

RESOLUTION NO. 19-06
**ESTABLISHMENT OF A POLICY FOR THE BURIAL OF INDIGENT
PERSONS**

WHEREAS, RCW 36.39.030 states "...the board of county commissioners of any county shall provide for the disposition of the remains of any indigent person including a recipient of public assistance who dies within the county and whose body is unclaimed by relatives or church organization."

WHEREAS, the Mason County Coroner has assumed the responsibility for the disposition of the remains of indigent persons who die in Mason County;

NOW THEREFORE, the Mason County Board of County Commissioners does hereby approve a Policy for the Burial of Indigent Persons, Attachment A which is hereby incorporated as part of this resolution.

APPROVED this 14th day of March, 2006.

MASON COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS


Lynda Ring Erickson, Chairperson



Jayni Kamin, Commissioner


Tim Sheldon, Commissioner

ATTEST:


Rebecca S. Rogers, Clerk of the Board

APPROVED AS TO FORM:


Michael Clift, Chief Deputy Prosecutor

POLICY FOR BURIAL OF INDIGENT PERSONS

Purpose:

- a. The purpose and intent of this policy is to comply with RCW 36.39.030 in providing for the disposition of the remains of any indigent person including a recipient of public assistance who dies within the county and whose body is unclaimed; and to comply with RCW 73.08.070, by designating a proper authority to be responsible, at the expense of the county, for the burial or cremation of any deceased indigent veteran or deceased family member of an indigent veteran.
- b. It shall be the responsibility of the Mason County Coroner to develop and administer a program to accomplish the purpose and intent of the policy.

Section 1. Definitions. The following definition shall apply in the interpretation and enforcement of the policy.

- a. "Department" means the Mason County Coroner.
- b. "Disposition" means the minimum services necessary to legally bury or cremate human remains.
- c. "Indigent" means the decedent was on public assistance at the time of death, or the decedent's estate is valued at less than \$2,500.00.
- d. "Unclaimed" means there is no relative who can be located within the state and who is liable for the disposition costs pursuant to RCW 68.50.160, nor is there any other person or entity, excepting funeral homes and/or cemeteries, or the Coroner's office who makes any claim to the remains, or who exerts or attempts to exert any influence of the disposition of the remains.

Section 2. Payment Authorized

- a. The Department is authorized to reimburse a licensed funeral home and/or cemetery/crematory for the minimum services set by the Department when such funeral home and/or cemetery/crematory has made a proper showing, according to rules devised by the Department that:
 1. it has, or will lawfully bury or cremate an indigent decedent, and
 2. it received the remains as an Entrusted Funeral Home, or decedent was an indigent veteran or deceased family member of an indigent veteran, and
 3. it made diligent efforts to locate relatives who may choose or are required to provide for the disposition, pursuant to RCW 68.50.160, and
 4. the decedent was at the time of death located in Mason County, and
 5. the decedent was indigent and the body unclaimed; PROVIDED, that each such reimbursement shall be conditional upon a promise by the funeral home and/or cemetery/crematory to reimburse the County dollar for dollar from any funds it may subsequently acquire from any other source for the disposition services performed by it.

- b. The Department shall provide reimbursement for disposition at the uniform rates established by the Department; PROVIDED that reimbursement for cremation shall be provided only upon proper showing that legal authorization has been obtained. The Coroner or the Coroner's designee may authorize cremation of indigent remains.

Section 3. Administration

- a. The Department shall develop rules and procedures for the implementation of this policy. The rules and procedures shall at a minimum include:
 - 1. process for obtaining cremation authorization from the Coroner's office when there is no other person authorized to do so;
 - 2. procedures for tracing and recovering from decedent's estates after reimbursement has been made, if and when it is cost effective for the county to do so;
 - 3. guidelines for the showing required in Section 2, including due diligence in locating persons required or willing to provide for disposition;
 - 4. procedures for verifying decedent's indigence; and all other rules and procedures which may be necessary and prudent to effectively implement this policy.
 - 5. establishment of uniform rates for services.
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