



## Information for funeral directors

To assist relatives or close friends affected by a death in custody, Corrective Services NSW may provide a subsidy toward the funeral expenses of up to \$2000 following an approved application. This financial assistance is paid directly to the funeral company chosen by the family of the deceased person.

The funeral company must provide an invoice which clearly states their business name, address, ABN and the services rendered for costs up to the amount of \$2000 (inclusive of GST). Other costs related to the funeral service should be directed to the relevant family member or person responsible.

Processing of an approved subsidy payment will not commence until the funeral service has been completed and the correct invoice has been submitted. Payment may then be expected within 30 days.

For any further information, please contact Dr Rev Keith Mascord via the mobile number on the back page.

## Contact information

**NSW Coroner's Office:** For information or assistance regarding the coronial process, or for counselling or bereavement support contact the Counselling and Support Unit, Department of Forensic Medicine on 02 9563 9000 or see: [http://www.coroners.justice.nsw.gov.au/Pages/support\\_services/counselling\\_services.aspx](http://www.coroners.justice.nsw.gov.au/Pages/support_services/counselling_services.aspx)

**Assistance for Aboriginal people:** The New South Wales Aboriginal Land Council offers land council members and Aboriginal people resident in New South Wales financial grants under a Funeral Benefits Scheme. Information on how to apply is at: <http://alc.org.au/nswalc-in-the-community/funeral-fund.aspx>

**Arranging a funeral:** For information about steps to take when arranging a funeral see: <https://www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au/buying-products-and-services/buying-services/funerals/funeral-information-standard>

**Finding a funeral Director:** contact The Australian Funeral Directors Association on 03 9859 9966 or see: <http://afda.org.au/>

**Chaplaincy Support & Subsidy:** For further information on the CSNSW Chaplaincy support and funeral subsidy please contact:

Chaplaincy Coordinator - Rev Dr. Keith Mascord  
Corrective Services Academy  
66 Terry Road, Eastwood NSW 2122  
Ph. 0419 994 008  
Email. [ChaplaincyCSNSW@justice.nsw.gov.au](mailto:ChaplaincyCSNSW@justice.nsw.gov.au)

Chaplaincy Administrator – Ms Jodie Barclay  
Ph: 02 9804 5449

# Information for Families and Friends after a Death in Custody

This pamphlet gives you information about:

- what the Police will do
- what Corrective Services NSW staff offer
- what the funeral director will do
- what the Coroner will do
- information for funeral directors
- contact information



Corrective Services NSW  
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## What the Police will do

The Police investigate what happened. Police officers will attend the Correctional Centre site and document the circumstances and the cause of the death. They will explain any legal matters that might arise from their investigation.

In NSW it is a legal requirement that every death in custody is reported to the coroner. The attending Police Officer is also required to give the Coroner's staff the name and contact details of a family member as the next-of-kin.

The Police will arrange for the deceased to be taken to the mortuary. If the person died in a Sydney Correctional Centre, they will be taken to Lidcombe, Sydney. If the person died in a regional NSW Correctional Centre, they may be taken to a regional hospital or to one of the two major forensic centres in Lidcombe or John Hunter Hospital in Newcastle.

## What Corrective Services NSW staff offer

The NSW Chaplaincy Service along with Offender Services & Programs staff will assist you with information and support.

The Chaplaincy Coordinator will be in touch by telephone with the next-of-kin, after Police have notified them of the death of their loved one. The Chaplaincy Coordinator will provide details of a \$2000 funeral subsidy that may be offered by the Commissioner to assist with funeral expenses. Further chaplaincy support will be offered to the family.

Offender Services & Programs staff can assist with:

- contacting other family or friends who need to know about the death
- providing you with information about how to collect any personal property and who to contact to arrange for money that belonged to the deceased, to be transferred
- referral to appropriate services for other supports and/or counselling for grief.

Sometimes families or very close friends feel a need to see the place where their loved one has died or to talk with people who were closely associated with them to better cope with the circumstances of the death. You can contact the custodial staff at the Correctional Centre to see if you are able to have a special visit for this purpose.

The Commissioner's Compassionate subsidy of up to \$2000 is paid directly to the funeral director. Please advise the name and contact details of the funeral director on the funeral subsidy application form as soon as possible for CSNSW to consider a payment towards funeral expenses. Any other costs related to the funeral service will be directed by the funeral company to the relevant family member or person responsible.

## What the funeral director will do

Funeral directors can help you with many of the formalities at this difficult time. They can assist you to make the arrangements for the burial or cremation ceremony, organise

notices in the media, and liaise with clergy or celebrants to conduct the ceremony. They can liaise with the Coroner's Office regarding when the deceased will be released, arrange transportation of the deceased to the cemetery or crematorium and assist you to obtain a Death Certificate.

At this distressing time it may be hard for you to 'shop around' for funeral services but under the law all NSW funeral directors must provide you with an itemised quote. These quotes should make it easier for you to compare services and prices of funeral directors. Make sure the quote includes GST so you know the full price.

## What the Coroner will do

An inquest is automatically held following a death in custody for the Coroner to inquire into the nature and cause of the death. The Coroner may then make recommendations to relevant authorities about any practices, policies or laws which could be changed to prevent a similar death occurring in the future. It can take some time before the Coroner is able to hold the inquest.

You can talk to the counsellors in the Counselling Unit at the Department of Forensic Medicine, about information or support you might need regarding the coronial process. They can also provide or assist you to access counselling and bereavement support. There is no time limit in using their services and it is free of charge. Other family members or friends affected by the death can also use their support services.

