

Funeral Standards

As agreed by Faith and Belief Cell

- From** London Resilience Strategic Coordination Group – Faith and Belief Cell
- Author** The Venerable Luke Miller, Archdeacon of London, Chair of the Faith and Belief Cell
- For use by** Families of all faiths and beliefs and of none, London Funeral Directors, Cemeteries, Crematoria, Faith and Belief Celebrants, Faith and Belief Leaders, Local Authorities, NHS Bereavement Teams, GPs and all those involved in the death management process.

Overview

It is recognised that in these hugely challenging times it may not be possible to conduct funerals and cremations in the usual way. This situation impacts on Londoners of all and no faith and belief.

It is important to stress that the Standards below:

- reflect the advice of the Faith Cell of the Mortality Management Group, on behalf of the Strategic Coordination Group (SCG), as to how to apply Government guidance in London and are specific to London at the point of issue.
- may evolve on the basis of feedback from the Faith and Belief Cell Advisory Panel and Contact Group

They offer a set of criteria to apply in all circumstances wherever public safety and operational capacity allow. **All those involved in the funeral process are kindly asked to take note of them.**

The Strategic Coordination Group was set up by the London Resilience Forum to coordinate public services' response to Covid19

Standards

Funerals should remain as normal as possible for as long as possible in line with social distancing regulations. When this cannot be sustained the following minimum standards should be maintained:

1. The family's choice of burial or cremation for their loved one should be respected, in line with the requirements and conditions set out in the [Coronavirus Act 2020](#).
2. A celebrant (minister) of the family's choice of faith/belief should always be present at the funeral even if there is no congregation at all, recognising that this may not be the individual of their choice.
3. As far as possible, name and contact details for the family should be given to the celebrant by the funeral director a minimum of one day before the funeral to allow contact with the family.
4. Attendance at funerals should be limited to those from within the household or close family of the loved one – their partner, children, parents and siblings. As per Government advice, anyone who has had contact with your loved one will need to self-isolate for 14 days from their last time of contact, and anyone who is showing signs of Covid-19 should not attend.
5. Ceremonial words should be said in line with the family's choice but these may be truncated from usual funeral rites.

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6. An offer to facilitate livestream via social media should be made. However it is recognised that not all Crematoria /Cemeteries have adequate WiFi/signal to achieve this. Where this is known to be the case (and where it is not), the family may prefer the funeral to be filmed so that it can be shared afterwards.

7. Faith and belief communities should, within their understanding of what is possible, offer memorial services and subsequent commemorations to bereaved families.

8. Bereavement support should be offered. This [Covid-19 toolkit from Thrive LDN](#) may be helpful in this regard.

9. Organisations which charge fees (funeral directors, celebrants, crematoria, cemeteries etc) are asked to work together to achieve consistency in what they charge in these circumstances.

For the most up-to-date [government guidance](#) on funerals and Covid-19.

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