



Arranging a Funeral or Cremation in San Antonio

This funeral and cremation planning guide is tasked with answering some important questions you may have regarding funeral arrangements. No matter whether you are researching with an interest to make a cremation plan for yourself, or have to arrange a funeral or cremation service for a loved one who passed. We have put together some FAQs about cremation costs and funeral prices in the Greater San Antonio area, state funeral laws, and where to get help.

What is your first call when a death occurs?

The first thing that arises when a death occurs is the need to select a funeral home to handle funeral arrangements, and transfer the deceased into their care. The majority of people die in a medical facility, where they can be held for a short period in the hospital morgue if necessary. It is important not to rush this decision, as you need to ensure you select the right funeral service provider for your needs.

How do I know which funeral home or cremation service provider best meets my needs?

This can be quite a difficult task if you have no experience with a funeral home, especially if your loved one did not have a funeral plan in place. There are around 50 funeral homes in the San Antonio area. If you want to have a traditional funeral ceremony, the actual location of the funeral home may be an important factor to consider. You will also need to factor in whether you have a specific financial budget, as you might need to make funeral price comparisons, before selecting a suitable funeral home.

Direct cremation service \$675 Call (210) 460-1911

What funeral home or cremation service options are there in San Antonio?

Given the range of funeral service locations serving the Greater San Antonio area, you have the option to arrange anything from a traditional funeral service to a simple direct cremation service. Therefore, you need to decide if you want a traditional funeral, something more modern like a life celebration service, or if you wish to consider cremation.

What is the average cost of a funeral service in San Antonio?

The N.F.D.A* surveyed the average cost of a funeral service in 2019 at \$7,640. This is without any cemetery fees. According to a recent price survey, the average cost of a traditional funeral service in San Antonio is around \$7,775, which is very close to national average.

How much does a cremation cost in San Antonio?

Cremation prices can certainly be a little more difficult to quote. It is dependent on the type of cremation service you select. Cremation is a cheaper alternative to a traditional funeral service but can still cost upwards of \$4,000 with a ceremony.

A simple cremation service with no ceremony, is referred to as a “direct cremation” in the funeral industry. A direct cremation in the San Antonio area can be arranged for as little as

\$675. For this reason you won't find a more economical funeral service arrangement option than a direct cremation.

It is, however, wise to check what is included in a low-cost direct cremation package to ensure there are not hidden fees to what may appear 'too cheap'. County fees are generally 'third-party' additional charges – such as death certificates and cremation permits. But, some affordable direct cremation packages include in a death certificate and cremation permit fee.

Extra charges that can be incurred on a budget direct cremation are fees for if a residential collection is required, if the deceased weighs over 300 pounds, and if a pace-maker needs to be removed prior to cremation.

[Are there any legal issues that I need to understand about arranging a funeral?](#)

Unless the deceased had already made (and paid) for a funeral plan, the legal next of kin is responsible for making funeral arrangements. The funeral director will generally obtain the death certificate, and may ask you how many copies you require. The fee for this is charged on top of your funeral service contract, as it is considered a third-party fee, and the funeral home have to pay this out separately. There is a \$20.00 fee for a death certificate in Texas, and a further \$3.00 for each additional death certificate ordered at the same time.

Texas law prohibits cremating any dead human body within 48 hours after death. A body cannot be cremated immediately following death without a waiver, only the County Medical Examiner or a Justice of the Peace may waive this time requirement.

After the mandatory waiting period, the cremation can be performed. The legal next of kin must sign a cremation authorization form and a cremation permit will be issued.

[Who has the responsibility for paying for funeral arrangements?](#)

As mentioned above, the responsibility for making and paying for a funeral falls to the immediate next of kin if the deceased did not pre-arrange and pre-pay for a funeral plan. This can be quite a burden, and is why more seniors today are considering setting up simple cremation arrangements.

Pre-planning can be simple and affordable, and give family peace of mind for when the time comes. ***Be aware that whomever signs the funeral contract with the funeral home is considered legally responsible for payment of the funeral bill.***

If you are interested in pre-arranging a simple cremation plan, contact your local DFS Memorials location on (210) 460-1911.

[What if the deceased is at the County Medical Examiner's?](#)

If the death occurred outside of a medical facility, was an accident, or unexplained, the body will be transferred to the Medical Examiner's office. It is the responsibility of the coroner to determine a cause of death before a death certificate can be issued. You will need to arrange

for a funeral home to collect your loved one once the coroner releases the body. Only a licensed funeral director can transport the deceased from the ME's morgue, and the next of kin will need to sign a release form for the Medical Examiner to release the body into the care of a funeral home.

The Medical Examiner will issue the death certificate and permit to cremate once they release the body. If you have further questions about identifying the body and making arrangements for the transfer of the deceased, you can contact Bexar County's Medical Examiner on (210) 335-4000.

Bexar County's Chief Medical Examiner is D. Kimberley Molina, M.D. and can be found at 7337 Louis Pasteur Drive, San Antonio, TX 78229.

How can I prepare if my loved one is in hospice care?

If your loved one is in hospice care, and the support staff have advised you to prepare for his or her passing, it can help to have made provisional arrangements. This way when the time comes, the hospice can immediately call the funeral service provider and arrange the transfer of your loved one into their care. If you contact a funeral home ahead of time, you can have some of the preparation in place, which can make it easier when the time comes.

When provisional arrangements are in place, it can help the family and the hospice. The hospice know who to call, and the authorizations and other legal documentation can be pre-prepared, saving stress at the time of the passing of your loved one.

Is it possible to find help with funeral expenses?

Texas Health and Human Services has the responsibility to assist citizens. There is a burial or cremation assistance registry of funeral homes that are willing to provide free common burial or low-cost private burial. For more information refer to [Texas HHS](#).

Are there legal considerations if I want to scattering cremated remains?

If you want to scatter ashes, Texas law allows you to do so over "uninhabited public land, over a public waterway or sea, or on the private property of a consenting owner." If the container is not biodegradable, you must remove the ashes from the container before scattering them.

What is the best way to set up a cremation plan in San Antonio?

You can make pre-arrangements with a funeral home and/or crematory. The terms and payment plans may differ depending on your requirements and age. And whether you make payment in full at the time of purchasing your pre-need plan, or arrange a payment plan.

Some cremation providers offer online arrangement services, so all this can be done from the comfort of your own home. Pre-planning can provide you with funeral service coverage that will give you and your family peace of mind.

What about arranging a green burial in San Antonio?

The National Funeral Directors Association recently conducted a survey, and discovered that 72% of funeral homes reported an increase in interest in green burial from families. At present, families typically have 2 options – traditional burial or cremation. A ‘natural’ green burial is less expensive than a traditional burial, and more environmentally-friendly than a cremation.

The Green Burial Council lists [one provider in San Antonio](#), and A Greener Funeral.org lists five green funeral homes in Texas.

Visit our [green burial resource section](#) for more information.

How do I obtain copies of a death certificate?

The funeral director will generally file for the death certificate for you, and will ask how many copies you require. The first death certificate costs \$20.00. Each additional copy (ordered at the same time) is charged at \$3.00 each.

You can request additional copies from Vital Records at a later date if you are a relative of the deceased or have a financial concern in their estate.

What is no-cost cremation?

A “no-cost” cremation generally refers to a whole body donation program where the deceased’s remains are cremated free of charge after the donation. Texas State University have a whole body donation program, more details can be found on [their website](#).

Can I have a private viewing before a simple cremation?

Yes, it is certainly possible to arrange for a private ‘goodbye’ viewing before a direct cremation. However, this is often dependent upon the availability of facilities, staff and scheduling. Sometimes, it can be arranged at no additional cost, but there may be a fee to offer a private viewing if additional staff and transfer of the deceased are required.

Is a casket needed for a cremation service?

No, there is no requirement (or law) that stipulates a casket is needed for a cremation service. A simple cremation is usually conducted using a simple reinforced cardboard container. It is possible to rent a casket if you wish to have a service before the cremation. This can help you save on funeral costs.

Where to find help with questions, or concerns, about arranging a funeral in San Antonio?

You can contact our DFS Memorials affordable funeral service provider in San Antonio with any questions you have. If you have a complaint against a funeral director or a funeral establishment you should attempt to resolve your complaint directly with the funeral home concerned. If you do not manage to reach a satisfactory resolution, then you can contact the Texas Funeral Service Commission. A formal complaint against a funeral establishment must be put in writing to them, and include copies of all documentation from the funeral home.

Texas Funeral Service Commission

P.O. Box 12217

Capitol Station

Austin Texas 78711

Feel free to contact us at US Funerals Online and we will try and help you if you have further questions about arranging a funeral or cremation service.