About this Guide

The content of the Guide has been designed for funeral directors and embalming professionals detailing protocols and best practices for protecting yourself, your staff, your firm, as well as the community you serve from the recent outbreak of the CORONAVIRUS (Covid-19).

The NFDMA Executive Committee and the Public Relations Committee collaborated on the content of this publication. This Guide is a comprehensive knowledge-sharing resource for funeral homes and their staff facing the coronavirus onslaught. Its aim is to help funeral directors and embalming professionals fight to slow down and contain the spread of the virus.

The Guide contains detailed explanations of processes from first call, removal, embalming, visitations, funeral, cremation and burial of the deceased infected with Covid-19 and their families you serve, as well as the general public. It also offers insights into ways in which the funeral home staff are able to increase awareness, and efficiency, such as focusing on early staff preparation and training, including strict disinfection protocols, and other effective strategies to minimize risk and maximize our protection.

Even though this Guide does not cover every aspect of this pandemic The NFDMA hopes this Guide provides the most-efficient and practical methods in decision-making while we face this battle, without having to start from scratch.

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This information being shared is specifically for the death care industry based on the 3/25/20 Centers for Disease Central and Prevention (CDC), the World Health Organization (WHO), Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and other national and international associations guidelines.
Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus.

Most people infected with the COVID-19 virus will experience mild to moderate respiratory illness and recover without requiring special treatment. Older people, and those with underlying medical problems like cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease, and cancer are more likely to develop serious illness.

The best way to prevent and slow down transmission is be well informed about the COVID-19 virus, the disease it causes and how it spreads. Protect yourself and others from infection by washing your hands or using an alcohol based rub frequently and not touching your face.

The COVID-19 virus spreads primarily through droplets of saliva or discharge from the nose when an infected person coughs or sneezes, so it’s important that you also practice respiratory etiquette (for example, by coughing into a flexed elbow).

At this time, there are no specific vaccines or treatments for COVID-19. However, there are many ongoing clinical trials evaluating potential treatments.

According to the CDC and WHO as of 3/25/2020
PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

The use and disposal of PPE is essential for reducing exposure. You should have policies and procedures specifying details on selecting PPE, the location of PPE, and training on how to put on PPE – including the order of donning, decontamination, removal of PPE, and disposal or storage. Additionally, training that includes emphasis on a buddy system, partnering for assistance and review, on donning, use and doffing can increase successful use of PPE.

The use of PPE requires selection factors that include supply, size, fit, protection level, comfort, design and experience in use. For example, glove selection is based on the type of exposure. Non-latex gloves are used for protection from infectious diseases, while chemical-resistant gloves are used for protection from chemicals. Other considerations include providing PPE in various sizes and manufactures for fit and comfort which can be key factors in appropriate use.

GLOVES
Gloves must be worn according to Standard and Contact Precautions:

- Hand hygiene should be performed when appropriate, regardless of indications for glove use.
- The use of examination gloves is indicated when there is potential for touching blood, body fluids, secretions, excretions and items visibly soiled by body fluids.
- Situations with risk of direct exposure include: contact with blood, contact with mucous membrane and with non-intact skin, and the potential presence of highly infectious and dangerous organisms; epidemic or emergency situations.

GOWN:
- Fully cover torso from neck to knees, arms to end of wrists, and wrap around the back.
- Fasten at back of neck and waist. Use duct tape to secure.

MASK OR RESPIRATOR:
- Secure ties or elastic bands at middle of head and neck.
- Fit flexible band to nose bridge.
- Fit snug to face and below chin.
For effective use of PPE to protect workers, it is essential to follow standard procedures for putting on and taking off the equipment.

## DONNING PPE

**Gown:**
- Fully cover torso from neck to knees, arms to end of wrists, and wrap around the back.
- Fasten at back of neck and waist.
  - Use duct tape to secure.

**Goggles or face-shield:**
- Place over face and eyes and adjust to fit.

## DOFFING PPE

**Goggles or face-shield:**
- Outside of goggles or face-shield is contaminated!
- To remove, handle by head band or ear pieces.
  - Place in designated receptacle for reprocessing or discard in waste container.

**Mask or respirator:**
- Front of mask/respirator is contaminated — DO NOT TOUCH!
- Grasp bottom, then top ties or elastics and remove.
  - Discard in waste container.

**Gloves:**
- Outside of gloves is contaminated!
- Grasp outside of glove with opposite gloved hand; peel off.
- Hold removed glove in gloved hand.
- Slide fingers of ungloved hand under remaining glove at wrist.
- Peel off the second glove.
- Discard gloves in waste container.

**Gown:**
- Gown front and sleeves are contaminated!
- Unfasten ties.
- Pull away from neck and shoulders, touching inside of gown only.
- Turn gown inside out.
- Fold or roll into a bundle and discard.
• Routine cleaning is important to ensure a clean and dust-free funeral home environment. Many microorganisms are usually present in “visible dirt”, and routine cleaning helps to eliminate this dirt.

• Administrative and office areas require normal domestic cleaning.

• Most embalming, dressing, casketing, and service areas should be cleaned by wet mopping.

• Dry sweeping is not recommended. The use of a neutral detergent solution improves the quality of cleaning. Hot water (80°C) is a useful and effective environmental cleaner.

• Any areas visibly contaminated with blood or body fluids should be cleaned immediately with detergent and water.

• Other areas that have bodies with known transmissible infectious diseases should be cleaned with a detergent/disinfectant solution.

• All horizontal surfaces and all toilet areas should be cleaned daily.

(For illustration purposes)
The following precautions must be taken to prevent spread of infection from cough:

- Close contact with people who are sick should be avoided.
- Stay at home when sick.
- Cover mouth and nose with a tissue while coughing or sneezing.
- Wash hands often with soap and warm water for 60 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand-rub.
- Avoid touching one’s eyes, nose or mouth.
- Practice other good health habits. Clean and disinfect frequently-touched surfaces. Have plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids and eat nutritious food.

Respiratory hygiene/Cough etiquette

The following measures to contain respiratory secretions are recommended for all individuals with signs and symptoms of a respiratory infection:

- Cover mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing.
- Use the nearest waste receptacle to dispose of the tissue after use.
- If you do not have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve, not your hands.
- Perform hand hygiene (e.g. hand-washing with non-antimicrobial soap and water, alcohol-based hand-rub, or antiseptic hand-wash) after having contact with respiratory secretions and contaminated objects/materials.

Funeral home facilities should ensure the availability of materials for respiratory hygiene/cough etiquette in waiting areas for families and visitors.

- Provide tissues and no-touch receptacles for used tissue disposal.
- Provide conveniently located dispensers of alcohol-based hand-rub; where sinks are available, ensure that supplies for hand-washing (i.e. soap, disposable towels) are consistently available.
Wash Your Hands Often to Stay Healthy

You can help yourself and your loved ones stay healthy by washing your hands often, especially during these key times when you are likely to get and spread germs:

• Before, during, and after preparing food.
• Before eating food.
• Before and after caring for someone at home who is sick with vomiting or diarrhea.
• Before and after treating a cut or wound.
• After using the toilet.
• After changing diapers or cleaning up a child who has used the toilet.
• After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
• After touching an animal, animal feed, or animal waste.
• After handling pet food or pet treats.
• After touching garbage.

Follow Five Steps to Wash Your Hands the Right Way

Washing your hands is one of the most effective ways to prevent the spread of germs. Clean hands can stop germs from spreading from one person to another and throughout an entire community.

Follow these five steps every time.

Wet your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold), turn off the tap, and apply soap.

Lather your hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.

Scrub your hands for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the “Happy Birthday” song from beginning to end twice.

Rinse your hands well under clean, running water.

Dry your hands using a clean towel or air dry them.

Use Hand Sanitizer When You Can’t Use Soap and Water

You can use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.

Washing hands with soap and water is the best way to get rid of germs in most situations. If soap and water are not readily available, you can use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
Follow universal precautions when removing the deceased – disposable gowns, gloves, masks etc. After removal, transport vehicles, cots and floors should be cleaned.

Make a request to Hospitals, hospice facilities, etc. if they could provide a central location for removal of the deceased and not from the patient’s room. The morgue or another private and isolated area to minimize employees contact and exposure to the virus.

Recommendations During the Removal Process

Limit number of persons planning funeral arrangement to no more than three (3); additional persons can meet via conference call.

For those present, have sanitizers, wipes available.

Sanitize your facility daily and after each arrangement conference.

Recommendations During the Arrangement Conference

Discuss procedure(s) with family on service requirements/options.

No second viewing.

Funeral and graveside service of 10 or less with social distancing. (Check your local and state guidelines)

Cemeteries should contacted. Some have other restrictions, ie. just the hearse and FD staff.

Post signage to limit hugging, kissing and handshaking.

Limit services in funeral home chapels to two hours or less.

Restrict viewings to two hours and not all day for multiple viewings in a day, stagger hours.

Recommendations During the Visitation or Funeral Service
• Sanitize often (door handles, light switches, etc.) Recipe to make hand sanitizer (aloe gel and rubbing alcohol)

• Offer live streaming if possible.

• Consider discontinuing limousine service or limit the number of riders. No one sitting in the front seat.

• Limit or discourage home set ups (chairs, register stands, etc.)

• Provide tickets for family to help limit the number of participants.

• Have families sign waivers, disclaimers, etc.

• Frequently clean door handles and other points of contact.

ABC Funeral Home
1234 Any Street - Any Town, USA

RESPONSE TO CORONAVIRUS
IN AN EFFORT TO EMPLOY SAFETY MEASURES
WE WILL EMPLOY THE FOLLOWING STEPS

• WIPING DOWN ALL DOOR HANDLES EVERY HOUR
• HAND SANITIZER AVAILABLE AT THE ENTRY OF OUR BUILDING AND AS REQUESTED
• SIGNS IN LAVATORY REMINDING TO WASH HANDS
• SOCIAL DISTANCING WE WILL REFRAIN FROM HUGGING, KISSING AND SHAKING HANDS

WHAT YOU CAN DO:
• SOCIAL DISTANCING
• LIMIT CONTACT WITH ATTENDEES AND SPACE
• GREET WITH FIST BUMPS OR ELBOW BUMPS
• IF YOU COUGH OR SNEEZE USE A TISSUE, DISPOSE OF TISSUE AND WASH HANDS IMMEDIATELY
• IF YOU ARE SICK, PLEASE STAY AT HOME
THANK YOU FOR YOUR UNDERSTANDING AS WE SERVE YOU WITH CARE
YOURS IN SERVICE.

(For illustration purposes)
The Vital Importance of Social Distancing

How a reduction in social contact can reduce the spread of Coronavirus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>5 Days</th>
<th>30 Days</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Normal Behaviour</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Person Infects</td>
<td>2.5 People</td>
<td>406 People</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50% Less Contact</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Person Infects</td>
<td>1.25 People</td>
<td>15 People</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75% Less Contact</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Person Infects</td>
<td>0.625 People</td>
<td>2.5 People</td>
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</table>

Source: Siner Laboratory / Gary Warshaw
Let’s help do our part in flattening the COVID-19 curve

Take common sense steps:

- No handshakes
- No hugs
- No packed events

Overcoming the epidemic:

- Without measures to slow the rate of infection
- Measures taken to slow the rate of infection
  (e.g., social distancing, event size limits)

Capacity of healthcare system:
- Capacity can actually decrease as healthcare workers get sick or are placed under quarantine
SANITIZE EQUIPMENT, INSTRUMENTS, AND VEHICLES

ADDRESSING COVID-19

Preparedness Planning for Global ScaleUps

1. Create a Cross-Functional Team to Assess Business Vulnerabilities
Every business is different and will have different vulnerabilities that may increase chances of being impacted by Coronavirus. Set a meeting with senior management to assess your specific situation.

2. Build a Business Continuity and Response Plan
Build business-continuity and crisis-management plans specifically designed to minimize the impacts of a global outbreak. This should be led by the CEO and have input from all functional heads. Clearly define protocols, roles and responsibilities.

3. Protect Your Employees and Customers
We recommend following the most conservative guidelines provided by leading global health authorities and remain alert to any changes or updates made.

4. Communicate Effectively
Assign clear responsibilities for internal and external communications to keep employees informed with frequent updates.