



**Commonwealth of Massachusetts**  
*Executive Office of Health and Human Services*  
**Department of Transitional Assistance**  
600 Washington Street • Boston, MA 02111

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Governor

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JOHN A. WAGNER  
Commissioner

**Field Operations Memo 2004-14**  
**April 1, 2004**

**To:** Transitional Assistance Office Staff  
**From:** *CD* Cescia Derderian, Assistant Commissioner for Field Operations *\**  
**Re:** Clarification of Payment of Funeral and Burial Expenses

**Clarification**

The Massachusetts General Laws (Chapter 117A, Section 9) specify that the Department is responsible for paying funeral and burial expenses for:

- a person whose identity is unknown and who is found dead; or
- any person who was without sufficient resources or financially responsible relatives to pay for funeral and burial expenses.

This includes, but is not limited to, TAFDC, EAEDC and SSI recipients and MassHealth members with less than \$1,500 in assets at the time of death.

**Note:** Funeral and burial expenses may include the cost of cremation only in those situations where the decedent or the decedent's next of kin has stated a preference for cremation. In all cases of cremation where no preference for cremation was stated, no funeral or burial expenses will be paid.

The Department will not pay any funeral and burial expenses if the total cost exceeds \$1,500. If the total cost does not exceed \$1,500, the Department will pay the balance of the funeral and burial cost up to \$1,100.



**Commonwealth of Massachusetts**  
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Argeo Paul Celucci  
Governor

Jane Swift  
Lieutenant Governor

William D. O'Leary  
Secretary

Clara McIntire  
Commissioner

**Field Operations Memo 99-16**  
**July 1, 1999**

**To:** Transitional Assistance Office Staff  
**From:** Joyce Sampson, Assistant Commissioner for Field Operations  
**Re:** Payment of Funeral and Burial Expenses

**Background** The Massachusetts General Laws (Chapter 117A, Section 9) specify that the Department is responsible for paying funeral and burial expenses for:

- a person whose identity is unknown and found dead, or
- any person who was without sufficient resources or financially responsible relatives to pay for funeral and burial expenses. This includes, but is not limited to, TAFDC, EAEDC and SSI recipients and DMA MassHealth members with less than \$1,500 in assets at the time of death.

**Note:** Funeral and burial expenses may include the cost of cremation.

**Applications for Recipients** A separate application does not need to be completed for payment of funeral and burial expenses on behalf of an individual who, at the time of death was: (1) an active TAFDC, EAEDC, SSI-A or SSI-D recipient, or (2) a pending TAFDC or EAEDC applicant opened with Action Reason 03.

The request for payment of funeral and burial expenses should be processed by the Transitional Assistance Office that has the active or pending case.

**Applications  
for Non-  
Recipients**

The *Application for Payment of Funeral and Burial Expenses (F&B-1)* form (see Attachment A) has been developed to collect the necessary information to determine eligibility for payment of funeral and burial expenses for deceased individuals who were not TAFDC, EAEDC, or SSI recipients at the time of death.

The F&B-1 may be submitted to **any** Transitional Assistance Office:

- on behalf of any deceased person who was **not** an active TAFDC, EAEDC, or SSI recipient, or pending TAFDC or EAEDC applicant at the time of death.
- by a relative, friend, funeral director, medical examiner or other person who is able to complete the application process and provide any necessary verifications.

**Verification  
of Funeral  
and Burial  
Expenses**

In all instances of requests for payment of funeral and burial expenses, the funeral director must:

- (1) submit an itemized bill,
- (2) submit a signed statement that the total cost of the funeral and burial does not exceed \$1,500, and
- (3) report any money paid or to be paid by sources other than the Department.

The Department will not pay any funeral and burial expenses if the total cost exceeds \$1,500.

**Assets**

The TAFDC and EAEDC asset limits do not apply to applications solely for payment of funeral and burial expenses. A decedent's and/or financially responsible relative's assets must be less than \$1,500.

Assets include, but are not limited to, savings and other bank accounts, life insurance, RSDI and Veterans' Administration death benefits, and personal needs accounts of nursing home or other long-term-care decedents. In all instances, death benefits and other resources must be explored before funeral and burial expenses are authorized.



**Assets  
(cont.)**

**Important:** Veterans' death benefits will not be paid once the Department authorizes the payment of the funeral and burial expense; therefore it is important that this benefit be explored before approving the payment.

Any assets available from the decedent or a financially responsible relative must be deducted from the maximum allowable cost (\$1,500); the Department then pays the balance, if any, up to \$1,100.

**Example #1:** Mr. Black was a resident in a long-term-care facility. His only asset at the time of his death was a personal needs account of \$600. The funeral and burial expenses are \$1,500. Deduct \$600 from the maximum allowable cost of \$1,500 and authorize a funeral and burial payment of \$900.

**Example #2:** Mr. White's only asset at the time of his death was a bank account with \$300. The funeral and burial expenses were \$1,500. Deduct \$300 from the maximum allowable cost of \$1,500. Although there is a balance due of \$1,200, the authorization for the funeral and burial payment may not exceed \$1,100.

**Example #3:** Mr. Green's wife is a financially responsible relative. At the time of Mr. Green's death, Mrs. Green had a bank account with \$1,800. Since her assets exceed the \$1,500 maximum allowable funeral and burial cost, Mr. Green is not eligible to have any of his funeral and burial expenses paid by the Department. The application must be denied.

**Payment of  
Funeral and  
Burial  
Expenses**

Send an NFL-9, approving or denying payment for funeral and burial expenses, to the person who made the request on behalf of the decedent.



An individual who was an active TAEDC, EAEDC, SSI-A or SSI-D recipient at the time of death and who is approved for funeral and burial expenses must be processed as a Category 2, 4, 1 or 3 respectively. After the payment for the funeral and burial expenses has been made, close the deceased recipient with Action Reason 49.

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**Payment of  
Funeral and  
Burial  
Expenses  
(cont.)**

An individual who was a pending (Action Reason 03) TAFDC or EAEDC applicant at the time of death and who is approved for payment of funeral and burial expenses must be processed as a Category 2 or 4 respectively. After the payment for the funeral and burial expenses has been made, close the deceased applicant/case with Action Reason 70.

for  
8/12/00  
7/10/00  
8/1/00

Any other deceased individual, (who was not an active TAFDC, EAEDC, or SSI case or a pending TAFDC or EAEDC applicant at the time of death) who is approved for payment of funeral and burial expenses must be opened/reopened on PACES as a Category 4 with Action Reason 03. After the payment for the funeral and burial expenses has been made, close the deceased recipient with Action Reason 70.

Funeral and Burial Expenses are paid through the Special Services Payment System (SSPS). See *Systems User's Guide: Volume III, SSPS User's Guide*.

**Policy**

The policy governing funerals and burials is found in the Transitional Cash Assistance Programs: Related Benefits - 106 CMR 705.700-705.710.

**Questions**

If you have any questions, please have your Hotline designee call the Policy Hotline at (617) 348-8478. For system-related questions, call the Customer Service Center at (617) 348-5290.