



CODE OF CREMATION PRACTICE

1. CONDUCT

The cremation of a human body is a significant and often deeply emotional occasion for those taking part in the service. This must never be forgotten by crematorium staff, who must work together to create and maintain a dignified, respectful, inclusive and professional atmosphere throughout all proceedings.

2. STAFF

Great care must be taken in appointing members of crematorium staff who act with compassion, professionalism and respect, and who uphold the standards expected within a modern bereavement service. All staff employed in the operation of cremators must be appropriately trained, competent and compliant with all current technical, ethical, health and safety, environmental and legal requirements. Ongoing professional development should be encouraged for all employees.

3. PRIOR TO COMMITTAL

A coffin or container and its contents brought to the crematorium, whether for a service prior to cremation, an unattended cremation, or a service prior to burial, shall be received through a designated entrance. Reception arrangements must preserve dignity, privacy and respect of the deceased.

If the coffin or container is to be cremated, it shall be transferred appropriately to the crematory. If the service is not to take place immediately, it shall be placed on the catafalque or moved to secure and sanitary holding facilities within the building. If the coffin is to be removed following a service prior to burial, suitable arrangements shall be made for dignified removal.

4. AFTER COMMITTAL

A body shall not be removed from the crematorium after the Service of Committal except for a lawful purpose.

Subject to receipt of the necessary authority to cremate, the coffin or container and its contents shall be placed into the cremator exactly as received and as soon as practicable. Where cremation does not take place on the same day, retention must be with appropriate authority and in circumstances deemed necessary by the Cremation Authority, including operational, environmental or exceptional circumstances. All bodies retained at the crematorium must be accommodated in secure, sanitary and respectful conditions.

Once placed in the cremator, the coffin or container and its contents shall not be interfered with until the cremation process is complete. On completion, all recoverable cremated remains, excluding metals and materials removed in accordance with process requirements, shall be collected and dealt with in accordance with the applicant's instructions and current legislation.

5. CORRECT IDENTITY

No coffin or container shall be accepted unless it bears adequate particulars confirming the identity of the deceased person contained therein. If encased, both the outer cover and inner coffin must bear appropriate identification.

Every care must be taken to ensure correct identification throughout all proceedings, from reception at the crematorium to the final disposal or release of the cremated remains. Robust tracking and recording systems, including digital systems where used, should be maintained.

6. SEPARATELY CREMATED

Each deceased person given to the care of the Cremation Authority shall be cremated separately. Exceptions may be made, for example in the case of parent and child, or siblings, where the applicant has made a specific request and where permitted by law and local policy.

7. COFFIN COVERS

Where a reusable cover or other approved reusable product is used, informed authority must be obtained from the applicant for cremation authorising its use and consenting to its subsequent removal prior to cremation.

8. METAL RESIDUES

Any metal recovered following cremation shall be dealt with in accordance with the applicant's wishes, the policies of the Cremation Authority, environmental good practice and any applicable legal requirements.

9. CREMATED REMAINS/ASHES

The utmost care shall be taken to ensure that cremated remains following removal from the cremator are kept separate, correctly identified and handled with respect at all times. Cremated remains shall be placed in an appropriate container pending collection, release or final disposal.

Where cremated remains are to be scattered or interred in a Garden of Remembrance or other approved location, this shall be conducted with dignity and respect. Where conveyed by carrier or postal service, they must be packaged, labelled and transported in accordance with current guidance and transport regulations.

10. CREMATORS AND ANCILLARY EQUIPMENT

Cremators and all ancillary equipment used in the crematorium shall be maintained in safe working order, serviced in accordance with manufacturers' recommendations and operated in compliance with all current environmental permits, emissions controls, health and safety standards and relevant legislation. Investment in modern technologies that improve efficiency, sustainability and service quality should be encouraged.

11. STATUTORY REGULATIONS

All cremations shall be carried out in accordance with the Cremation Acts, all regulations made thereunder, environmental legislation, health and safety law, data protection requirements and any subsequent legislation or statutory guidance.

12. EQUALITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION

Cremation services shall be delivered fairly and without discrimination. Cremation Authorities should respect the diverse cultural, religious, spiritual and personal needs of bereaved people wherever reasonably practicable, while maintaining legal and operational requirements.

13. ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

Cremation Authorities should operate with regard to environmental sustainability, including emissions reduction, energy efficiency, waste minimisation and responsible use of resources, while maintaining the highest standards of care and dignity.