

## COVID-19 Funeral and Mortuary Science Guidance

Updated 03/07/2022

### Infection Control Guidance for Funeral Homes

- [Standard infection control practices](#) should be used for handling a deceased person who has died from COVID-19. Standard [Personal Protective Equipment \(PPE\)](#), including facial protection, should be used by the mortician when preparing the body or embalming, especially if splashing of fluids is expected. Follow routine cleaning and disinfection procedures using an [EPA-registered, hospital-grade disinfectant](#) to clean the mortuary work area and the outside of a body bag, if applicable.
- The deceased can be buried or cremated following current state guidelines.
- Funeral homes should implement [measures that mitigate the exposure and spread of COVID-19 among its workforce](#).

Guidance about safely handling and collecting post-mortem specimens: [CDC's COVID-19 Postmortem Guidance](#).

### General Guidance for Funerals

- Attendees and funeral home staff should monitor their local [COVID-19 Community Level](#) to learn what precautions they should be taking to prevent COVID-19. In areas of high-level transmission, attendees should be encouraged to wear masks indoors. Social distancing and frequent hand washing should always be encouraged.
- There is currently no known risk associated with being in the same room at a funeral or visitation service with the body of someone who has died of COVID-19.
- People who were in recent contact (within 5 days) with the deceased and may have been exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19 should not attend unless they were [up to date on their COVID-19 vaccine](#) prior to their exposure.
- People who feel sick should stay home.
- Funeral homes should:
  - Consider offering livestreaming as an option for these services/viewings;
  - Supply tissues and alcohol-based hand rubs for the families to use; and
  - Stock an adequate supply of soap and paper towels in the restrooms.

Ultimately, funeral homes should determine how to best balance this guidance with the needs of their families. Each funeral home should develop a plan to manage challenges presented by the current situation. Funeral home managers should stay up to date [regarding current COVID-19 recommendations of gatherings](#) to protect their staff and families of the deceased.

### References and Additional Resources

- [National Funeral Directors Association COVID-19 Guidelines for Visitations and Funerals](#)
- [CDC COVID-19 Guidance for Workplaces](#)
- [CDC COVID-19 Guidance for Gatherings](#)
- [CDC COVID-19 Community Transmission Levels](#)