



Arranging a Funeral or Cremation in Portland

Direct cremation service \$900 Call (503) 404-3992

This funeral and cremation planning guide will answer some of the key questions you may face with when making funeral arrangements. Regardless of 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. We have put together the following FAQs about cremation costs and funeral prices in the Portland area, as well as state funeral laws, and other funeral/cremation considerations.

What to do when a death occurs – First call

Your first point of call when a death occurs 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 they can be held for a short period in the hospital morgue if necessary. This can mean that you do not have to make a hasty decision. Give yourself some time to select the right funeral service provider for your needs.

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 [28 funeral service providers](#) in Portland. If you want to have a funeral ceremony, the physical location of the funeral home may 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 Portland?

With a range of funeral service providers serving the Portland area, you can arrange anything from a full-service traditional funeral to a simple direct cremation service. 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 Portland?

According to Funeralocity (2021), **the average traditional funeral service costs \$6,452 for an adult funeral in Oregon**, which is slightly below the national average. 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 \$8,000.**

How much does a cremation cost in Portland?

Cremation cost is often 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 \$5,073 in Oregon** (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 \$900 in Portland.** 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 Portland, and is likely to cost nearer to \$2,000 with most funeral providers. 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 generally 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?](#)

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 Oregon, a cremation can only be performed once a ‘Cremation Authorization Form’ has been signed by the legal next of kin and the coroner has issued the cremation permit [Cremation permit fee is \$7.00]. There is a mandatory waiting period of 24 hours before a cremation can proceed. That being said, it usually takes about 3 days to make all the necessary arrangements and complete the paperwork. An expedited service can be arranged if required.

A casket is NOT required by law for a cremation. All that is required is a suitable rigid container. A cremation container is usually a reinforced cardboard or plywood box. If you wish to hold a funeral service before the cremation, some funeral homes offer rental caskets.

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

The death certificate is generally prepared and filed by the funeral director. In Oregon it must be filed within 5 days after the death and before the cremation or burial takes place [Statute § 432.307]. The funeral director will need all the personal information about the deceased in order to file the death certificate. He can order you multiple copies (if required for settling the deceased’s estate) or you can order additional copies yourself at a later date. The original death certificate is filed in the county where the death occurred. The original copy stays with the health department of the county. Certified copies of the death certificate are usually available 7-10 days after the death, however, if the death occurred outside the Portland Metro Area, it may take up to 2 weeks.

You can obtain a certified copy of a death certificate either online, by phone, by mail, or in-person from Oregon’s Public Health Division. **The fee for a copy of a death certificate varies depending upon which service you use between \$20.00 and \$36.50, with each additional copy priced at \$15.00.** In person a

copy can be obtained within about 40 minutes, regular mail takes 8-10 weeks, and online it takes 2 days to be processed and then the shipping time. Expedited shipping can be arranged.

Who is responsible for paying for a funeral?

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 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 [\(503\) 404-3992](tel:5034043992).

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 Multnomah County Medical Examiner's Office at (503) 988-0055. Alternatively, you can find them at:

Multnomah County Medical Examiner's Office

619 NW 6th Ave, 4th Floor

Portland, OR 97209

503-988-0055

503-988-4588 fax

medical.examiner@multco.us

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 put 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?

More families are finding themselves struggling 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 Portland, Oregon As Oregon has a higher than average cremation rate, there is a greater percentage of families seeking different options for memorialization after cremation. Cremated remains can be interred in a grave plot or cremation niche, stored in a cremation urn at home, or scattered. There are also today a multitude of creative cremation artifacts that can be created from cremation ashes, such as cremation diamonds, glass jewelry, birdbaths, and portraits to name but a few. Check out our [Ash Scattering](#) section for more information.

You can scatter cremated remains in a designated memorial scattering garden, on private land (with the landowner's consent), or on many public and state lands. If considering scattering on public or municipal land you should check the local zoning ordinance first. There is, however, no 'cremains police' and cremated remains are sterile organic matter so they pose no threat to the environment. As long as you use safe scattering techniques, there really should be no concern about scattering ashes into the atmosphere. This is the official statement from the Oregon Mortuary Board concerning the legalities of scattering ashes in Oregon.

Oregon is in Region 10 (Pacific Northwest) of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and you can conduct a burial at sea if you so choose. A scattering ceremony should be 3 nautical miles to sea. Charter services are available to do this for around \$175.

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

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 Portland, contact your local provider on [\(503\) 404-3992](tel:5034043992).

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 Portland. The plan costs just \$450 for a 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 Oregon. The cover is worldwide. Read more about this affordable peace of mind death expense coverage here: [Travel Protection Plan](#).

[Arranging a green burial in Portland, Oregon](#)

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 Oregon. Details can be found on our [Green Burials Directory](#).

Can I arrange a no-cost cremation in Portland?

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 Oregon, OHSU has a Body Donation program, more details including a Donation form can be found 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 Oregon that stipulates a casket is required for a cremation service. 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.

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

You can contact our DFS Memorials affordable funeral service provider in Portland 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. Unfortunately, though, it does sometimes happen that you may have a complaint or grievance with a funeral home and you do not manage to resolve it directly with the funeral director. In this case, you should make your complaint in writing to the Oregon Mortuary and Cemetery Board who regulates and licenses funeral businesses in Oregon. They can be contacted at 800 NE Oregon Street # 430 Portland OR 97232 Phone: (971) 673-1500

Another useful consumer resource is the Oregon Cremation Alliance (an affiliate of the Funeral Consumers Alliance).

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.