



COVID-19 Fatality Management Recommendations

It is essential during the COVID-19 pandemic that the death industry, to include medical examiner offices, Justices of the Peace, and funeral homes, continue with postmortem exams, cremations and burials of the deceased.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has released [Postmortem Guidance](#) for:

- [Recommended Postmortem Specimens](#)
- [Recommended Biosafety and Infection Control Practices](#)
- [Collection of Postmortem Specimens Only](#)
- [Submission of Specimens for Testing](#)
- [Cleaning and Waste Disposal Recommendations](#)
- [Transportation of Human Remains](#)

The CDC has also provided some additional guidance on [COVID-19 and Funerals](#).

Death Reporting

At this time, the death certificate and burial transit permit (BTP) process has not changed. For vital statistics announcements, contact information, and TxEVER training resources, please visit dshs.texas.gov/txever/.

For deaths due to COVID-19, report COVID-19 in Cause of Death—Part I on the Medical 2 tab. Report other chronic conditions that may have contributed (e.g. COPD, asthma) in Cause of Death—Part II on the Medical 2 tab.

Funeral Home Recommendations

[Texas Funeral Directors Association](#) and the [National Funeral Directors Association](#) (NFDA) have posted COVID-19 guidance on their websites for funeral directors. The NFDA has broken out the CDC guidance into different sections for easier navigation. These sections include guidance on transfers and arrangements, cremation and burial, availability of PPE, and visitation and funerals.

The NFDA is recommending the following with regards to social distancing and funerals:

- Have a private viewing for only immediate family and/or close friends.
 - Offer an option for a large memorial service for all family and friends at a later date.
- Delay the funeral and hold it at a later date. Discuss options for final disposition if this option is chosen.

- Discuss options for webcasting the funeral so others can view from home.

Cold Storage

If a shortage of cold storage arises, contact your local emergency management coordinator for assistance. Lack of cold storage will likely not only effect one facility, therefore; it is recommended that local/regional jurisdictions coordinate and establish a decedent collection point to better utilize scare resources with the potential for high demand.