

CF OPERATING PROCEDURE  
NO. 175-70

STATE OF FLORIDA  
DEPARTMENT OF  
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES  
TALLAHASSEE, December 18, 2014

## Family Safety

### FUNERAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE

1. Purpose. This operating procedure establishes guidelines for the provision of funeral arrangements at no cost to the Department for children who die while in the Department's custody or in the care of its designee, and for young adults who die while in the Extended Foster Care, Postsecondary Education Services and Support, or Aftercare programs.
2. Scope. This operating procedure is applicable in all cases where existing resources are not available to pay for funerals and final expenses of a child who dies while in the Department's custody or in the care of the Department's designee, or a young adult who dies while in the Extended Foster Care, Postsecondary Education Services and Support, or Aftercare programs.
3. Explanation of Terms. For purposes of this operating procedure, the following definitions will apply:
  - a. "Child" means any unmarried person under the age of 18 years who has not been emancipated by order of the court and who has been found to be dependent and is in the Department's custody or in the care of the Department's designee. This includes children in shelter status who have not yet been adjudicated.
  - b. "Designee" means a person, contractual provider or other agency or entity named by the Department.
  - c. "Department" means the State of Florida Department of Children and Families.
  - d. "Member(s)" means the members of the Florida Cemetery, Cremation, and Funeral Association ("FCCFA") and their respective funeral establishment.
  - e. "Young adult" means an individual who has attained 18 years of age but who has not attained 21 years of age (or 22, if disabled), who is in Extended Foster Care, and/or an individual who has attained 18 years of age but who has not attained 23 years of age, who is in the Road to Independence programs, including Postsecondary Education Services and Support and Aftercare.
4. General. The purpose of this operating procedure is to ensure culturally appropriate funeral arrangements are made and carried out for children and young adults who die while in the custody of the Department or the care of its designee and who do not have family members, a client welfare trust fund, or other resources to pay the cost of funeral and burial arrangements. The Florida Cemetery, Cremation and Funeral Association (FCCFA) historically has aided the Department in identifying funeral homes that may be able to assist with services for those families who cannot afford a funeral. The FCCFA does not directly provide funding for the service or burial of a child or young adult. The FCCFA attempts to locate members of its association who are able to provide low or no-cost services to the families in need of assistance within the scope of this operating procedure. In some instances, the FCCFA may not be able to identify a member in the vicinity of the deceased who is able to provide low or no-cost services.

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This operating procedure supersedes CFOP 175-70 dated March 13, 2000.

OPR: Child Welfare

DISTRIBUTION: X: OSES; OSGC; ASGO; Child Welfare Program Office; Region and Circuit Child Welfare staff.

5. Procedure.

a. Any time a child or young adult who is in the custody of the Department or the care of its designee dies, the case manager or case manager supervisor of the deceased child or young adult shall immediately notify the biological parent of the death of the child or young adult. In cases that involve a child whose parents' rights have been terminated, the case manager and case manager supervisor shall decide on a case-by-case basis whether to notify the biological parent.

b. The deceased child or young adult's case manager or supervisor shall determine whether the family has the resources to pay the funeral expenses as soon as possible. Immediately upon determining whether the family has the resources, the respective regional Family and Community Services Director or designee will be contacted and provided with this information.

c. If the parents do not have the necessary financial resources, the respective regional Family and Community Services Director or designee shall call the Florida Cemetery, Cremation and Funeral Association's office in Tallahassee at (800) 226-3332 during regular working hours. Should a death occur between 5:00 p.m. Friday and 8:30 a.m. Monday, call John Ricco, Executive Director, at (850) 294-9382, or Danielle Jessup, Program Manager, at (954) 270-4041.

d. FCCFA will send the FCCFA Foster Child Funeral Program form to the respective regional Family and Community Services Director or designee. Once the form is completed and received by the FCCFA office in Tallahassee, the FCCFA will begin to identify members of FCCFA:

- (1) That are in close proximity to the deceased foster child or young adult; and,
- (2) That are able to provide low or no-cost services to the family.

e. Once an FCCFA member is identified and is able to provide such services, the FCCFA will provide the contact information of the case worker to the funeral establishment(s) that has offered to assist. From that point forward, the case worker or agency coordinator and the funeral establishment will coordinate the remainder of the process, including but not limited to the release of the body, funeral arrangements and burial/cremation information.

f. Family participation in such activities as providing clothing, scheduling of services and provision of clergy will be coordinated with the local funeral director through the regional Family and Community Services Director or designee. If the religious affiliation of the biological parents is unknown and cannot be reasonably determined, the religious affiliation of the foster parents may be used in the selection of the clergy.

g. The Office of Child Welfare shall ensure that the FCCFA's executive director is provided with an updated listing of the regional Family and Community Services directors.

h. If the Department, designee, or family member of the deceased child or young adult has already begun speaking with a funeral establishment(s) about any arrangements for death prior to contacting the FCCFA, the FCCFA has the right to decline all assistance within the scope of this operating procedure.

BY DIRECTION OF THE SECRETARY:

*(Signed original copy on file)*

JANICE THOMAS  
Assistant Secretary for  
Child Welfare

SUMMARY OF REVISED, DELETED OR ADDED MATERIAL

Updated to include current procedures for providing “no cost” funeral arrangements for eligible children or young adults.