



10 steps

to Honouring and Celebrating Life

A practical guide to help families with funeral or memorial arrangements



**SOUTHERN
METROPOLITAN**
CEMETERIES TRUST

Honouring and celebrating life

01

Who to notify first


When your loved one passes away:

IN AGED CARE OR HOSPICE → **Onsite Doctor, Family GP**
 If organ donor: Call nearest hospital

IN HOSPITAL → **Hospital Staff**

UNEXPECTEDLY at any other place, including at home → **Coroner | Police**
 Police involvement is a normal part of the procedure for unexpected deaths.
 Police will engage the services of a Funeral Director who will assist with immediate logistical requirements. They will then be able to transfer paperwork to your preferred Funeral Director.

KEY

 SMCT SERVICES

FD FUNERAL DIRECTOR SERVICES

visit - smct.org.au

02

Notify family / close friends

Contact family members and friends of the deceased

There is no right or wrong way to do this - in person or by phone. Sharing this task with several family members can be helpful. Consider contacting employers and those connected to places the deceased regularly visited and those who could become concerned.

Review last Will and testament along with other paperwork that details your loved one's wishes. This may include prepaid arrangements with the cemetery and/or Funeral Director.

(If available refer to MYLIFEBOOK information for funeral arrangements and wishes.)

03

Arrangement for dependents

Make arrangements for dependents, pets and property

Seek immediate care for dependents and pets while long term solutions are being found.

It is also worth securing any property or assets and having mail redirected to an alternative address if applicable.

04

Consider burial / cremation and funeral ceremony options

Consider the type of funeral ceremony you would like, and the way your loved one would wish to be remembered

⦿ A location will need to be selected if one has not been prearranged.

To assist families in navigating the many options available, our customer care team can provide packages and advice across a range of funeral services, along with suitable burial or cremation positions for you to consider.

We are a purpose led, not-for-profit organisation that is committed to serving the diverse needs of our community.

Call our customer care team, who are here to support you with any questions and to help you find the best choice for you and your family.

Call: (03) 8558 8278

05

Selecting a funeral director

A Funeral Director will help you:

- Complete and collect all official paperwork, including the processing of the death certificate
- Prepare and transport the deceased
- Make decisions and understand options regarding religious or ceremonial requirements
- Get the support you need in making funeral arrangements

⦿ **How to find a Funeral Director**

Funeral Directors offer a variety of services and packages. To help you decide on which Funeral Director is right for you and your family, it helps to write a list of questions you may have.

It is important that you feel informed and confident of the services that will be provided.

SMCT can provide you with a list of Funeral Directors that are registered with us and that we know and trust.

Call: (03) 8558 8278

06

Selecting a coffin/ casket and transportation

An enclosed receptacle (coffin/casket) is legally required for the transportation of the deceased.

There is an extensive range available and we recommend speaking with your Funeral Director about options to suit your needs and budget.

A Coffin is constructed of timber, or similar material, with a flat lid and is shaped at the shoulders.

A Casket is constructed of timber or metal and can have either a flat or domed lid and is rectangular in shape.

⦿ Our award-winning florist can help you find a floral arrangement to complement the colour and finish of the selected coffin or casket.

FD Your Funeral Director can provide options and pricing for coffins / caskets based on your family's needs.

They will also manage transportation and assist with paperwork.

07

Arranging a viewing

Viewings are normally conducted at the family home or another appropriate location such as a funeral home or within one of our beautiful purpose-built facilities - i.e. The Atrium.

The deceased is presented in an open coffin or casket, to give those attending, a final moment to say goodbye.

⦿ Both Springvale Botanical Cememtery and Bunurong Memorial Park offer beautiful private viewing rooms for those wishing to organise this service.

Cremation witness viewing rooms are also available at both Springvale and Bunurong Crematorium and provide an intimate room to farewell a loved one.

FD Funeral Directors assist with preparing the deceased for a viewing.

08

Funeral / memorial service

Funeral services and ceremonies provide an important opportunity to honour and celebrate a life lived.

As with all significant life events, it is a time to gather with family and friends and to come together in union and solidarity.

The ceremony, as well as new and old traditions, allow us to grieve properly. They let us reflect on our pain, our gratitude and our memories. They allow us to express our grief and to begin healing through support and connection.



We provide a range of services across several of our locations:

- Modernly appointed chapel & reflection spaces (Springvale Botanical Cemetery & Bunurong Memorial Park) with ample guest parking
- Floral arrangements created by our award-winning florist team
 - Cafe with playground for guests

FD

Funeral Directors play an important role on the day of the service. They provide safe transportation of the deceased and complete all legal documentation. They assist family's with the day's proceedings and can work with the family about any pre-arranged wishes and individual requests.

09

After service functions

Many families choose to host a function after the service, to provide family and friends a chance to come together to support one another and share memories of their loved one.



We offer state-of-the-art function spaces conveniently located within Springvale Botanical Cemetery and Bunurong Memorial Park. These fully-licensed spaces accommodate various group sizes and are located amongst acres of beautiful gardens. They offer a range of culturally inspired and personalised menus.

“food is symbolic of love when words are inadequate”

~ Dr Alan Wolfelt

Our on site florist can assist with a variety of beautiful fresh flowers and floral arrangements.

10

Support services

Although each and every person will grieve and mourn differently, our experience and research has taught us much about the grieving process. We are proud to be able to channel this experience into supportive programs that focus on the wellness of our clients and their families.

We invite our clients to visit our Centre for Care & Wellbeing - a welcoming sanctuary designed to offer support, connection and healing to those experiencing loss. A weekly timetable of activities provides grieving families with opportunities to participate in reflection, meditation, and wellbeing sessions, as well as music and art therapy. All are welcome in this special place, where healing and connection often begins.



INTRODUCTION

We appreciate that planning the end of our lives or losing a loved one is extremely difficult, and that making the arrangements to honour and celebrate the life of a loved one can be highly emotional and challenging.

Our purpose is to honour and celebrate life, and we are committed to serving your needs through this time.

FIVE FREEDOMS

We believe that every person, regardless of their religion, culture or personal preference, should be able to honour and celebrate their loved one as they choose. We encourage every family to remember these Five Freedoms as they go through the planning process.

- 1. You have the freedom to take your time.** Reflect on how you would like to honour your loved ones. If you are feeling rushed or pressured, look for alternative services that are more aligned to the family needs.
- 2. You have the freedom to ask questions.** We are here to help and guide you through the next weeks, months and years. It is essential that you feel supported and comfortable to ask questions and seek clarification and assistance at any time.
- 3. You have the freedom to question common practices.** The services we provide must be transparent, seamless and suit you and your family's needs. Please do not hesitate to challenge what is considered the 'normal' practice - this is your unique journey.
- 4. You have the freedom to decide what is right for you.** We are here to walk with you through the memorial process. We want you to feel comfortable and to be able to choose what is right for you and your loved ones.
- 5. You have the freedom to honour the life of your loved one in the way that you choose.** We are each unique in our own way. Let us help you celebrate and honour your loved one in a way that reflects their uniqueness and wishes.



OUR SERVICES

We are committed to guiding families through some of the most important decisions that need to be made when a loved one passes.

Our services include:

Focusing on community: We are a community-based, not-for-profit organisation, committed to providing beautiful and diverse locations as the final resting place for loved ones.

Honouring life: Providing grave, crypt or cremation memorial options that honour and preserve cultural, religious beliefs and personal preferences.

Celebrating life: Bunurong Memorial Park and Springvale Botanical Cemetery offer the convenience of modern on-site facilities to celebrate life including chapels, reflection spaces and function rooms with culturally inspired and personalised menus.

Arranging floral tributes: On-site florists at both Bunurong and Springvale specialise in a variety of floral arrangements and tributes.

Giving you peace of mind: Our customer care team are here for you and your family at every step, from helping you with arrangements to caring for family members who are coming to terms with their new reality.

Preserving eternally: Through our perpetuity (for all time) fund, we provide peace of mind that each of our sites will be preserved for the enjoyment of generations to come.

Maintaining family records: Maintenance of the deceased's records which is helpful for tracing genealogy and connecting past and future generations.

PRE-PLANNING

There are many benefits to planning ahead - it helps to reduce many of the strains on family members at an emotionally difficult time by providing specific details of your wishes. This clarity gives families the time they need to grieve, connect and heal without needing to take on the stress of making arrangements.

We can help you plan ahead

Our experienced Customer Care Team on **(03) 8558 8278** who can discuss the benefits of pre-planning and the best options for you or a loved one.

Advantages of planning ahead with SMCT

- Gives you the opportunity to secure specific locations so family members can stay together.
- You can purchase for a future

need at today's prices.

- Your funds are securely invested in a not-for-profit organisation that has been serving the community since 1852.
- Family members are not burdened financially, and there are no ongoing fees.
- Key decisions are made and recorded to reassure family members of final wishes.
- If required, you can cancel in the future. Refunds for cemetery positions are calculated on the current price, e.g. if you purchase today and cancel in 10 years, the refund is based on today's pricing and not the price originally paid, excluding any cancellation and maintenance fees that apply.
- Cemetery positions are not considered an asset and therefore do not impact pension payments.

MYLIFEBOOK

A practical planning tool that helps you plan your final wishes in one convenient place, helping family members and service providers with delivering on your wishes.

To get started, visit: smct.org.au/mylifebook



MEMORIAL OPTIONS

Wishes, specific instructions and prepaid arrangements

Your loved one may have left specific instructions on the type of burial, cremation or funeral they wanted and may have made prepaid arrangements with a cemetery and/or Funeral Director. This may be in the form of a conversation or written into a Will. For these cases, it is important to share any wishes with the SMCT Customer Care team who can support your family with honouring your loved one.

Permanent and lasting memorials

Making the right decision, both now and for the future, can be challenging. If specific wishes are not known, it is important to consider what and how you would like to commemorate your loved one, or how they would have liked to be remembered.

We have a variety of burial or cremation options, including beautiful mausoleums and other areas specifically designed for cultural and individual preferences. Prices are dependant on several factors, such as location and type of service.

Having a permanent resting place to visit provides an essential connection and place of remembrance for those left behind.

Do you need help deciding?

Our online guided experience tool has been designed to help you search available options and packages based on preferred location, culture, setting or type.

Visit smct.org.au/guided-experience to discover more.

We are here to help you make the right decision, call our customer care team on (03) 8558 8278, who can walk you through the options available.

SELECTING A FUNERAL DIRECTOR

How to select a Funeral Director

The care, services and packages provided by each Funeral Director can vary greatly. We recommend that you prepare a list of questions for Funeral Directors you are considering to help you choose the most suitable option for you and your family.

Refer to our 'Five Freedoms' and ask questions to seek clarification if you are unsure. You do not need

A Funeral Director is not required in the case of stillbirth or for children under 21 weeks of age. We have several special resting places, dedicated to the memory of young lives lost.

to involve a Funeral Director when planning a funeral, but you may find it helpful. It is up to each family to include a Funeral Director as much, or as little as needed.

Find an SMCT Registered Funeral Director

For a list of SMCT registered Funeral Directors, please contact our customer care team on **(03) 8558 8278**.





FUNERAL DIRECTOR SERVICES

Funeral Directors perform an important function in coordinating the logistics of a funeral.

Funeral Directors can assist with:

Transportation: The immediate hours following the death of a loved one can be distressing. Depending on where the death occurred, urgent transportation of the body may be required. A Funeral Director can assist with transportation to each location and care for your loved one while funeral arrangements are being made.

Legal compliance: The Funeral Director is required to comply with State law and provide paperwork to governing bodies, for example organising the death certificate and liaising with the coroner's office.

Providing paperwork on the day of the funeral: They are responsible for supplying the Funeral Services team

at the cemetery with the required paperwork to carry out the burial or cremation.

Responsible for mortuary services: They carry out any services requested by the family, such as embalming.

Optional Services provided by Funeral Directors:

Coordinate the funeral: They can work with families and the cemetery to co-ordinate the timings of the funeral day and ensure the day runs smoothly.

Supplying a coffin or casket: They can provide various options of coffins or caskets.

Managing arrangements for the funeral: They work with the cemetery

to book the funeral requirements, including a grave, chapel or reflections space and on-site functions.

Arranging a viewing: They can help arrange a gathering where you can say goodbye to your loved one prior to the funeral.

Other services: There are a number of services Funeral Directors can provide to their customers, including finding a minister or celebrant, arranging flowers, organising music, and handing out an order of service.

FUNERAL VIEWING



Bunurong Memorial Park Viewing Rooms

A funeral viewing is an intimate gathering, usually conducted prior to the funeral (the day before or on the day of). It provides family and friends with a final viewing of the deceased in a private and personal setting.

Viewings regularly include prayers, music, tributes and/or other forms of reflection.

Many Funeral Directors provide services that assist family members with viewing arrangements. These can include recommendations and logistics on transportation, clothing, cultural traditions and venue. Viewings can be held at your family home, Springvale Botanical Cemetery, Bunurong Memorial Park or another preferred location.



FUNERAL / MEMORIAL SERVICE

A funeral/memorial service provides an opportunity for family and friends to come together to honour and remember the life of a loved one.

Over the past few decades, funeral / memorial services have shifted from more traditional events to become highly personalised, reflecting the unique style and interests of the deceased. There is no right or wrong way to honour and celebrate the life of a loved one - only that it is meaningful to you and your family and friends.

When planning a service, reflect on the values, beliefs and cultural traditions that are important to you or your loved one - this may assist with selecting the most suitable style and venue for the ceremony. In some cases, your loved one may have left instructions with their Will, detailing specific wishes for the funeral services or other arrangements.

When does a funeral take place?

Individual and cultural preferences generally determine the timeframe for which a funeral should take place. In some cultures, funeral traditions need to occur within 24-48 hours. However, it is most common for funerals to take place approximately 7-10 days after the death. Timing may also need to allow for family and friends travelling from interstate or overseas. Funeral Directors can assist with facilities for longer-term care of a loved one, based on your needs.

Venue

A funeral ceremony can take place in a variety of locations, including a church, mosque, chapel, home or gravesite. Often the service location chosen will be based on the number of guests likely to attend, location proximity, facilities and availability.

We offer beautiful and distinctive chapels and reflection spaces within Bunurong Memorial Park and Springvale Botanical Cemetery. Each location provides families with comfortable chapel and reflection space options, tastefully decorated and equipped with audio-visual technology for the sharing of treasured memories via photos and video.

Who conducts a Ceremony/ Service?

Commonly a Celebrant, Priest or Minister officiate funeral services. However, dependant on individual preferences, families can choose anyone who they feel best represents the way the deceased wished to be honoured.

Eulogy

A eulogy is a speech delivered at a funeral which commemorates the life of the deceased. It often includes fond and heart-felt words given by family members, close friends or a spokesperson. It can take the form of a biographical eulogy, that details the person's interests and life achievements.

Order of Service

An 'Order of Service' is a printed program, handed to arriving guests, it outlines the chronological order (flow) of the ceremony. It allows guests to follow the funeral proceedings and participate in songs, hymns, prayers and offerings. It can also act as a meaningful take-home memorial piece.

FLOWER TRIBUTE

Flowers are a symbolic tribute and are available in a range of styles including coffin or casket sprays, wreaths and crosses. If you are looking for something more unique, our award-winning "Café Vita et Flores" floristry team can create stunning custom arrangements to suit individual tastes and styles.



Visit smct.org.au/florist for more information, or in-store (Café Vita et Flores) within Springvale Botanical Cemetery or Bunurong Memorial Park.



AFTER-SERVICE FUNCTION

"Food is symbolic of love when words are inadequate."

- Dr Alan Wolfelt

You may wish to hold a gathering for guests after the funeral ceremony. An after-service function generally includes the serving of food and drinks while guests come together to share memories and support family and friends.

Both Springvale Botanical Cemetery and Bunurong Memorial Park remove the need for guests to travel

to alternative locations, providing fully-licensed and private function spaces with a range of culturally inspired menus.

For more information or to discuss menu options, our function manager is available for a consultation to help you design the perfect function to honour and celebrate your loved one.



For Springvale Botanical Cemetery, please call (03) 8558 8278 and for Bunurong Memorial Park, please call (03) 9788 9488 or email info@cafevita.org.au



At the Centre for Care & Wellbeing we are here to assist families through grief and to respect everyone's right to honour the life of their loved one in the way that they choose.

Although everyone will grieve and mourn differently, our vast experience and research have taught us much about the grieving process.

The centre is focused on allowing people to go through a period of mourning, where their loss is

acknowledged. This support allows them to express their grief, which can provide great comfort.

The Centre for Care & Wellbeing is a proud initiative of SMCT, providing families with a range of intimate group sessions designed to promote wellness and to help people at a time when they may need it most. Discover our upcoming timetable at smct.org.au/ccw

"This is a safe haven where stories are told, connections are made, lives are honoured and care is anchored in compassion."



We are here to help. Call us on (03) 8772 6111 to find out how we can help support you or a loved one, or visit: smct.org.au/ccw

HELPFUL INFORMATION

There are several organisations to contact and administrative tasks to complete when someone dies. To help you with this, we have provided some useful information for you to consider.



Information for the Funeral Director

It is beneficial to have copies of official identification of the deceased to ensure Funeral Directors record accurate information. You will need to provide the following information:

- Full legal name of the deceased
- Date of birth
- Mother's maiden name

Authorisations and why they are important

There are two types of authorisations that are important when arranging a funeral; "Authorising Person" and the "Holder of Right".

Authorising Person: is a person that signs the Funeral Director's

paperwork, "authorising" the burial or cremation to proceed. This person then assumes ongoing authority over the deceased and can, therefore, make arrangements or give instructions regarding a grave or memorial for the deceased. They can also give another person written authority to make this arrangement.

Holder of Right (HOR) of

Interment: is the owner of a grave or memorial location. This person is required to sign an authorisation form to allow an interment to take place. Should the HOR be the deceased, the next of kin or beneficiary of the deceased will be required to sign a Statutory Declaration stating that the HOR is deceased and that they are either the beneficiary or have authority to act on behalf of the family.

NOTIFICATIONS

Death Certificate

The Funeral Director can apply for the Death Certificate on your behalf from the Births, Deaths and Marriages office. Alternatively, the Authorising Person can apply for the Death Certificate.

Phone: **1300 369 367**

www.bdm.vic.gov.au

Wills and Probate

If you are named as an executor in a Will, you may need to apply for 'probate'. This is a legal document authorising your management over the deceased's estate according to the instructions outlined in their Will.

Phone: **(03) 9607 9550**

www.supremecourt.vic.gov.au/wills-and-probate

Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA)

Phone: **133 254**

www.dva.gov.au/benefits-and-payments/bereavement-assistance

Centrelink and Medicare

It is important to notify the Department of Human Services (Bereavement Assistance) when someone has died so that they can update their Centrelink, Medicare and/or Child Support Records.

Phone: **132 300**

Advise of Death form:

www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/forms/sa116a

Find a Service Centre:

<https://findus.humanservices.gov.au/findnearest.asp>

Australian Tax Office (ATO)

As the executor or administrator of the estate, you will need to notify the ATO of a person's death.

Phone: **132 865**

www.ato.gov.au/forms/notification-of-a-deceased-person/

Australian Electoral Commission

Phone: **132 326**

The Department of Health and Human Services has a checklist that you may also find useful.

www.humanservices.gov.au/sites/default/files/who-to-notify-checklist.pdf

Access support today

The Centre for Care and Wellbeing (CCW) partners with the Australian Centre for Grief and Bereavement (ACGB) to offer bereaved visitors a wide range of care and support services to assist through the various stages of grief.

ACGB provide bereavement support and care to CCW programs. The CCW also refer visitors to ACGB for individual counselling and group support as required.

Australian Centre for Grief and Bereavement

1300 664 786

To view a full list of bereavement counselling and support organisations visit smct.org.au/help, or to find out more about the support services available through CCW go to page 19 of this booklet.

smct.org.au



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