



# WHAT HAPPENS AT A FUNERAL



There are many different funeral traditions that can suit the needs of any family.

Beechwood offers individuals and their family a variety of choices.

It is important that the funeral truly reflect the individual who is being remembered.



Typically, friends and family often share stories and anecdotes that reflect their relationship with and the character of the deceased. And a funeral service may be led by a religious or cultural leader, or by a relative or friend of the deceased.

Funeral services can be very different from family to family. However, there are certain elements that can be present at any type of memorial, funeral of celebration of life service.





### What happens on the day of a funeral?

On the day of a funeral, the funeral director will transport your loved one to the service location, which can be the Beechwood Sacred Space, a religious location like a church, mosque or temple. This can involve a hearse.

The funeral director will then lay out the flowers, photos and any and all personal items to be displayed alongside the casket or urn.

The family members and close friends may choose to travel together in a procession of vehicles.

### Who walks in first at a funeral?

Each service should cater to the families wishes and can reflect the families' traditions. There is no right or wrong order

and it should be left to the next of kin to decide.

### Who sits in the first rows at a funeral?

Usually, close friends and family sit on the front row closest to the casket of their loved one. However, it is up to the family to decide who sits there.





## What happens at a funeral service?

Every funeral service is as unique as the individual it is memorializing. The order of service depends on the requests that the deceased and the family made.

Most funeral services follow a similar sequence:

- **Funeral procession** – pallbearers may carry the casket or the urn into the venue hosting the funeral.
- **Ceremony** – this usually lasts 30-45 minutes and is usually lead by a member of the clergy or a celebrant. However, certain denominations may require a longer service.
- **Committal service** – after the ceremony ends, your loved one will be taken away to be cremated or buried. This may be at a separate location and may be on a different day.

## What to expect during a funeral?

The funeral service is traditionally led by a member of the clergy or a celebrant, but anyone who was close to the deceased may lead the service. A funeral service may include eulogies, funeral hymns, readings, and music. Some families will also choose to include a photo or video slideshow.

## What happens after the funeral service?

It is common for family members to wait at the exit and thank guests as they leave the funeral. If it is a burial or inurnment, the casket or urn will be transported to the cemetery or burial ground where pallbearers will lift the casket onto the grave to then be lower it into the grave or place in a niche or vault.

The means of disposition can vary depending on the wishes of the families or the prearrangements made by the deceased.



## What to expect when attending an open-casket funeral?

If you are planning to attend a funeral with an open casket, the deceased will be visible. For some, this can offer a source of comfort, while others feel uncomfortable seeing the body of their loved one. If you do not want to view the body, it is perfectly acceptable to take a seat and not approach the casket.

It is based on your own comfort level.

## What happens at a burial?

- Funeral procession arrives at the burial ground – the casket will be removed from the hearse and carried to the grave.
- Mourners gather – here the person leading the service, a celebrant, will say a few words.
- The casket or urn may be lowered into the grave or placed on the supports.

## What happens at a funeral or burial reception?

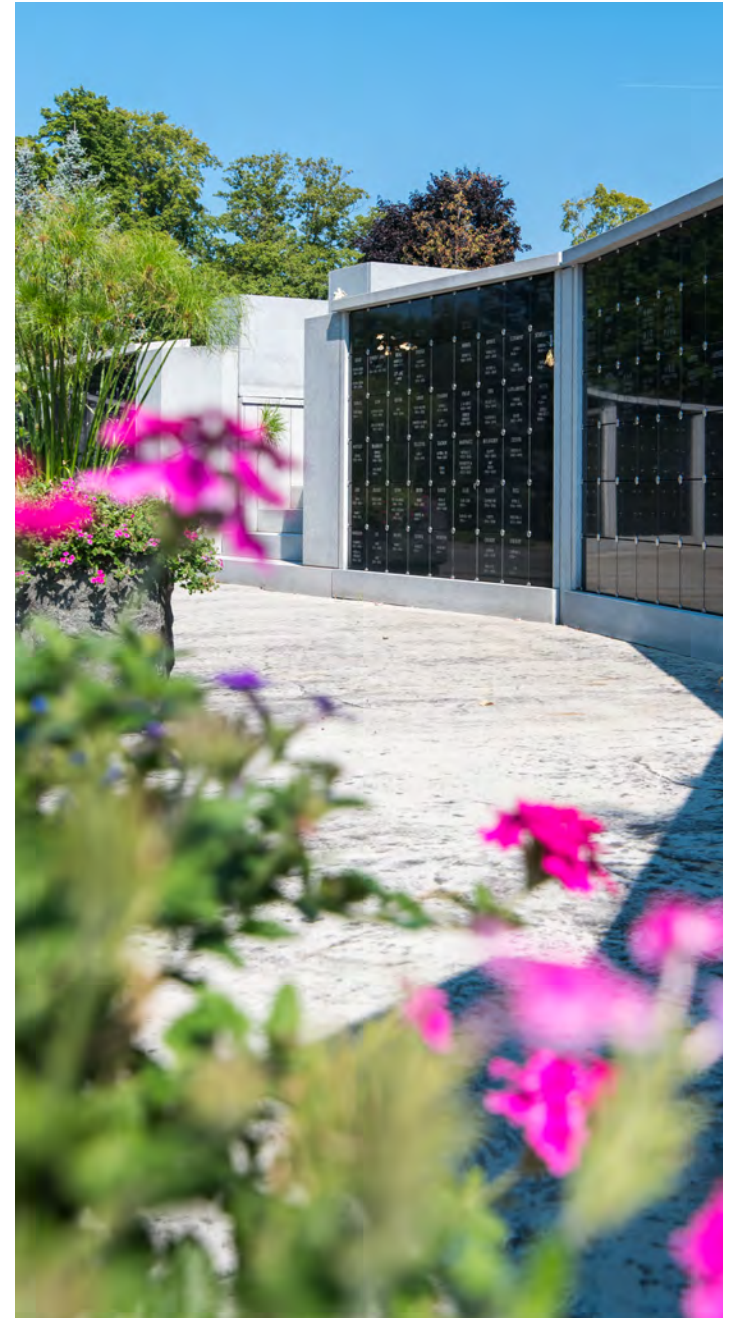
At the reception, family and friends gather to reflect on the life of their loved one. It normally happens straight after a cremation, inurnment or burial and can be at the funeral home in the reception rooms or even at a different location.

## How long does a funeral usually last?

Depending on the religion or tradition and where the service is held, they usually last 45 minutes to an hour.

## What time are most funerals?

Funeral timings will vary depending on what the family organises with the Funeral Director. They can occur any time throughout the week and especially on Fridays and Saturdays.





## Taking children to funerals

Children can attend funerals. If you are concerned for a child attending a funeral, there are ways to make it easier for them to understand and feel comfortable. It is a good idea to explain to them in detail what will happen throughout the day, so they know what to expect.

Beechwood Cemetery does provide children with our comfort stuffed animal called **Echo, the fox**.

A reminder that funeral services can come in different names and different sequences, however its is important to make sure that the funeral is reflective of the loved one who has passed and provides the opportunity for friends and family to mourn together and celebrate his/her life.



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# About Us

Beechwood is the National Cemetery of Canada and is the home of the National Military Cemetery of the Canadian Forces, RCMP National Memorial Cemetery, the Ottawa Police Service Memorial Cemetery, the CSIS National Memorial Cemetery and many more organizations and religious groups. Beechwood has been proudly serving our community since 1873.

Take advantage of all the services offered by Beechwood Cemetery, including pre-arrangements, full service funerals, cremation, cemetery services and executor assistance. Beechwood Cemetery can meet whatever wishes you may have from visitations, informal gatherings, life celebrations, memorial services, catered receptions, to a custom monument or memorialization.

Beechwood Cemetery is here to provide you with everything you need to make the right decision for you and your loved ones.

*Beechwood, Funeral, Cemetery and Cremation Services* is owned by The Beechwood Cemetery Foundation and operates on a not-for-profit basis. Governed by a volunteer Board of Directors, it is the only organization of its kind in Ottawa. In choosing Beechwood, Funeral, Cemetery and Cremation Services, you can take comfort in knowing that all funds are used for the maintenance, preservation and enhancement of this National Historic Site. The Beechwood Cemetery Foundation was created for the purpose of safeguarding Beechwood's future and increasing public awareness of Beechwood, as well as the important historical persons buried within it.