

Aitkin County Health & Human Services

204 First St. NW
AITKIN, MINNESOTA 56431-1291
PHONE 1-800-328-3744 or 1-218-927-7200 - FAX # 927-7210

DATE: April 21, 2015

TO: Aitkin County Board of Commissioners
Nathan Burkett, County Administrator

FROM: Tom Burke, Director

SUBJECT: Funeral Costs

Please find enclosed, the information related to an increase of rate request by Sorenson Root Thompson Funeral Services. While it has been some 19 years since we have made rate adjustments, our present rate structure places us well within the average returns in our region and usually on the higher end of the averages. If the present request is fully granted, we will be up to 50% higher than our regional counterparts. The costs for these services are 100% levy dollars.

There have been approximately 55 burials from 2010 through 2014 or 11 burials on average per year. SRT served just over half of those burials. Any change in rate impacts all providers who service county related burials.

For further details please see the attached documents:

- Most recent letter from Jerry Thompson (2 pages)
- Proposal to re-evaluate the social service allowance for burials and cremations
- Letter from Jerry Thompson dated March 13, 2015
- General Price List from SRT Funeral Service
- Public Assistance Burial Funeral Claim Rates comparison with surrounding counties

The Cremation Society in Duluth was contacted and noted that they provide a Basic Cremation for a private party at a cost of \$1645 and with Chapel Rental for a service they charge an additional \$595.00. Aitkin County burial to the Cremation Society is currently \$1,000.00 for immediate cremation and \$2,000.00 for cremation with a service.



Director of Aitkin County Health and Human Services

Attn: Mr. Tom Burke

204 First Street NW

Aitkin, Minnesota 56431

Please find enclosed copies of our General Price List which details the many things which we do for the families which we serve. I believe you had a concern about what the boards questions might be in regards to what our normal charges entail. The price list details some of this information, but I will try to go a little further in depth.

When I look at our charges to the public we serve, I have to take into account all aspects of our business and price these services so that we are operating in the black and not the red. The things I look at are personnel costs, and that means having a licensed funeral director available 24 hours a day 7 days a week 365 days a year, building expenses such as upkeep, maintenance, heating and cooling, electric, telephones, keeping the building in compliance with all of the state and federal codes, taxes, and insurances. Other items that I have to look at are the cost of keeping our vehicles in good running condition and updating those as needed and also the insurance on them. I also take into consideration the time that we actually spend with each family planning the service they want and taking care of all the details for that particular family from the death certificate, cremation authorization, securing the proper permits, obituary notices, coordinating the service with the church and minister, arranging for musicians, coordinating with the cemeteries and grave diggers right down to transporting flowers and arranging the flowers. We also have specialized equipment and items that we need to have available to perform our job, from removal cots to body bags to gloves and masks to specialized church trucks for the caskets to having flower stands and tripods available. This is not an exhaustive list but it should give you some idea of what goes on behind the setting of the prices which we charge for our various services. The General Price List is mandated by federal law and it came about so families would know exactly what they are paying for.

Sorensen - Root - Thompson

218 / 927-2614 • Fax: 218 / 927-3100

31 Minnesota Ave S Aitkin, Minnesota 56431



McGregor Funeral Home

218 / 768-3136

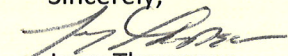
Maddy Street McGregor, Minnesota 55760

www.srtfuneral.com

With that said, I am asking to recover 50% of what our actual charges are, which I feel is fair, as we would be discounting our price by 50%. As in my last proposal, I had listed what our current charges are for various minimum options and for the most part we are currently recovering about 30% except for the immediate cremation with a memorial service where we are recovering about 45%.

If you need any further information, please let me know. I will wait to hear back from you as to when this will be on the agenda for the Health and Human Services board to consider. I feel it is very important that I be there to answer any questions as this issue affects my business directly.

Sincerely,



Jerry Thompson



www.srtfuneral.com

Director of Aitkin County Health
and Human Services
Mr. Tom Burke
204 First Street NW
Aitkin, Minnesota 56431

March 13, 2015

Dear Tom;

The following is a revised proposal for the Health and Human service board to consider. In four separte catoagories I will show first what our normal cahrges are. Second I will show what our current reimbursement is and thirdly show the percentage of recovery which we are recieving. I would like to propose that we are able to recover at least 50% of our charges.

	Our Charge	Reimbursement	Reimbursement %
Traditional service with minimum casket	6000	2000	30%
Service with rental casket and cermation	5960	2000	30%
Immediate cremation with service	4390	2000	45%
Immediate Cremation without service	3295	1000	27%

If we can increase the allowance to cover 50% of our charges and keep the rest of the allowances in place, such as Open/Close grave actual, vault if required at cost, cemetery at cost if one is needed, I believe would be a fair proposal.

I will be out of the office until Monday March 23. I will check in with you on Monday to verify that evrrything is still on for the Tuesday, March 24th Health and Human Service Board Meeting at 9:00 AM

Sincerely;

Jerry Thompson

MAR 16 2015



Aitkin County Health and Human Services

RE: Proposal to re-evaluate the social service allowance for burials and cremations.

Current allowance is \$1000 for immediate cremation and no service. \$2000 for immediate cremation and a memorial service and \$2000 for a traditional service which includes all preparation work and providing a casket. The cost of a vault and open/close grave is paid at cost.

Background: The last time that any change has been made in the allowance was in 1996 which is 19 years ago.

Proposal: Immediate cremation with no service: \$2000

Immediate Cremation with a memorial service: \$3200

Service with rental casket and with cremation following: \$3500

Traditional service with all preparation and providing minimum casket: \$3500

Cost of vault if required: Actual cost

Open/Close Grave: Actual cost charged by gravedigger Average is \$600 to \$1000

Grave Lot: Actual cost if family does not have means to pay for a grave lot.

On average we deal with about 10 to 15 social service burials a year. With these numbers I would project that it would increase the budget for social service burials an additional \$15,000 to \$20,000 per year. Please note that we have no control over the cost of cemetery lots, the grave digger fees or the wholesale cost of the vaults.

Please find included a copy of the current form which is used to apply for the county burial reimbursement and also a copy of our General Price List which will give you an idea of what our actual charges are for the general public. If you have any questions please feel free to contact me here anytime. Thank you for your consideration on this matter. Sincerely; Jerry Thompson

RECEIVING CREMATED REMAINS FROM ANOTHER FUNERAL HOME & MEMORIAL SERVICE	\$1500.00
Our charge includes basic services of funeral director, staff and a proportionate share of overhead costs.	Basic Service..... \$905.00
	Facilities Use, Equipment and Staff for Service \$595.00

RECEIVING OF REMAINS FROM ANOTHER FUNERAL PROVIDER	\$1795.00
This charge includes basic services of funeral provider and staff, a proportionate share of overhead costs, transfer of remains to funeral establishment within a 30 mile radius, care of remains and local transportation within a 30 mile radius, care of remains and local transportation within a 30 mile radius to final disposition. This fee does not include visitation or funeral ceremonies.	Basic Service..... \$995.00
	Removal \$350.00
	Care of Remains..... \$100.00
	Transportation \$350.00

FORWARDING OF REMAINS FROM ANOTHER FUNERAL PROVIDER	\$2290.00
This charge includes basic services of funeral provider and staff, a proportionate share of overhead costs, transfer of remains to funeral establishment within a 30 mile radius, embalming and preparation of remains, and local transportation. This fee does not include additional transportation such as airfare or transportation containers such as air trays or casket.	Basic Service..... \$995.00
	Removal \$350.00
	Embalming \$595.00
	Transportation \$350.00

IMMEDIATE BURIAL	\$3445.00
This charge includes basic services of funeral provider and staff, a proportionate share of overhead costs, transfer of remains to funeral establishment within a 30 mile radius, care of remains and local transportation within a 30 mile radius to place of final disposition. This fee does not include embalming, visitation or funeral ceremonies, or other cemetery goods and services such as an outer burial container, casket, grave opening and closing fees or cost of cemetery plot.	Basic Service..... \$2595.00
	Removal \$350.00
	Care of Remains..... \$150.00
	Transportation \$350.00

IMMEDIATE BURIAL	\$3445.00
With casket or alternative container provided by consumer.	

IMMEDIATE BURIAL	\$3545.00
With alternative container purchased from funeral home.	

IMMEDIATE BURIAL	\$3445.00
With casket purchased from funeral home, in addition to cost of casket selected.	

CASH ADVANCE ITEMS (Cash we advance on your behalf)

We may charge you for obtaining cash advance items.

- Crematory Fees
- Honorariums - Pastor and/or Church, Organist, Soloist, Ladies Aid
- Luncheons
- Flowers
- Newspaper Notices - Obituaries
- Death Certificates (MN \$13 first copy / \$6 each additional)
- Cemetery Fees
- Limousine
- Motorcycle Escort
- County Fees - Cremation Authorizations (up to \$300)
- Vault Company Overtime Charges

HOLIDAY AND OVERTIME FEES

Saturday Visitation	\$300.00
Sunday Funeral	\$300.00
Holiday Visitation OR Funeral Service	\$500.00



FUNERAL SERVICE

Sorensen - Root - Thompson
 31 Minnesota Ave S
 Aitkin, Minnesota 56431
 Phone: (218) 927-2614 Fax: (218) 927-3100

McGregor Funeral Home
 Maddy Street
 McGregor, Minnesota 55760
 Phone: (218) 768-3136

www.srtfuneral.com

General Price List

These prices are effective as of
 November 1, 2013
 and are subject to change without notice

ITEMIZED SELECTIONS

The goods and services shown below are those we can provide to our customers. You may choose only the items you desire. However, any funeral arrangements you select will include a charge for our services. If legal or other requirements mean you must buy any item you did not specifically ask for, we will explain the reason in writing on the statement we provide describing the funeral goods and services you selected.

DIRECTORS
Jerry Thompson • Jason Brezinsky

Owned and operated by Gerald and Valerie Thompson

TRADITIONAL FUNERAL SERVICE

BASIC SERVICES FUNERAL PROVIDER	\$2595.00
This charge includes arrangement conference, planning and coordinating the final disposition, securing required authorization forms and permits, obtaining demographic information for the filing of death certificate, obtaining certified copies of death certificate, coordinating and planning with others as needed such as clergy, churches, musicians, cemeteries, crematories, newspapers and florists. This fee also includes a proportionate share of our overhead costs such as insurance, local, state and federal taxes, maintenance, salaries, etc.	
EMBALMING	\$595.00
Except in certain special cases, embalming is not required by law. Embalming may be necessary, however, if you select certain funeral arrangements, such as a funeral with a viewing. If you do not want embalming, you usually have the right to choose an arrangement that does not require you to pay for it, such as direct cremation or immediate burial or when refrigeration or use of dry ice is available.	
OTHER PREPARATION OF THE BODY	
Dressing, Casketing, Cosmetizing	\$225.00
Special Care of Autopsied Remains	\$150.00
Special Care of Tissue Donated Remains	\$150.00
Restoration of Autopsied Bodies for Private Family Viewing Prior to Cremation	\$495.00
Re-Constructive Restoration when Necessary	\$100.00
Dressing, Casketing of Unembalmed Remains	\$400.00
USE OF FACILITIES, EQUIPMENT, AND/OR STAFF FOR VIEWING	\$250.00
USE OF FACILITIES, EQUIPMENT AND/OR STAFF FOR FUNERAL	\$595.00
TRANSFER OF REMAINS TO THE FUNERAL HOME OR OTHER LOCATION	\$350.00
(Withing 30 mile radius. Additional mileage charge is \$2.10 per mile one way.)	
HEARSE OR FUNERAL COACH	\$350.00
SERVICE CAR (Multi-purpose vehicle for delivering flowers, permits, etc).....	\$100.00
STAFF FOR GRAVESIDE SERVICE	\$395.00
THE STANDARD CHARGE FOR FACILITIES, EQUIPMENT, TRANSPORTATION AND STAFF FOR A TRADITIONAL FUNERAL SERVICE	\$5060.00

CREMATION OPTIONS

DIRECT CREMATION	\$3195.00
With combustible casket or alternative container provided by consumer	
DIRECT CREMATION WITH MEMORIAL SERVICE	Funeral Director & Staff
This service includes services of the funeral director and staff, obtaining legal documents, coordinating and directing the service, transfer of remains, facilities for memorial service, transfer of equipment to another facility, cremation container and crematory fee. This service does not include cash advances or merchandise selected, such as an urn.	\$2595.00
	Removal
	\$350.00
	Facilities Use, Equipment, & Staff for Service..
	\$595.00
	Service Car.....
	\$100.00
	Cremation Container.....
	\$100.00
	Crematory Fee.....
	\$400.00
	\$4140.00
	Weekday Discount
	-300.00
	\$3840.00
DIRECT CREMATION	Funeral Director & Staff
This charge includes basic services of funeral provider and staff, a pro-portionate share of overhead costs, transfer of remains to funeral establishment within a 30 mile radius, care of remains and local transportation of the crematory, temporary cremated remains container and crematory fee. This fee does not include embalming, visitation or funeral ceremonies, or other goods such as a cremation urn. If you want to arrange a (direct) cremation, you can use an alternative container. An alternative cremation container is a combustible, closed container resistant to the leakage of bodily fluids that encases the body and can be made of materials like fiberboard or composition materials (with or without an outside covering).	\$2595.00
	Removal
	\$350.00
	Cremation Container.....
	\$100.00
	Crematory Fee.....
	\$400.00
	\$3295.00
CREMATION WITH TRADITIONAL FUNERAL SERVICE	Funeral Director & Staff
Includes Open Casket Visitation Services (Funeral Home or Church)	\$2595.00
This charge includes arrangement conference, planning and coordinating the final disposition, securing required authorization forms and permits, obtaining demographic information for the filing of death certificate, obtaining certified copies of death certificate, coordinating and planning with others as needed such as clergy, church, musicians, cemeteries, crematories, crematory fee, newspapers and florists. This fee also includes a proportionate share of our overhead coses such as insurance, local, state and federal taxes, maintenance, salaries, etc. This service does not include cash advance items or merchandise selected, such as: rental casket, cremation container, urn, casket or printing package.	\$595.00
	Embalming.....
	\$225.00
	Dressing, Casketing, Cosmetizing
	\$250.00
	Facilities Use, Equipment, Staff for Viewing ...
	\$595.00
	Removal
	\$350.00
	Funeral Coach
	\$350.00
	Service Car.....
	\$100.00
	Crematory Fee
	\$400.00
	\$5460.00
	Rental Casket
	\$895.00
	\$6355.00
<u>MERCHANDISE</u>	
CASKETS	\$895.00 to \$4195.00
A complete list will be provided at funeral home.	
OUTER BURIAL CONTAINERS	\$1395.00 to \$6995.00
A complete list will be provided at funeral home.	
GRASS DEVICE AND DELIVERY (NO VAULT)	\$500.00
ALTERNATIVE CONTAINER	\$100.00
CREMATED REMAINS CONTAINER - URNS	\$150.00 to \$650.00
A complete list will be provided at funeral home.	
RENTAL CASKET	\$895.00
If you choose a funeral service where a rental casket is provided, the casket used for the funeral service may have been used in a previous service. If the casket has been used in a previous funeral service, the interior lining has been either replaced or thoroughly cleaned.	
MISCELLANEOUS MERCHANDISE	Custom Printing Package
	\$250.00
Includes memorial board, register book, memorial folders, thank you cards (unlimited).	

Public Assistance Burial Funeral Claims Rates

<u>County</u>	<u>Cremation</u>	<u>Funeral</u>	<u>Embalming</u>	<u>Burial Plot</u>	<u>Opening & Closing of Lot</u>	<u>Vault or box</u>	<u>Transportation</u>	<u>Misc</u>
Aitkin	\$2000 max (basic funeral/cremation) \$1000 max immediate cremation Proposed changes: \$2000 immediate cremation w/o service \$3200 immediate cremation w/ service \$3500 service w/ rental casket and cremation to follow	\$2000 max (basic funeral/cremation) Proposed changes: \$3500 (all prep & minimum casket)		Actual cost if family does not have means to pay for a grave lot	Actual cost average is \$600 - \$1000	Actual cost (if required)	\$1 per loaded mile outside trade area	\$100 max (no vault) Grave Side svc
Carlton	\$1000 (no embalming & no svc)	\$1,840	\$1840 (with or w/o svc)	Actual cost	\$400 max	Actual cost	\$1 per loaded mile outside Carlton Co.	
Crow Wing	\$2100 max immediate cremation \$2500 max - cremation w/ burial - (includes \$2100 plus \$400 allowance for cemetery costs)	\$3200 max immediate burial					\$2.00 outside a 20 mile radius (in addition to max when necessary)	\$700 cemetery allowance
Itasca	\$1150 max No funeral svc - including all professional svcs, transportation of body & container	\$1500 max Service w/ traditional burial/cremation including all professional svcs, funeral svc, transportation of body, casket or cremation container		Actual cost	Actual cost	Actual cost		
Koochiching	\$1400 w/ service \$1200 w/o svc	\$2237 max \$1705: Basic burial charges (svcs & casket) Includes professional svcs, embalming, use of facilities, first call car, funeral coach, add'l car (if required), casket cost				\$532	\$2.50 per loaded mile	\$475 - Coroner autopsy transfer fee \$75 - disaster removal pouch
Mille Lacs	\$1700 flat rate	\$2101 (includes professional svcs, casket, vault) Proposed changes: \$2136 (includes professional svcs, casket, vault. Children and oversized vaults can be negotiated w/ county)	\$200 max (paid only if 72 hr rule cannot be enforced)		Actual cost		\$1.25 per loaded mile outside of Mille Lacs Co.	
Pine	\$1500 w/ service (all inclusive except for transportation)	Stillborn & infants up to age 2: \$1000 Children ages 2 - 6 years of age: \$1000 Children age 6 to adult \$1500 includes: service, casket, vault. Oversized caskets - county will pay the difference between the price of regular county approved casket and a oversized casket.		Plot & sexton fees @ county cost, but county owned lots must be used first, unless deceased has prepaid lot.	Rate must be county approved		\$1.00 per loaded mile outside of Pine Co.	

Lake	<p>Cavallin Funeral Home \$1065 (\$1360 w/ *add'l charges) direct cremation includes: \$635 professional svcs \$145 general use of facility \$95 removal vehicle \$95 hearse for svc/transport to crematory \$95 container for cremation</p> <p>\$1290 (\$1585 w/ *add'l charges) traditional svc f/b cremation includes: \$635 professional svcs \$145 general use of facility \$95 removal vehicle \$95 hearse for svc/transport to crematory \$225 use of rental casket \$95 container for cremation</p> <p>*Crematory charges in addition (Hegstrom Family Funeral Home) \$295</p>	<p>Cavallin Funeral Home \$1545 (\$2095 w/ *add'l charges) traditional svc w/ burial includes: \$270 casket \$305 other burial container \$635 professional svcs \$85 funeral svcs \$60 general use of facility \$95 removal vehicle \$95 hearse for svc/transport to crematory</p> <p>*Add'l Cemetery charges (City of Two Harbors) \$225 purchase of burial lot \$325 Opening and Closing Costs</p>						
St. Louis	<p>\$1400 w/o funeral svc \$1700 w/ funeral svc</p>	<p>\$2200 Traditional services w/ body present and earth burial</p>		<p>\$255 - Cremation w/o funeral svc <u>or</u> w/ funeral svc \$600- Traditional svc</p>	<p>\$265 - Cremation w/o funeral svc <u>or</u> w/ funeral svc \$600 - Traditional svc</p>	<p>n/a - cremation svcs Traditional svc - Billed separately at cost</p>		<p>Crematory fee: \$210 w/o funeral svc \$184 w/ funeral svc Medical Examiner fee: \$50 cremation w/o funeral svc \$50 cremation w/ funeral svc</p>
Public Assistance Burial Funeral Claims - Children								
County	Funeral							
Itasca	<p>Stillborn - 1 year: 25% of adult rate 1 yr - 5yrs: 50% of adult rate Over 5 years: Adult rate (see above)</p>							
Koochiching	<p>Stillborn (2 ft casket req): \$205 + 15% Infant (>3 ft casket): \$235 + 15% Children (casket 3 ft +): Same as adult</p>							
	*Separate rate sheet for Forest Hill Cemetery							