

A person's death is a time for mourning and honouring the life that is now gone.

When a person dies, and there are no resources available to pay for funeral expenses through the individual's estate or family unit, or the sponsor of a deceased sponsored immigrant, the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction may assist with these costs.

This service is available to all citizens of British Columbia.

## For More Information

Visit the government website at:

[www.gov.bc.ca/sdpr](http://www.gov.bc.ca/sdpr)

Or call the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction toll-free:

**1-866-866-0800**

Access income and disability assistance services online at [myselfserve.gov.bc.ca](http://myselfserve.gov.bc.ca).



# Ministry Assistance with Funeral Costs



Ministry of  
Social Development  
and Poverty Reduction

## The Legal Representative

When a death occurs, a legal representative for the deceased must be determined. Section 5 of the *Cemetery, Interment and Funeral Services Act* explains the guidelines for establishing legal representatives. Legal representation is most often a relative, but in cases where there are no relatives or they are unable to assume this responsibility, the ministry may make arrangements for services and payment to the funeral home.

Once the legal representative has determined that there are no resources available for funeral expenses through the deceased's estate or family unit or the sponsor of a deceased sponsored immigrant, they may apply to the ministry for assistance.

To establish eligibility, the ministry requires:

- » Name and address of the deceased.
- » Name of the next of kin.
- » A statement of the deceased's income and assets.
- » A request to the ministry to cover funeral costs.

A ministry supplement paid to assist with funeral costs is a debt due to the government and may be recovered.

## Making Arrangements

If ministry assistance has been requested, funeral arrangements can be made as soon as eligibility has been established.

Costs covered by the ministry can include Funeral Provider's Service Fees, casket or urn, and cemetery or crematorium fees. Additional items and services not covered by the ministry may be purchased by families or other individuals or organizations, at their own expense. A surviving spouse, parent of a minor child or sponsor of a sponsored immigrant cannot upgrade items paid for by the ministry such as the casket or plot.

Items funded by the ministry through funeral service provider fees may include the following:

- » Transporting a deceased person's body within British Columbia within 32 kilometres.
- » Completing and filing the registration of death.
- » Obtaining a burial or cremation permit.
- » Professional and staff services including counselling and co-ordination with legal representative of deceased and co-ordination with crematorium and cemetery.

- » Preparing a deceased person's body for burial or cremation including basic sanitary care and casketing.
- » Use of facilities and equipment of a funeral provider including preparation room, refrigeration, parking and service areas.
- » Transfer of the deceased from the funeral home to the cemetery or crematorium.
- » Co-ordination of bereavement rites and ceremonies.
- » Attendance of staff for services and visitation.
- » Preparation of the deceased including embalming, dressing, hairdressing.
- » Use of funeral home or chapel facilities and equipment for memorial and funeral services.

