

Playing a part in planning the funeral service allows you to add personal touches and to make the service something that truly reflects the person's life. It also provides you with rituals which may help in the early stages of grief.

It is important to know if the person had clear wishes, such as preference for burial or cremation, funeral service or none. Also important to know if there was a prepaid funeral arrangement.

#### Getting assistance

This can be an emotionally draining time. Consider asking someone to assist you with the funeral arrangements.

#### Choosing a Funeral Organiser

This is one of the early things you will need to do.

If you decide to use a funeral director, unless you have a particular firm that you know well, ***you have the right to speak to many Funeral Directors (FD) before making a decision.***

FD are registered with the Funeral Directors Association of New Zealand (FDANZ)

<http://www.fdanz.org/>

#### Do-it-yourself

If a funeral director is not involved, you will need to liaise directly with the cemetery or crematorium office where the funeral is to take place.

<http://www.diyfuneral.co.nz/>

Natural/green burial

[www.naturalburials.co.nz/](http://www.naturalburials.co.nz/)

Eco Funerals

[www.ecofunerals.co.nz/](http://www.ecofunerals.co.nz/)

#### Tissue Donation

Your relative or friend may have indicated that they would like to donate tissue. If this was the case, the donor team should be contacted.

<http://www.donor.co.nz/>

#### Donating body to medicine

If this was organised, contact the relevant people. However, this may not always be possible if the university is not able to accommodate the body. Consider tissue donation as an alternative.

[Bequest – University of Auckland](#)

#### Coroner's involvement

If the Coroner is involved, it will take a few days until the Funeral Director takes over. It takes some time for the Coroner's report to be completed and forwarded to the GP.

#### Some questions to ask the FD:

- Will the person be embalmed?
- Where will the service be held?
- Will the funeral service be recorded?
- Is there an opportunity for a webcasting service?
- Will the service be religious / Non-religious?
- Who will conduct the service e.g. Minister or Celebrant?

Q. What is included? For example

- Death notice in paper
- Flowers or donations to a charity of your choosing
- Catering
- Service Sheets
- Memorial Presentations

Q. What are the costs?

- Burial versus cremation
- Funeral - weekend / mid-week
- Casket options
- Is GST included in the quote?

#### What can be included in a funeral?

**Music:** Own choice; a favourite piece - a simple way of personalising the service, cultural piece, religious music.

It is traditional to have music played as people enter and leave, and sometimes during the service – allowing quiet reflection time.

**Poems and prose readings:** you may have some personal or family pieces.

**Returning to your home country:** If the wishes were that the body/ashes are to return to the home country, a funeral director can help with the regulations and repatriation of the body.

**Venue:**  
A venue may include a church, chapel, RSA, sports club, outdoor location or Funeral Home.

**Who to notify:**

The next of kin and family members  
The family doctor  
The Solicitor or executor of the will  
The preferred Funeral Director

**Alternative websites:**

Registrar of Deaths;  
[www.bdm.govt.nz](http://www.bdm.govt.nz)  
NZ Citizens Advice Bureau:  
<http://www.cab.org.nz/vat/fp/d/Pages/GeneralInformation.aspx>  
NZ Government – Death and Bereavement:  
<https://www.govt.nz/browse/family-and-whanau/death-and-bereavement/>  
NZ Work and Income:  
<http://www.workandincome.govt.nz/eligibility/urgent-costs/bereavement.html>

## Although one journey may be finishing, the journey for you will continue.

The time before a funeral can be very busy. When the funeral is over the reality begins to sink in. We are all unique and grieve differently. Be gentle with yourself. As you face your loss there might be times when you need some support. Your GP will be the best person to approach in the first instance to put you in touch with the appropriate support available to you in your area.

Services that have been involved during the person's illness, or the Funeral Director may also offer bereavement support.



Reviewed 01.2024 CF  
Te Ara Whakapiri - Last Days of Life Care  
Planning a funeral



## Planning a funeral

A funeral is a significant event. It may not be easy to think about, whether your own or that of a relative.

This leaflet aims to help you consider some of the important information involved.