



To our Massachusetts Communities,

Assisting families and friends with loss is our privilege and honor as funeral directors. Given the reality of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is important to know that funeral directors throughout Massachusetts are taking precautions to limit exposure to the coronavirus. We are still operating 24 hours a day, seven days a week making certain that those entrusted to our care and the families we serve are receiving uninterrupted service and attention, regardless of the cause of death.

In the last days and weeks, the Massachusetts Funeral Directors Association has been in regular contact with numerous state and federal agencies, including the Centers for Disease Control and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, ensuring that the information our member funeral homes receive is as current as possible. Funeral homes are in regular contact with local officials, ensuring that public welfare is a primary concern. In addition, as part of our annual license renewal, we participate in public health and safety training.

As health officials have indicated, one way to limit the spread of the COVID-19 virus is through limiting public gatherings. Our sympathies go out to anyone who has the additional burden of grief and loss during this time, and we are here to guide each family with their particular needs on an individual basis. We encourage bereaved families to work with their funeral director to create meaningful services that fall within the governor's emergency order of limiting large public gatherings.

By now, you are aware that another way to limit the spread of the virus is to refrain from going out in public if you have symptoms of COVID-19 or are feeling unwell. Please stay home to not only speed your recovery and prevent spreading illness but to also protect those in high-risk groups. If you are experiencing a cough, fever, or shortness of breath, we encourage you not to attend funeral services. Reach out to the funeral home handling services, and they will be willing to share your sympathies with the family of the deceased, and they may also offer some other options to let the bereaved know that you support and care for them during this difficult time.

We are your neighbors and friends. Funeral directors live and work in your communities, and we take the impact of this pandemic seriously.

Please know that, above all, we are committed to the families we serve. We remain focused on maintaining high standards and ethical practices as we serve the dead and bereaved with the health and well-being of our communities in mind as we move forward together in the coming weeks and months.

Sincerely,

*C. R. Lyons*

Clarence R. Lyons, President

On behalf of the Members of the Massachusetts Funeral Directors Association

*ABOUT MFDA: The Massachusetts Funeral Directors Association is the funeral directors' professional community and is the recognized voice and resource for information on issues affecting the funeral service profession as well as the bereaved community that we are honored to serve in the many cities and towns throughout Massachusetts. Together we leverage our experience, expertise, and influence to anticipate and address issues, to build skills, to develop practical solutions to business problems, and to set the standard for quality service and ethical practice when serving bereaved families. MFDA represents more than 500 funeral homes in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and is the largest representative organization of funeral service professionals in New England. During one year, our members provide services for over 45,000 families, and during that same period, more than 2 million people visit our member funeral establishments.*