

DATE: January 29, 2021

RE: **UPDATE: POLICY REGARDING GATHERINGS AT OUR CEMETERIES**

With the State of New York and the County of Erie no longer enforcing yellow, orange and red zone restrictions, our cemeteries have convened and are collectively instituting the following policy, effective Monday, February 1, 2021.

1. Attendance at OUTDOOR committal services (full body or cremains) will be limited to a maximum of fifty (50) people. Proper social distancing and wearing of masks by all attendees is mandatory.
2. Attendance at INDOOR committal services (full body entombment or cremains inurnment) will be limited to 50% occupancy or 50 people maximum. Proper social distancing and wearing of masks by all in attendance is mandatory.\*\*
3. Policy and procedures outlined within our May 31, 2020 memo are still in place.

**\*\*Each cemetery will choose to allow or not allow inside chapel services.**

Effective Monday, June 1, 2020:

Casket Interments:

1. Funeral homes or funeral directors are able to once again provide pall bearers.
2. If the funeral home is unable to provide pall bearers or do not have sufficient staff, cemetery staff will carry the casket, however it is one or the other - we will not "mix" cemetery staff, acting as pall bearers, with funeral home staff, families or the general public acting as pall bearers.
3. Lowering device and placer continues to be used. No chairs or greens set up.
4. The casket will remain on the lowering device until clergy or the funeral director concludes the committal.
5. Cemetery employees will stand back with gloves/masks during the carrying of the casket to the interment site, while the committal is occurring and until family and funeral directors have returned to the road, cars or established a minimum of 6 feet away from all cemetery staff and equipment.
6. Once the committal is completed, and all funeral home staff and immediate family move away from the site, allowing minimum social distancing for cemetery staff, cemetery staff will lower the casket and complete the interment.

Entombments:

1. Each cemetery will choose to allow or not allow inside chapel services. However, in any case cemetery staff will be deployed as in numbers 1 and 2 above.
2. Once the committal service - held either outside or inside based on each individual cemetery policy - is completed, cemetery employees, wearing face masks and gloves, will take the casket and **complete the entombment.**
3. **Family can witness from a distance.**

Cremains:

1. Same as numbers 1 and 2 in "Entombments" above.
2. If graveside urn table present, and same as numbers 4, 5 and 6 under "Casket Interments" above.

We thank you for your understanding and support, we are committed to keeping you well-informed as federal, state and local mandates affect our operations. Wishing you, your staff and family continued good health.