

One advantage of pre-paying is that the cost can be frozen to protect against inflation and save your family members these expenses when the service is needed.

The funeral director can give you a book that guides you in providing the information needed. You should complete this book carefully and completely. Be sure to include a copy of your obituary and a copy of the list of Masonic bodies you belong to as was suggested earlier. If you are a veteran be sure to include pertinent information about your service record. This should include the branch of service, rank held, medals awarded, date of entry, date of discharge, service serial number and a copy of your discharge papers (DD 214).

Legal Assistance

You should visit your attorney and have him draw up a last will and testament. This will ensure your wishes are legal and binding, and will leave no doubt as to the disposition of your property. Such arrangements will raise a big burden from the shoulders of your survivors at a very traumatic time in their lives.

Don't Delay

Therefore, Brethren, do it now, for as our Masonic funeral service says *"...life is uncertain, and all earthly pursuits are vain, let us no longer postpone consideration of the all-important concerns of eternity ..."*

Be prepared and be considerate of your loved ones and your Brothers and, most of all, be prepared yourself, first in your heart and secondly in your affairs.

Useful Addresses:

Grand Lodge of Virginia A.F. & A.M.

4115 Nine Mile Road
Richmond, VA 23223-4926
804-222-3110



Tuckahoe Lodge 347 A.F. & A.M.

Bob Carpenter, Jr., Secretary
10604 Joseph Court
Glen Allen, VA 23060-6490
804-837-0360 (c)



Scottish Rite-Richmond Valley

PO Box 9136
Richmond, VA 23227-0136
804-264-2050



Acca Shrine

1712 Bellevue Ave
Richmond, VA 23227-3920
804-264-0506



Grand Chapter Royal Arch

500 Masonic Lane Suite C
Richmond, VA 23223-4916
804-222-9120



Grand Commandery

500 Masonic Lane, Suite A
Richmond, VA 23223-5552
804-226-8027



Original Planning Guide Courtesy of:
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MASONIC

FUNERAL



PLANNING

GUIDE

"The last offices paid to the dead are useful as lessons to the living; from them we are to derive instruction and to consider every solemnity of this kind as a summons to prepare for our dissolution."
(From the Grand Lodge of Virginia Masonic Funeral Service)

We have all listened to these ageless words spoken in honor of departed Brethren. The question for you is: When these words are spoken over you, will you have made the preparations necessary to satisfy the laws of the land and to ease the burden of your passing on your family? Have you told your family that a beautiful Masonic Service is available? It's something we should all consider in a timely manner, especially while we are of sound mind and body and able to make sound decisions regarding possessions and last wishes.

Approaching this task from the standpoint of membership in the Fraternity, we must deal with the long-standing tradition not to discuss, in detail, the business of the Fraternity. Therefore, many widows and children have no idea who in the Lodge needs to be notified of our passing. Following are a few suggestions that will ease the burden not only on your family but your Lodge Secretary and Master as well.

Getting Started

Include with your important papers, envelopes addressed to the Lodge Secretary and the secretaries of all the appendant bodies in which you have membership. Put a sheet of paper in each envelope with your Masonic history (if you have been a member of more than one Lodge, be sure your list reflects the correct names and locations of all Lodges in which you have held membership) in case you have transferred your membership, and a place for your

survivor to write the date of your passing and any other information that might be of interest to the Lodge and appendant bodies.

Attach to the envelopes a sheet of paper with detailed instructions that explain to your next of kin the importance of notifying each Masonic body of your passing. If you are uncertain what the correct address is, look at the return address on your latest dues notice. Some helpful addresses are listed on the back panel of this pamphlet.

Also, include with these important papers a sheet of paper with instructions on whom to contact to request a Masonic funeral service. The Master of your Lodge is always an appropriate person to contact when requesting a service. If he is unavailable, contact your Lodge Secretary.

It would be a good idea to write a draft of your obituary so that those things that were important to you, in your life, will be known to others. It also insures your Masonic memberships, titles, and honors are listed accurately. Include the full name of each body as well as the complete title of each office you have held.

Be sure to include specific instructions on the disposal of your Masonic books, pins, jewelry, aprons and related items. This may be to a Masonic relative who is interested; your Lodge for their library or perhaps a brother who you know will keep and treasure your books as you did.

You may want to donate your books to the Lodge with instructions to sell them and use the money earned for upkeep of the Lodge hall or a Lodge charity.

Whatever your personal wishes, make timely plans and leave clear instructions. It is sad to go to a flea market or yard sale and see someone's Masonic book

collection lying in a neglected heap on a dusty table.

Pre-planning

Now for a look at the worldly side of the issue of death. As in disposition of your Masonic belongings, it should be a priority with every brother to make final plans. You should contact a funeral director and ask him for assistance in pre-planning your funeral and burial. Your funeral director can assist you in developing a pre-need plan. This plan can be purchased and paid for at any time. The funeral director will help you select your casket, service, vault, grave plot and grave marker or guide you if your wish is cremation.

They will also make suggestions on the type of service and what will be included in the service, such as visitation times, minister/spiritual leader, songs, casket bearers and Masonic emblem on the service folder. The funeral director should be instructed to remind the family that it is customary for the apron to remain in the casket.

The funeral director will counsel you on the financial aspects of your service and will help you to select a casket, burial site, etc., that is within your financial range. He will suggest options for paying for your pre-need, which can include CDs, insurance policies, etc.

