

# COVID-19 FUNERAL GUIDELINES

*Funeral Guidelines – a need to adapt our practices during this extraordinary time.*

Bereaved families from all cultures and backgrounds will find this time challenging. This makes it even more important that we show each other kindness and caring.

There are now strict rules put in place during Alert Level 4 for when loved ones have passed away. These rules apply to everyone, every culture, every religion.

This means that our ways of engaging with one another, our cultural and traditional practices must change. This information aims to support Pacific Peoples during these difficult times, but also uphold the Ministry of Health COVID-19 Alert Level 4 Funerals and Tangihanga advice. This means no **formal funeral arrangements** until further notice.

## FOR PACIFIC PEOPLES THIS MEANS:

- All usual Pacific Cultural protocols cannot take place while New Zealand is at Alert Level 4, but you can use online platforms such as video or mobile calls.
- No public gatherings allowed, whatsoever. For example, burials, cremations, memorial services, funeral wakes, processions or receptions and social gatherings, both indoors and outdoors.
- This rule applies to all deceased persons regardless of when and where they died, or the cause of death.

## FUNERAL SERVICES

- All religious leaders from any denomination, relatives and friends of the deceased must adhere to the COVID-19 protocols while New Zealand is at Alert Level 4.
- A registered funeral director must be contacted to carry out the functions of burial or cremation and transporting a deceased person in New Zealand.
- Families or communities must not carry out burials, cremations or transportation of deceased persons without engaging first with a registered funeral director.
- Funeral directors are encouraged to carry out burials and cremations as quickly as possible and provide you with the best options for your situation. However, this is not always possible. Families may consider the following options:
  - Holding the funeral after the Alert Level 4 restrictions ease. Bear in mind that we don't know when that might be.
  - Funeral Directors may live stream or provide photos of the service and/or burial for later viewing.
  - Cremating the deceased and burying the ashes at a later date.
  - Holding a memorial or appropriate cultural service later, when restrictions on gatherings are lifted and it is safe to do so.

## VIEWING OF BODIES

- There will be an opportunity for family who have been in the same isolation bubble as the deceased to go to the funeral home to view the body.
- Other family and friends or others in separate isolation bubbles cannot go to the funeral home for viewing.
- Viewing of bodies must only take place in a funeral home managed by a funeral director registered with their local authority.
- The deceased cannot be transported from the funeral home for viewing purposes at any time.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact your local funeral director [www.fdanz.co.nz](http://www.fdanz.co.nz)

Ministry of Health [www.health.govt.nz](http://www.health.govt.nz)

Ministry for Pacific Peoples [www.mpp.govt.nz](http://www.mpp.govt.nz)

COVID-19 [www.covid19.govt.nz](http://www.covid19.govt.nz)