



# © Home Funeral FAQs

## What is a home funeral?

A noncommercial, family-centered response to memorializing that involves caring for and preparation of the body at home (or in a prepared space) after death.

## Is this legal?

Yes. It is legal in every US state for families to keep or bring the body of their loved one home until time of disposition.

## What does a home funeral look like?

It looks different for every family but generally includes:

- keeping the body cool with noninvasive techniques, such as ice (embalming is not required)
- filing the death certificate and obtaining transport and burial permits
- transporting the deceased to the place of burial or cremation
- facilitating the final disposition, such as digging the grave in a natural burial ground
- preparing the body for burial or cremation by bathing, dressing and laying out for visitation
- hiring professionals for specific products or services
- planning and carrying out after-death rituals or ceremonies

*Families who choose to care for their deceased report a sense of self-sufficiency and contentment having honored their loved ones in a meaningful way. They also express a strong connection to their friends, family and community as well as a quicker pathway to healing. Helping others through a sorrowful time can be cathartic and is usually empowering for everyone involved.*

## Is this safe?

Yes. Dead bodies do not pose an increased health risk any more than the body of a living person. With appropriate hygiene and cooling techniques, it is perfectly safe to keep a loved one home for several days. Embalming chemicals are highly toxic and embalmers are eight times more likely to contract myeloid leukemia than the general population.

## How much does a home funeral cost?

A conventional, commercial funeral costs \$8,343 (NFDA) and that doesn't include casket, vault, cremation or burial costs. The average home funeral costs the price of ice, copies of the death certificate as desired, gas to transport the body, and a rigid container, such as a cardboard box or pine casket, usually totaling under \$200. Home funeral consultations are \$50/hour and burial/cremation costs would be added at whatever the going rate at your chosen cemetery/crematorium.