



Indiana Funeral Directors Association

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IFDA Coronavirus (COVID-19) ADVISORY-UPDATE

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UPDATE 2/27/20-

The Coronavirus (COVID-19) continues to grow worldwide. As of this morning nearly 82,000 cases have been reported with a mortality rate equivalent to 30 deaths per 100,000 cases.

The United States remains in low risk with only 60 reported cases and no reported deaths. Indiana has no cases currently within our borders.

NOW is the ideal time to prepare you and funeral home staff on how to handle this as it gets worse. Please see/click this link for CDC care guidelines of deceased remains.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-postmortem-specimens.html>

Much remains unknown about this virus, but following earlier outlined OSHA guidelines and precautions, keeping informed, using common sense towards cleanliness and disease-spread prevention, and preparing for the worse will make this much easier to traverse for all.

Because your funeral homes are public spaces, you must prepare for protecting the public health which is a charge in your licensing laws-to prevent the spread of infectious disease. Constant cleaning of public spaces, hand sanitizers based with alcohol available for all, and being prepared for the possibility of no public funeral services are all reasonable expectations going forward if the outbreak contuse to worsen.

The Influenza viruses continue to be a bigger immediate threat and should be treated with the same caution as recommended with COVID-19. The practices recommended by OSHA , CDC, and WHO and IFDA are universal and are applicable in caring for all situations.

UPDATE 2/16/20-As part of our on-going commitment to the members of IFDA to stay informed and prepared, we are releasing following information regarding CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19).

As with any global health scare in the 21st century, information moves at the speed of light; some useful and some grossly inaccurate. As an association, we now feel the appropriate time to offer useful information for death care professionals related to protecting themselves and those entrusted to their care.

First, please keep perspective as it relates to the current Coronavirus. Let us make comparison to a more prevalent threat in Indiana that you work against daily, the influenza viruses. As of Friday, February 14, 2020, there were 15 positive cases Coronavirus cases in the United States, 347 who were tested with negative results, 81 pending results¹. There were 15 additional positive quarantined arrivals in California late Sunday night moving this number to 30; no reported deaths in America.

Likewise, according to the Indiana State Department of Health as of February 8, 2020, there have been 54 confirmed flu-related deaths during the 2019-2020 flu season in Indiana with our state under a “widespread” or high infection alert.²

With no intent of being dismissive towards the significance of awareness, preparation, and action plans in your funeral homes as it relates to the Coronavirus, we want to reassure you that you and your staff should already be prepared to handle the Coronavirus should the situation present itself. **THE CORONAVIRUS A SERIOUS SITUATION AND SHOULD BE TREATED AS SUCH THROUGH AWARENESS AND PREPARATION ALONG WITH PRECAUTIONS IN PREVENTING THE INFLUENZA VIRUSES AS THEY POSE A MORE IMMEDIATE THREAT TO YOUR FUNERAL HOME CURRENTLY.**

While deeper understanding is still evolving about Coronavirus (COVID-19), as an association we are encouraging use of standard everyday precautions that you already are practicing inclusive of contact precautions, airborne precautions, and bloodborne pathogen controls as part of your larger exposure control plan as required of funeral service by OSHA.

Suggested Coronavirus Funeral Home Best Practices should include:

- Focused awareness regarding nature of death and treatments of decedents in your care
- Established open communication emergency lines with local health department if a case related to Coronavirus (COVID-19) is under your care
- Staff training/review of OSHA Standards

¹ Centers for Disease Control, February 14, 2020

² www.in.gov/isdh/files/Weekly%20Influenza%20Report-Week%206-2019-2020.pdf

- Check engineering controls for prep room ventilation system that it is functioning and meeting OSHA standards for air circulation for PPM and recommended hourly air exchanges of 6 for existing structures and 12 for renovated or new construction, negative pressure to the surrounding areas of your funeral home, and exhausting directly to the outside of your building or passing of air through a HEPA filter
- Practicing **Respiratory Protection guidelines** as prescribed by **OSHA 29 CFR 1910.134**
- Practicing **Bloodborne Pathogens guidelines** as prescribed by **OSHA 29 CFR 1910.1030**
- Practicing **Personal Protective Equipment guidelines** as prescribed by **OSHA 29 CFR 1910.132**
- Expediated disposition (burial or cremation) is recommended in compliance with local laws and health department mandates
- For persons in direct contact with decedent, suggested covering with masks, respirators, and approved personal protective equipment
- Decontamination before exiting the room with known contaminant and sterilizing or disposal of equipment after use
- Please be mindful that living hosts such as visitors to your funeral home potentially posing a greater risk in some instances than the decedent and encouraging proper precautions by all for general welfare
- Frequent, thorough handwashing is a recommended practice for all

Should you have any questions, please call the IFDA office as we stand ready to provide assistance as the need arises. 317-846-2446