



Arranging a Funeral or Cremation in Seattle

Direct cremation service \$1,050 Call [\(206\) 745-9744](tel:2067459744)

Whether you are researching with an interest to make a cremation plan for yourself, or need to arrange a funeral or cremation service for a loved one who has passed, this funeral and cremation planning guide aims to answer some of the key questions you will have if faced with the task of making funeral arrangements in Seattle. The following FAQs about cremation costs and funeral prices in the Seattle area, as well as state funeral laws, and other funeral/cremation considerations, have been put together to help you know where to start when arranging a funeral or cremation.

First call: What to do when a death occurs

When a death occurs your first call will be to select a funeral home to handle funeral arrangements, and transfer the deceased into their care. Most deaths occur in a medical facility, where the deceased can be held for a short period in the hospital morgue if necessary. Do give yourself some time to select the right funeral service provider for your needs, try not to feel rushed to make a decision straight away.

How to choose a funeral home or cremation service provider?

If your loved one had no funeral plan, and you have no prior experience with a funeral home, this will be the first decision to make. There are around 29 funeral service providers in Seattle. If you want to have a funeral ceremony, the physical location of the funeral home will likely be an important consideration. Also, if you are working to a specific financial budget for the funeral cost, you will likely want to make funeral price comparisons, before selecting a suitable funeral home.

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What are the funeral service or cremation service options in Seattle?

There are a range of funeral service providers serving the Seattle area, as mentioned above, therefore you can arrange anything from a full-service traditional funeral to a simple direct cremation service. You will need to decide if you want a traditional funeral, something more modern like a life celebration service, or if you want to consider cremation as a more affordable option. Read on to find out more about [direct cremation](#) and how it is your most affordable option.

What is the average cost of a funeral service in Seattle?

According to Funeralocity (2021), **the average cost for an adult funeral in the Seattle Metropolitan area is \$7,029**. This is based on the most commonly selected items for a traditional funeral including a casket and vault. However, it does not include cemetery costs. **A grave space, a grave marker, and opening/closing the grave can easily cost another \$1,500 to \$2,500. Therefore, a typical traditional funeral and burial cost is likely at least \$8,500.**

How much does a cremation cost in Seattle?

Cremation cost is generally more difficult to quote as it is dependent on the type of cremation service you opt for. Whether you opt for a cremation with a traditional service or a direct cremation without a service.

Cremation is a cheaper alternative to a traditional funeral, but **a cremation with a memorial service will still cost upwards of \$3,000, with an average cost of around \$5,609 in the Seattle area** (Funeralocity 2021).

A simple cremation service with no ceremony, is referred to as a “[direct cremation](#)” in the funeral industry. **A direct cremation can be arranged for just \$1,050 in Seattle.** This is the most economical funeral service arrangement available to families. The cost of a simple cremation can, however, still vary between different funeral service providers in Seattle, with an average cost of \$1,480 in the Seattle Metropolitan area.

Therefore, how much your cremation will cost will largely depend upon what type of cremation service you select, and which provider you opt to conduct the service.

It is always a good idea to check what is included in a low-cost direct cremation package to ensure there are no hidden fees. Sometimes what can appear low-cost can have additional fees added to the full package price.

County fees are generally ‘third-party’ additional charges –such as death certificates and cremation permits. But, some affordable direct cremation packages may include 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.

[What legal issues do I need to understand about arranging a funeral in Washington?](#)

If the deceased did not have a paid-for funeral plan in place, then the responsibility for making and paying for the funeral arrangements falls on the legal next of kin. In the state of Washington, you have three days after death to file with the local registrar for the death certificate. You need to register for the document before the body is cremated or buried. Asking the person/organization in charge of the funeral is the most straightforward method for obtaining the death certificate.

You will likely need more than one certified copy of the death certificate for various reasons, such as taking care of the deceased personal affairs.

[How do I apply for a Death Certificate in Seattle?](#)

The funeral director will generally file for the death certificate for you and will ask how many copies you require. **Death certificates costs \$25.00 per copy in Seattle** and 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.

[Who is responsible for paying for a funeral?](#)

As mentioned above, if the deceased did not pre-arrange and pre-pay for a funeral plan, then the responsibility for paying for a funeral falls to the immediate next of kin. This can, understandably, be quite a burden for many people, and is why more seniors today are considering setting up simple cremation arrangements. Pre-planning can be a simple and affordable option, giving families peace of mind for when the time comes.

Be aware that whoever 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 [\(206\) 745-9744](tel:2067459744).

[What happens 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 the Chief Medical Examiner for Seattle at (206) 731-3232, ext. 4. Alternatively, you can find them at:

Harborview Medical Center
Ninth & Jefferson Building, 2nd Floor
908 Jefferson St
Seattle, WA 98104

[How do 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 provisional arrangements in place. This is so that when the time comes, the hospice can immediately contact 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, this will alleviate some of the stress that comes with having to make arrangements on short notice. This also means the hospice know who to call, and the authorizations and other legal documentation can be pre-prepared.

[What help with funeral expenses is there for low-income or uninsured families?](#)

This is a common question as more families find themselves not being able to pay for funeral expenses. Unfortunately, there is very limited public or state assistance for funeral costs. The state takes care of any indigent deaths (as is their responsibility) but this is done by the means of a pauper burial or cremation.

Social Security offer a \$255 death benefit payment (if qualifying) and the funeral director will be able to assist you with claiming this. You may also find it useful to read our article on ['What are your options on how to pay for a funeral or cremation?'](#). It provides more information on how you can raise funds to cover funeral expenses.

[What can I legally do with the cremated remains? Laws for scattering ashes in Seattle, WA](#)

You can scatter cremated remains on any private land (with the permission of the landowner). To scatter in national parkland, you need permission from the Chief Park Ranger, and for state trust

uplands you need permission from the regional manager. Details about obtaining a permit to scatter in Mount Rainer National Park are available here: no commercial scattering services are permitted to operate and scatter on state trust uplands. You should scatter ashes on the ground at least 100 yards from any trail, road, developed building, or waterway. No memorial marker is permitted and no publicity of the scattering.

Scattering in the Puget Sound, Pacific Ocean, Lake Washington or any inland water is permitted within the 3-mile limit as enforced by Region 10 of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Such scatterings should be reported to the local administrator of the EPA at 1200 Sixth Avenue, Seattle, WA 98101 within 30 days of the scattering.

Scattering is permitted from Washington state scheduled ferries (WSF) and 3-5 days' notice is required for a scattering memorial service to be conducted. Ceremonies can only be held during non-peak sailing times, and only if weather conditions permit. Ashes must be in a biodegradable container that can be easily dropped. A member of the WSF crew will accompany a member of your party to the aft of the ferry into the restricted area so the container may be cast into the water. At the captain's discretion, the ferry's horn may be sounded. To find out more contact WSF admin on (206) 264-3554.

Only biodegradable containers and floral tributes should be used for any public scattering purposes.

[I want to pre-plan a simple cremation. What is the best way to set up a cremation plan in Seattle?](#)

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 opt to arrange a payment plan.

More cremation providers are now offering 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, reducing the stress associated with making last-minute funeral arrangements after a loved one has passed. To discuss your options for pre-planning a simple cremation in Seattle, contact your local provider on [\(206\) 745-9744](tel:2067459744).

If you travel (as 80% of adults do these days), you may wish to consider purchasing a Travel Protection Plan. This is an affordable assurance policy that provides you with life time cover for funeral costs should you happen to pass away 75 miles or more away from your home in Seattle. The plan costs just \$450 for an individual or \$875 for a couple, and will cover all costs for a cremation at the place of death, or returning the deceased home to Washington. The cover is worldwide. Read more about this affordable peace of mind death expense coverage here: [Travel Protection Plan](#).

[Arranging a green burial in Washington](#)

In a recent survey, The National Funeral Directors Association 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. However, a 'natural' green burial is less expensive than a traditional burial, and more environmentally-friendly than a cremation. Typically, a green funeral will cost between \$3,000 and \$5,000.

There are currently around five cemeteries offering green burial options in Washington. Details can be found on our [Green Burials Directory](#)

Can I arrange a no-cost cremation in Seattle?

A “no-cost” cremation normally refers to a whole-body donation program where the deceased’s remains are cremated free of charge after the donation. If you wish to donate your body to science in Washington, the University of Washington’s Willied Body Program accepts donations and is a non-profit organization. Following the donation, the cremated remains are interred in the community plot at Evergreen-Washelli Cemetery or can be returned to the family. However, not all donations can be accepted. You can find out more on their [website](#).

For more information on whole body donation, visit our page on [Body Donation](#).

Do I need a casket for a cremation service?

No, there is no requirement (or law) in Washington that stipulates a casket is required for a cremation service. A cremation is usually conducted using a simple reinforced cardboard container. It is, however, possible to rent a casket if you wish to have a service before the cremation. This will help you save on funeral costs, as caskets can be a significant expense for a traditional funeral and burial.

I have questions, or concerns, about arranging a funeral in Seattle. Where can I find help?

You can contact our DFS Memorials affordable funeral service provider in Seattle 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 this is unsuccessful you can contact the Washington State Department of Licensing. The details of how to make a formal complaint and the form to be completed can be downloaded [here](#).

Alternatively, you can contact the local funeral director’s association if the funeral home is a member:

*Washington State Funeral Directors Association
1535 SW Dash Point Road
Federal Way, Washington 98023*

The People’s Memorial Association (PMA) was founded in 1939 and is a non-profit organization dedicated to helping Washington residents save money on funerals. They also act as an advocacy for consumers on all end-of-life matters:

*1801 12th Ave Suite A
Seattle, WA 98122
Phone: 206-325-0489*

Lastly, 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.