Policy Name	**County Burial Allowance**
Policy Number	**2.701**
Origination Date	**1/1/1997**
Board Approval Date	**7/16/19**
Policy Owner	**Financial Services Supervisor – Julie Jahn**
Responsible Personnel	Financial Services Staff
Regulatory Requirement	M.S. 261.035
Cross References	
Attachments	**Application for County Burial Funds**

Appendix Purpose

To specify the terms of burials paid for at the Swift County Board expense.

Procedure

A. In accordance with MN Statute 261.035, Swift County will provide direct cremation for residents of the county who are otherwise unable to pay the cost of for disposition of their remains. A county burial will not be paid if the spouse's assets exceed $9,000.

B. Under this policy Swift County will utilize cremation. If it is determined that cremation is not in accordance with the decedent's personal preferences or the known practices of the decedent's faith tradition or the personal preferences of the decedent's spouse or the decedent's next of kin, the County Board shall provide a burial and funeral. All exception requests must be made in writing and will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and approved by the Agency Director or their designee.

C. Application

   a. The Department will require that a responsible family member complete an Application for County Burial Funds. If death occurs on a weekend and no one at the Department can be contacted, the mortician would proceed with the idea it might be a county paid burial. The family must contact the Department the first business day following the weekend. Authorization and approval of a county burial must be received prior to making funeral plans. The Eligibility Worker will make a timely determination of eligibility for the county funded burial and inform the funeral home of the determination. The funeral direct shall provide a copy of an itemized bill before payment will be made.

D. The funeral home may charge miscellaneous expenses such as memorial cards, register books, acknowledgment cards, flowers, music, etc. to the deceased person's family. A county paid burial cannot exceed the amount adopted by the County Board nor can the Department contribute toward a more expensive burial.

E. Application of Assets

a. Assets of the deceased person must be applied towards the funeral expense. Death benefits payable from Social Security, Veteran's allowance, insurance or any other source must be applied to the bill first. The funeral home will bill the balance to the Department. The Eligibility Worker will review the bill and forward to the Accounting Office for payment of the county burial.

b. Any crowdfunding sources such as benefits, fundraisers, or online sources such as GoFundMe accounts, solicited to pay for burial expenses will be considered as available assets to offset the disposition costs. Any crowdfunding benefits raised to help pay for medical expenses of a deceased recipient of Medical Assistance will be considered as available if the Medical Assistance Program covered all medical expenses. Any outstanding medical bills of the deceased that are not covered by Medical Assistance may be paid by the crowdfunding source as an allowable expense; however, any remaining balance in the crowdfunding source will be considered an available asset to help offset the disposition costs. Any funds being raised via crowdfunding, benefits, or fundraisers may be subject to recovery for reimbursement of the county paid burial costs.

F. Infants

a. Reimbursement for funeral expenses for stillborn children will be at costs and not to exceed 50% of the authorized amount for adults.

G. Allowances for cremation services shall be at the following rates:

1. Professional Services $1000
   (cost of the service, initial transfer, facilities and equipment, visitations, etc.)
2. Merchandise
   Urn (item at lowest cost) $125 (approx.)
3. Cast Advance Items
   a. Outside container/vault (if required) $95 (approx.)
   b. Cemetery charges at cost $150 (approx.)
   c. Grave Opening/Closing at cost
   d. Transportation – loaded miles $1.50/mile
   e. Crematory charges $625 (approx.)
   f. Other (city, fees, etc.) at cost

Swift County does not pay for cemetery markers/headstone.

Allowances for traditional burial services if cremation is against the family's beliefs shall be at the following rates:

1. Professional Services $1400
   (cost of service, embalming, initial transfer, facilities and equipment, visitations, etc.)
2. Merchandise
   a. Casket (item at lowest cost) $595 (approx.)
3. Cash Advance Items
   a. Outside container/vault at cost $575 (approx.)

b. Cemetery charges at cost	$500 (approx.)
c. Grave Opening/Closing	at cost
d. Transportation – loaded mile	$1.50/mile
e. Other (city, fees, etc.)	at cost

Swift County does not pay for cemetery markers/headstones.

Violation of this Policy

No or only partial adherence to this policy or procedure may result in noncompliance with current regulatory requirements and subsequent penalties to Swift County Human Services. Remediation for violators will include, but not be limited to, disciplinary action up to and including termination depending on the circumstances of the situation at the time.

Signatures:

Policy Owner — Date: 7/16/19

Catherine Lee, Director — Date: 7-16-19

Board Approval: Gary Hendrickx, Board Chair — Date: 7-16-19