating the burial ground. You also need to fill it with the property deed so that the location is precise for the future.

Should you be living in a rural zone, the chances of holding a home burial are quite high.

### **What are the regulations on cremation in Utah?**

Even though it's not generalized, some crematories may ask you to hire a funeral director for preparing the cremation. Not everyone intends to hire a funeral director, in which case you need to check with the crematory if they're accepting the body straight from the family.

### **Do you need a special permit for a cremation?**

The "Cremation Authorization Form" and cremation permit have to be acquired from the Medical Examiner. In case of cremation, there's a 24-hour mandatory waiting period after death in most states. However, there is no waiting time required by the law in Utah.

The medical examiner must check the death record and approve the cremation. When it's done, the local registrar will release the burial-transit permit and authorize the cremation later on. The cremation can only take place after filing the death certificate.

### **How much will you pay for cremation in Utah?**

Typically, the cremation funeral services cost around \$3,000, but it depends a lot on the services you're selecting. You may pay a lot less than \$3,000, and it all depends on the ancillary services/products of your choice.

### **Does the Utah law allow you to have direct cremation?**

When there are no services involved, and the cremation takes place right after the documentation is released, we can talk about direct cremation. In such situations, the cremated remains are delivered to the family in a temporary recipient.

For an additional fee, private family viewing or a more sophisticated cremation urn can be used, in which case the spending will be higher.

## **Frequently Asked Questions about funerals in Utah**

### **Q: Do you have to buy a vault in Utah?**

A: No laws oblige you to purchase a vault in Utah. However, many cemeteries indeed require clients to buy the vault. No Federal or State laws are demanding the use of vaults.

Vaults are essential since they preserve the casket for more than a couple of hundreds of years. They also reduce the risk of ground colliding and count for the maintenance of the cemetery.

### **Q: Is it mandatory to use a grave marker in the state of Utah?**

A: In the state of Utah, there are no regulations regarding the use of a grave marker. It's advisable to buy and install the grave marker after some time, once the ground has settled in.

**Q: Can you transport the body back to or from Utah after death?**

A: You need to hire a funeral director who provides shipping services if you intend to send the body elsewhere after death. You need a funeral professional for coordinating the planning at the place of death and where the body will be shipped to.

When the body is sent between the U.S. states, you can fly or transport by land the body of the deceased. Specific containers and embalming may be requested in some situations.

Shipping a body is pricey, so you may want to consider cremating the body at the place of death, transporting the ashes later.