

# Planning a Funeral

**When someone has just died there are many things to think about. It can be a very difficult time with overwhelming feelings of loss and sadness. Here in New Zealand, it is the responsibility of family to make the final arrangements for the person who has died. While it is not a legal requirement, many people choose to have a funeral or some form of remembrance service.**

Planning a funeral may seem like a difficult task especially if you are not familiar with the process. Understanding what is involved and how to go about it, can make the process easier. The following is some information that may assist you to organise an appropriate farewell.

## Choosing a funeral director

This is one of the first things you will need to do. You may know of a funeral director you would like to use or maybe you are needing to find one for the first time. Asking friends is a good way to find out about someone you may use. You might want to contact several funeral directors to compare prices and options before finalising any plans. It is not essential to have a funeral director, and you may decide to arrange the funeral yourself.

## Questions to ask the funeral director

The funeral director will meet you at your home or in their offices at a convenient time to discuss arrangements - this is usually within 24 hours of first contact. This will be an opportunity for the funeral director to discuss with you the range of choices available and any religious or cultural preferences that you would like to be honoured during the service.

Key decisions to discuss with them include:

- Who the key decision maker in the family/whānau is?
- Whether it will be a burial or cremation?
- Will the person be embalmed?
- Where will the service be held?
- Will the service be religious/ non-religious?
- Who will conduct the service, for example, a minister or celebrant?

## The funeral director will be able to help you with the following:

- Placing a death notice in the newspaper
- Ordering flowers or donations to a charity of your choosing
- Organising Catering
- Developing Service sheets
- Making Memorial presentations
- Organising the death certificate
- Arrangements for repatriation if required

## Funeral Costs

The current cost of a funeral can range somewhere between about \$4,000 - \$12,000. The cost will depend on several factors including:

- Whether it is a cremation or burial
- How much of the planning and preparation is done by the family/whānau

## Financial Assistance available

Work and Income New Zealand (WINZ) may provide a funeral Grant, if certain eligibility criteria are met, to assist with costs. However, it is unlikely the grant will cover the full cost of the funeral. You can get more information about this grant at <https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/products/a-z-benefits/funeral-grant.html> or by asking the funeral Director.

## Useful websites

For more information about planning a funeral the following websites have useful information:

<https://endoflife.services.govt.nz/welcome>

<https://www.fdanz.co.nz/planning-a-funeral/what-to-do-when-someone-dies/>