

FUNERAL SERVICES FOR THE CALGARY HINDU COMMUNITY



HEALTH SEMINAR # 25
March 21, 2017 – Updated
Apr 2020

Jitendra Davda, Funeral Committee

What will be covered today?

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- Funeral committee objective
- Funeral services & pricing information
- What to do when a family member passes away?
- Q & A



Sequence of Events

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Our Focus Today



- Wills & Estate Planning
- Family wishes

- Death
- Funeral planning
- Ceremony

- Notifications to agencies
- Executor responsibilities



Funeral Committee - Volunteers



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□ Current committee Volunteers

- Bhaskar Thankey - [403 242 9787](tel:4032429787) or bthankey@hotmail.com
- Jitendra Davda - [403 402 9110](tel:4034029110) or davdaj@gmail.com
- Manoj Raythatha - [403 651 8122](tel:4036518122) or raythatha@shaw.ca
- Chandrakant Lad - [587 899 2725](tel:5878992725) or chandra.lad@gmail.com
- Manubhai Makwana - [403-462-7070](tel:4034627070) or manu.makwana@shaw.ca
- Rupesh Patel - [403.461.6006](tel:4034616006) or rups51@gmail.com

Vinay Dattani – Advisor and Information source

- If anyone wants to take an active part in the committee please provide your names to any of our committee members



On behalf of the Funeral Committee...

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- We are pleased to present to you information on Funeral services specifically for the Hindu community
- The information is based on our experience and understanding of our traditions and culture
- We fully understand there are variations based on different faith, beliefs and traditions
- Funeral committee does not get involved in any financial transactions – can provide guidance



Funeral Committee – Our Objective

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- ❑ To assist families with Funeral services keeping in mind:
 - ❑ Funeral is a very private matter
 - ❑ Funeral committee volunteer is only engaged if requested
 - ❑ Families can contact the vendor directly – just mention that you would like to use the “Hindu Community” arrangements and costs



Funeral Committee – How we can help

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- Take the initial call from the Family of the deceased, gather information and make the call to the Funeral home (for meeting, transfer the body etc.)
- Meet with family (if required) to go through the Funeral procedure and norms
- Discuss options of Private VS Public service
- Discuss options of where to have the service
- Arrange for a priest
- Provide list of Samagri required for ceremony
- Assist with announcement through community email



Accepting Death

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- Birth and death are counter parts of life
- Most families have a hard time talking about deaths, funeral etc.
- When a death occurs in a family, it is normal for people to get confused and emotional to think rationally
- Ceremonies connected with death – Cremation and Last rites are very important in the Hindu traditions to provide peace to departed soul for reincarnation

SHIFT from Grieving to **“Celebration of Life”**



Funeral services in Calgary

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- Number of Funeral services vendors have increased dramatically with the aging population
- Discussions with various vendors have resulted in making arrangements & pricing with two vendors
 - Heritage Funeral Services (3 locations)
 - Country Hills Crematorium



Heritage Funeral Services

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- Agreement term – Jan 1, 2019 to Dec 31, 2021
- Three locations -
 - ▣ Calgary Crematorium & Funeral Services
3219 – 4th Street N.W. – Seating capacity 170
 - ▣ McInnis & Holloway Chapel of the Bells
2720 Centre Street North – Seating capacity 280
 - ▣ McInnis & Holloway Eastside Memorial Chapel
5188 Memorial Drive N.E. – Seating capacity 250

NOTE: To get our pricing and packages, arrangements **MUST** be made through the Calgary Crematorium location at 3219 – 4th Street N.W. regardless of where the services are going to be held (Tel: 403.299.0111)



Heritage Funeral - Services

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- Professional services including:
 - Transportation of deceased from within city limits
 - Embalming and sanitation
 - Preparation for dressing & viewing (with / without family assistance)
 - Legal paperwork, assistance with newspaper announcements
 - Cremation and witnessing of cremation
 - Family visitations, if required prior to the service
 - Obituary on Funeral Services website



Heritage Funeral – Services. cont'd

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- ▣ Memorial book
- ▣ Honey Brown Urn including storage of urn for up to a year
- ▣ Harmony or Minor Elder lite Casket
- ▣ Use of Audio/Visual equipment
- ▣ Two bags of flower petals
- ▣ 10 or more Statement of Death certificates – required for banks, CPP, OAS and other agencies
- ▣ Alberta Registry - One official Death certificate
- ▣ Package of documents required for completion by family members after the funeral
- ▣ We have a box with all the utensils required for ceremony



Heritage Funeral – Additional services

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- ❑ Funeral coach to Residence with Casket
- ❑ Services at larger facility
- ❑ Services on Statutory holidays
- ❑ Family Limousine (10 passenger)
- ❑ Service Folders
- ❑ Transportation of deceased – outside city limits
- ❑ Video production on DVD

10% Discount available on additional services



What are the costs involved?

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- Funeral service costs has become like buying a car – what options do we want?
- We will hear prices quoted from \$995 to \$20,000 – all depends on what we want
- Funeral committee has negotiated packages with two vendors that should meet requirements of most families – flexibilities available to alter
- Funeral service vendors will always try and up sale on their services – it is their business and they want to be profitable



Cost at Heritage Funeral Services

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- Calgary Crematorium – 3219 – 4th Street NW
\$5,633 plus GST
- McInnis & Holloway (Chapel of the Bells or East Side Memorial) **\$6,558** plus GST



Country Hills Crematorium



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- ❑ Brand new 18k sq ft facility built in mid 2016
- ❑ Located at 11995 – 16th Street N.E. Tel: 403.274.0576
- ❑ Two large halls (with capacity of 440 seating each) and large parking area (108 stalls)
- ❑ Two Cremation facilities to allow for two different funerals to happen concurrently
- ❑ First Crematorium & funeral centre co-owned by South Asian partners and Pierson family



Country Hills Crematorium - Services

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- Agreement term – Effective Sep 2019
- Professional services including:
 - ▣ Transportation of deceased from within city limits
 - ▣ Embalming and sanitation
 - ▣ Preparation for dressing & viewing (with / without family assistance)
 - ▣ Legal paperwork, assistance with newspaper announcements
 - ▣ Cremation and witnessing of cremation
 - ▣ Family visitations, if required prior to the service



Country Hills Crematorium – Services.. cont'd

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- ❑ Memorial book, Scattering urn
- ❑ Use of Audio/Visual equipment
- ❑ Horizon Birch, White Faith Ultralite or Minor Wood Bar Casket
- ❑ One bag of flower petals
- ❑ Alberta Registry - One official Death certificate
- ❑ 10 or more Statement of Death certificates – required for banks, CPP, OAS and other agencies
- ❑ Package of documents required for completion by family members after the funeral



Country Hills Crematorium – Additional Services

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- Similar to Heritage Funeral Services – additional services are available from this vendor as well
- Large commercial Kitchen



Cost at Country Hills Crematorium

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- **\$5,475** plus GST
- Children – up to 5 years of age
 - ▣ No charge for basic services and facilities
 - ▣ Urn, casket or cremation container at cost
- Children – 6 to 17 years of age
 - ▣ Fees charged are at 35% of the Regular Professional fees
 - ▣ Urn, casket or cremation container at cost



What to do when a death occurs?

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- ❑ Do not panic, have courage, help is available
- ❑ Call one of the Funeral committee members if you want their help or call one of the two vendors with the following info:
 - ❑ Legal full name of the deceased
 - ❑ Time and location of deceased
 - ❑ Name of Doctor in charge
 - ❑ Authorize transfer of body to the funeral home
 - ❑ Arrange a face to face meeting with the Funeral Director



Family Decisions



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- ❑ Involve Funeral committee volunteer or not
- ❑ Private funeral or Public funeral
- ❑ Public Memorial service and private funeral
- ❑ Out of town family members/friends coming
- ❑ Announcement in newspapers, community email
- ❑ Family member with authority to work with Funeral committee volunteer and attend meeting with Funeral Director
- ❑ Last rites at Funeral home or at residence
- ❑ Casket open or close during public parikrama



Before meeting with the Funeral Director

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- Get family consensus on when the funeral should take place
- Gather all the information that will be required for the meeting
- Funeral committee (if involved) can arrange for the meeting, make provisional booking for the funeral, arrange for a priest, assist with announcement through community emails, printing of handouts (if req'd)



Info required for meeting with Funeral Director

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Designated family member with authority to make decisions should be present

- Take the following documents/information:
 - ▣ Passport, Drivers License, Alberta health care card, Social Insurance number
 - ▣ Full name, DofB, Name of spouse, Birth place, Address, phone #
 - ▣ Full name of deceased's father & mother and place of birth
 - ▣ Credit card for payment



Before the day of the Funeral

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- ❑ Priest is lined up
- ❑ For public funerals, announcements in newspaper(s) and/or community email
- ❑ Samagri for the ceremony is ready
- ❑ Family members lined up for Eulogy, Emcee, Speakers, Presentations and who will be witnessing the cremation
- ❑ Clothing for the deceased given to the Funeral home and who if any helping with the dressing
- ❑ Printing of programs, Photo of deceased
- ❑ Arrange for any special CD or bhajan singers



Day of the Funeral



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- ❑ Bathing and dressing – by Funeral home staff with / without family members
- ❑ Family ceremony 30 minutes before the public comes (doors closed for public)
- ❑ Ceremony – Gita slokas by priest, Eulogy, speeches, Shanti Path, Public viewing and parikrama, cremation including havan, announcements for bhajans etc.
- ❑ Family line up as the public departs
- ❑ Shiv Pooja (Uthamnu), if desired for family



Uthamnu – Shiv Pooja



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- Why do we do it?
 - ▣ Lord Shiva is the god of destruction and regeneration and we pray to Lord Shiva to accept the Atma (Soul) and grant it eternal peace
- Items required for this ceremony
 - ▣ Photo of Lord Shiva
 - ▣ Photo of the deceased
 - ▣ White handkerchief or cloth
 - ▣ Diya
- Typically done at the end of the funeral



Other Information



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- Distribution of ashes
 - In Alberta, officially there is no designated place to distribute the ashes in spite of several attempts
- Donating organs and tissues
 - Discuss it with your immediate family
 - Alberta Organ and Tissue Donation Registry
<https://myhealth.alberta.ca/Pages/OTDRHome.aspx>
- Body Donation (for research)
 - <https://www.ucalgary.ca/bodydonation/>



Prepayment Options

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- Prepayment option – Available with Heritage Funeral services and County Hills Crematorium
- Calgary Co-operative Memorial Society – one time membership of \$40 offer services through McInnis & Holloway
 - <http://www.calgarymemorial.com/calgary-airdrie-cochrane.html>



Government Programs

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- The Canada Pension Plan (CPP) death benefit is a one-time, lump-sum payment to the estate on behalf of a deceased CPP contributor – up to \$2,500
 - <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/publicpensions/cpp/cpp-death-benefit.html>
- Financial assistance - Eligibility is based on the financial resources available in the estate of the deceased
 - <http://www.humanservices.alberta.ca/AWonline/IS/4862.html>
- Low income Seniors subsidy (up to \$1,200)
 - <http://www.seniors-housing.alberta.ca/documents/SNA-Information-Booklet.pdf>



Priest

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- Dakshina to Priest should be given at the end of the ceremony
- Same Priest can perform 11th, 12th, 13th day and 12 month rituals if required – to be discussed directly with the Priest
- Priest is not required at time of death but is recommended for the service
- Samagri list varies slightly depending on Priest



Priests on our list

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- Pandit Mahend Singh – Tel: 403.248.4317
- Acharya Rahul Dev – Tel: 403.903.5221
- Pandit Harishchandra Dabral – Tel: 403.613.9642
- Hindu Temple (Priest) – 403.291.2551
- Keshav Sharma – 306.501.4410
- Pandit Mohanmurari Tiwari – 403.771.4911
- Acharya Vinod Sodiyaal – 403.397.6478



Sources

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- Sonali Jewellers (Pravinbhai Jogia) provides FREE gold, silver and bronze metal pieces
- O K General Foods, upon request, could have the Samagri material ready (Owner Laddie Tel: 403 293 1186)
- Hindu Society provides FREE hall to have a memorial service/bhajans
- Choice Memorial provides a very low cost Simplified cremation starting at \$995
 - <http://www.choicememorial.com/>



Infants

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- Infants – age varies depending on different beliefs
– usually under age of 1 are buried and not cremated
- Plots are available from City of Calgary and Funeral homes assist with this process



After the Funeral



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Funeral home will provide a package that will have a list and forms to complete for various agencies.

Notifications to various government agencies, insurance, banks, investments, will execution etc.

Additional information:

- Steps to take following a death
 - ▣ <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/benefits/family/death.html>
- Estate Executor's responsibilities
 - ▣ <https://www.canada.ca/en/financial-consumer-agency/services/estate-planning/estate-representative.html#toc1>



Samagri from Grocery store

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- ❑ Agarbatti 1 pkt
- ❑ Ghee 200 gms bottle
- ❑ Havan samagri 1 box
- ❑ Chandan 1 box
- ❑ Kapoor 4 pkts
- ❑ Sopari 10 pcs
- ❑ Rose water 1 small bottle
- ❑ Coconut 5 pcs
- ❑ Honey 200 gms
- ❑ Rice 50 gms
- ❑ Black sesame seeds 50 gms
- ❑ Nagarvel Paan 5
- ❑ Sticks from mango tree 5 pcs
- ❑ Ganga jaal 1 pkt



Items to take from home

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- Photo of the deceased with a garland
- Diyas (3), Matches
- Gold, silver, bronze metal pieces
- 5 Ladoos (prepared by mixing wheat flour, water, jaggary (gur) and ghee)
- Tulsi leaves (3)
- Program with photo/write up (if desired)



Q & A



Jitendra Davda, Funeral Committee