

# Deceased Management Advisory Group

While funerals are excluded from the ban on gatherings, it is absolutely vital that funeral services abide by social distancing rules and do not create an unnecessary risk of transmitting COVID-19 between those in attendance.

The Deceased Management Advisory Group (DMAG), which is regularly liaising with government on the sector's response to COVID-19, comprises the Association of Private Crematoria and Cemeteries (APCC), Federation of Burial and Cremation Authorities (FBCA); Funeral Furnishing Manufacturers' Association (FFMA); Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management (ICCM); National Association of Funeral Directors (NAFD), National Society of Allied & Independent Funeral Directors (SAIF) and The Cremation Society.

The members of DMAG are aware of the important and central role of the funeral ritual to the grieving process for many families. However, during these extremely challenging times the transmission of the coronavirus at funeral gatherings to the elderly, frail, those in vulnerable groups along with funeral directors and crematorium staff cannot be overlooked.

In line with Government guidance, funeral services should only be attended by a limited number of people who are not in any of the high-risk categories and are not self-isolating. No specific number has been set by the Government.

Only the following people should attend:

- members of the person's household
- close family members
- if the deceased has neither household or family members in attendance, then it is possible for a modest number of friends to attend.

Funerals should be arranged over the phone or via other electronic means, wherever possible. If a funeral must be arranged in person, please respect the social distancing guidance – keep two metres apart, wash hands frequently, and cough or sneeze into a tissue/crook of your elbow and limit the number of people attending in person to arrange the funeral.

Do not arrange a funeral in person if anyone involved has symptoms or should be self-isolating, in accordance with government advice. It is vital that we do all we can to reduce the spread of the virus and that funeral service employees (who



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are key workers) can remain healthy and able to continue supporting bereaved families.

If you wish to view the deceased person by visiting the Chapel of Rest, please make arrangements with your funeral director for specific times and limit the numbers attending at any one time to those living in the same household. At-risk groups are strongly urged not to visit.

Limousines should only be used if there is no alternative option. Some funeral firms have now withdrawn them from use, because of the risk of infection spreading inside the vehicle.

If used, each vehicle should only be used to carry those living in the same household (in line with social distancing guidance). The driver must be able to abide by social distancing guidelines too, keeping glass screens up and limiting the number travelling to ensure they can sit as far back as possible. Webcasting/live streaming of the funeral service (using professional or personal devices) may still be possible – thereby enabling other mourners to still participate without putting themselves and others at risk of harm.

Please don't publicly advertise the funeral details to reduce the risk of other, well-meaning mourners arriving unexpectedly. This is not permitted under current social distancing laws. and they may be turned away at the door, which could be distressing for them and the bereaved family. It will also place funeral key workers at unnecessary risk of harm.

During the service, all mourners should remain two metres apart from anyone not living in their household at all times. Refrain from making physical contact with anyone outside of your household.

There may be other changes too. For example, the gardens may be closed, it may not be possible to touch the coffin or for families to be bearers, the curtains may not be able to remain open during the service and all charitable collections should be done online.

This guidance will be updated, where necessary, as the situation changes.



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