

GUIDELINES FOR FAMILIES ARRANGING A CREMATION



**Wakapuaka Crematorium
Atawhai Drive, Nelson**

Wakapuaka Crematorium



Although most funerals are arranged through a Funeral Director some people may prefer to make their own arrangements. These guidelines will assist those who wish to manage their own arrangements.

Arranging a Cremation Getting Authorisation

Cremations and Cremating Authorities are highly regulated by the Cremation Regulations (1973). There are some strict requirements relating to cremation. If you are unused to administration, the documents can be quite complex and you may wish to seek the aid of a Funeral Director, Solicitor, advisory organisation (e.g. Citizen's Advice Bureau); or other experienced practitioner.

Nelson City Council is a Crematorium Authority and provides a cremation service. For those wishing to arrange a cremation, a number of forms need to be completed and presented to the Cremation Registrar at Nelson City Council.

The forms required are -

- **Form A : Application for Cremation** – The Applicant must complete this form in full and sign in front of a witness.
- **Form B : Certificate of Medical Practitioner** - This must be completed in full by the Doctor who has seen and identified the body after death.
- **Form AB : Certificate in Relation to Pacemakers and Other Bio-mechanical Aids** - Please ensure this document is completed by the Medical Practitioner or other suitably qualified person.
- **Form F – Permission to Cremate** – This must be completed in full and signed by a designated Medical Referee in duplicate. One copy needs to be retained with the cremation documents (Forms A, B, and AB and the other must be presented to the Cremator Operator/Attendant..
- **Form H: Register of Cremations** – This form is completed by the Cremations Registrar or Cremator Operator/Attendant immediately following cremation. The Applicant or nominated person is required to sign Form H on receiving the ashes.

Submitting the Forms

During Business hours:

(Business hours are defined as Monday – Friday, 8.30am to 4.30pm, excluding public holidays and other days which the Nelson City Council office is closed.)

You can provide the documents to the cremation registrar by:

- email to cremation.registrar@ncc.govt.nz,
- by fax 03 546 0239
- by post to PO Box 645, Nelson, 7010
- or in person at the Customer Service Centre, Nelson City Council, 110 Trafalgar Street, Nelson.

If forms are provided electronically (i.e. by email or fax), the originals will also need to be received as soon as possible.

The forms must be legible and completed fully. The cremation will not be able to proceed if they are illegible or incomplete.

The cremation registration team will arrange for the medical referee to review the documents and will let you know as soon as all the approvals have been done.

Outside of Business Hours:

For **urgent** cremations that **need** (b) to take place before the next business day:

1. Contact the Nelson Medical and Injury Centre, 98 Waimea Rd, Nelson on 03 546 8881 and ask to be put in contact with the medical referee. They will arrange for the on duty referee to contact you to complete their part of the paperwork.
2. Telephone 546 0200 (24 hours a day, 7 days a week) and ask to speak with the duty cremation officer who will make arrangements with you to receive the forms.

Please note:

- (a) The crematorium operator is unable to accept application forms for cremation. They must be received by the cremation registrar, who will then instruct the crematorium operator that they can proceed with the cremation.
- (b) An urgent cremation is one that needs to take place urgently for the reasons of religious requirements, health risk or decomposition factors. The decision about whether an urgent cremation is required is made by the cremation registrar or delegated deputy.

Death Certificate

A death certificate is not required for cremation purposes, however within three working days after the burial or cremation family will need to send the Notification of Death for Registration form to the Department of Internal Affairs to register the death. More information, along with forms and a brochure "Before Burial or Cremation" can be downloaded from www.dia.govt.nz

Making a Booking

To book a cremation the family member or funeral arranger with delegated responsibility for arranging the service must contact Council's crematorium operator at least 24 hours prior to the service. The operator can be contacted on (03) 545 1139 or after hours on (03) 546 0200.

The crematorium operator needs to know:

- the full name and age of deceased
- the preferred date and time that the service and/or cremation is to take place.

Cremations may be available outside of the crematoriums standard working hours (9.00am – 4.00pm, Monday to Friday) subject to agreement with the Crematorium Operator.

Chapel Hire

Nelson Crematorium has a chapel for the purposes of services and committals. The chapel is equipped with a sound system (I-pod compatible) and can accommodate up to 70 people.

A committal usually takes about half an hour, with a service being of an hour's duration.

Additional fees will apply to Chapel Hire.

Family and friends are welcome to prepare the Chapel half an hour before start of service free of charge. Staff will be there to assist you.

Nelson Crematorium reserves the right to charge extra for all services that exceed normal duration times or late arrivals.

Fees

Current Fees for cremation are available by calling (03) 546 0200, email to enquiry@ncc.govt.nz or from our website nelson.govt.nz.

Presentation of the Deceased

Following death a natural process of tissue break-down occurs in the deceased and so if embalming is not going to take place, it is recommended that a cremation takes place no more than two to three days after passing away. This should generally be reduced to one to two days during summer. The use of ice-packs or refrigeration helps to slow the degenerative process and the medical practitioner certifying death may be able to provide further information.

Where the deceased has not been embalmed, and the cremation occurs more than 24 hours after death, the casket needs to be lined with a waterproof liner/shroud. The liner should be of heavy duty plastic or similar natural waterproof but combustible material, and should be firmly fixed in place to the bottom and sides of the casket to hold it in place.

Caskets

For health & safety reasons, cremation will only take place with caskets. The casket needs to be made of untreated wood or readily combustible material. The bottom of the casket must be flat, smooth, and rigid. The casket may be polished. Handles and nameplate must be firmly fixed.

Cardboard caskets of robust construction are permitted. Wicker caskets may be acceptable if of sufficiently sturdy design and fitted with a rigid base. Caskets made of English elm, lead, iron, or other unsuitable material may not be used.

Should the family/applicant wish to provide their own casket they should contact the Cremator Operator (545 1139) to discuss requirements before the casket is made.

It is the Funeral Arranger's responsibility to check with the Crematorium Operator that the casket supplied meets the requirements for cremation.

Interior:

The casket should not contain any material such as alcohol, sawdust, pitch, aerosol, flammable containers, jewellery, or other personal effects that could cause a hazard. Should the casket contain any personal effects they must be sufficiently combustible to be destroyed during the cremation process. The Funeral Arranger should check with the Crematorium Operator if they are unsure of the requirements.

Dimensions:

A casket for cremation should not generally exceed 2200mm in length, 700mm in width and 500mm in depth and must be sufficiently robust to facilitate handling and loading. Nelson Crematorium does have the ability to undertake cremations with over-size caskets though the funeral arranger should confirm in advance with the Cremation Operator.

Open Casket

Where the deceased has been embalmed a request can be made to the Crematorium Operator for an open casket in the Chapel during a service, except where a medical referee or the police require the casket to be closed.

Ashes

Collection

Ashes may be left at the crematorium without charge for a period of not more than fourteen days after the cremation. If after fourteen days from the date of cremation the ashes have not been collected and no arrangements have been made for further storage, the Authority may dispose of the ashes as it thinks fit in accordance with the relevant regulations.

Interment of Ashes

On payment of the prescribed fee, ashes may be interred at one of the City cemeteries. Further details can be obtained by reference to Council's website at www.nelson.govt.nz where this document, and all related forms can be obtained electronically.