

2013 General Price Survey Service Category List

Here are the service categories listed in the survey and, very basically, what they stand for:

Basic fee: non-declinable overhead and basic service fee applied to all totals. Many funeral homes state that this fee is already included in their charges for direct cremation, immediate burial and forwarding and receiving of remains. Be sure to verify this before signing a contract.

Embalming: Not required for immediate cremation or earth burial but some establishments require it for delayed funerals when no refrigeration is available.

OPB: Other Body Preparation. Dressing and casketing, typically done for an open-casket viewing.

Viewing: Only for a public open casket event to actually view the body, although this sometimes includes a "visitation" or calling hours at the funeral home, with or without a casket present.

Funeral: The actual service with the casket or urn present, as opposed to a memorial service usually held at a later time to celebrate the deceased person's life often done without funeral home involvement. If a funeral is being performed at a church, or synagogue, or mosque, there may be little if any need for funeral home services other than transport and removal of the casket. Check before agreeing to this cost.

Transfer: Pick up of the body at the place of death and transport to the funeral home only. There are additional charges per mile outside a given radius from the funeral home.

Hearse: Use of this vehicle, if available, to transfer the body to the church, crematory, cemetery, or airport .

Limo/Sedan: Use of specific funeral home vehicles for the family. If family members will be providing their own transportation, there is no need for this service.

Service vehicle: Use of an alternative vehicle, sometimes used to deliver flowers, or bring flowers from the funeral to the gravesite, or pick up clergy.

TOTAL OF ALL SERVICES ABOVE THIS LINE - ADDITIONAL CHARGES BELOW THIS LINE: For a "Full service Funeral" this does not include various costs. Read the entire contract carefully before signing.

Caskets: Most basic model cost. A funeral home cannot charge more if family provides an alternate container.

Vaults: Many cemeteries require a concrete vault to prevent cave-ins after burials. The cost listed is the most basic model cost of outer container required by many cemeteries. Not all cemeteries require a vault, nor is a vault required for burial on private property.

Immediate Burial: This charge does not include the cost of a casket.

Graveside: Service in the cemetery. Typically this is charged when there are no other services. A "committal" after a full-service funeral may have no extra charge, although some will charge at the rate of the graveside fee. If death occurs in the winter, there will usually be a charge for body storage until the Spring.

Direct Cremation: Includes actual process of cremation. In some cases an additional cost of a crematory fee of \$400 is added if it was not included in the breakdown cost of cremation and includes the use of an alternative container. We have listed the lowest cost option as provided by the funeral homes.

Memorial: Cost of Funeral Directors assistance with service when the body is not present. A memorial service can be arranged and conducted without funeral home assistance.

Forward: Arranging body transfer to another funeral home. (To get the best price, always contact a funeral home in the state where the burial will take place and let them negotiate a price with the funeral home where the death occurs.)

Receive: Body received from another funeral home.

Body donation: Assistance with delivering remains when body has been donated to a medical school. (The UVM Medical School now pays the funeral home directly for this cost when prior arrangements have been made for body donation.)

Private viewing per hour: Cost per hour of additional viewing time. A body does not need to be embalmed for this, although you may wish to ask the funeral home to dress the body first and use refrigeration, if available, instead. See charge listed under OPB.

ID prep/view and Sanitary Care: Additional services required only in very specific circumstances.

Refrigeration: Only required if funeral is delayed. Not all homes have refrigeration units.

Web site and prices: Funeral home has a website and prices are displayed, if "yes". Funeral homes may have added a website in the time after we have received information.

FTC and VT compliance: "NO" = major infraction, "no" = minor infraction or omission per information we have received, (These categories were compiled by Lisa Carlson who may be reached at lisa@funeralethics.org to discuss reasons.)