Memorial Service Checklist

FOR FAMILY DIRECTED CEREMONY

CREMATION SOCIETY
of New Hampshire

Simple ✤ Affordable ✤ Dignified

In an effort to guide our client families, we have developed this checklist for those coordinating and directing their own memorial service or ceremony. While this list does not cover every situation, it should provide general guidance to ensure that the important items have been addressed prior to the service taking place. If you have specific situations which are not covered in this list, please contact our office and speak with one of our family service counselors. We are always available to either answer your questions or assist in coordinating the service.

For the Church Service

- ☐ Choose the location and time of the ceremony and reserve the location
- ☐ Identify clergy, celebrant or person of your choosing to officiate service
- ☐ Decide on type and tone of service (e.g. religious, spiritual, life celebration, humanistic)
- ☐ Select the elements of the service (music, sermon, prayers, scripture readings, eulogy, sharing memories, video, and so forth)
- ☐ Decide on the order and timing of the service (when are songs played, prayers read)
- ☐ Pick individual(s) to do readings, give eulogy and share memories or thoughts (if desired)
- ☐ Select specific music (live or taped), if desired, to be used during the service and the timing of when the songs will be played
- ☐ Purchase floral arrangement(s), memorial guest book and cards and any other items you will need for the service
- ☐ Prepare any video and/or audio that will be used during the service (if not provided by the church or facility) and designate someone to run the equipment during the service

- [ ] Ensure floral tributes are delivered and displayed at the church or facility at least thirty minutes prior to guests arriving

- [ ] Determine where cremated remains will be displayed during the service and designate someone to deliver the urn to the facility along with urn display table (if not provided by facility) and other items such as a pictures, at least thirty minutes prior to service

- [ ] Verify with church or facility that there are adequate stands and tables to display the floral arrangements and determine where flowers can be displayed

- [ ] If the service is to take place in a church, make sure you are familiar with the specific customs and funeral rites of the religion and the specific church as it pertains to cremated remains and the ceremony

- [ ] Assign person to remove flowers from church or facility following ceremony and delivery of arrangements to family residence, cemetery or designated donation site

- [ ] Meet with clergy/officiant and musicians (if applicable) prior to service to review order of service, making sure they are aware of anyone else doing readings or speaking

- [ ] Place memorial register book, memorial cards, donation tray and any other materials at entry point of facility and designate person to direct attendees to sign book as they enter

- [ ] Coordinate how family will process and recess at the beginning and end of service

- [ ] Reserve adequate seating for immediate family members and any special guests

- [ ] Designate usher(s) to be available to seat guests and answer questions (e.g. location of rest rooms, children's room, directions to cemetery)

- [ ] Have someone make appropriate announcements at the beginning and conclusion of services (e.g. requesting everyone to turn off cell phone, inviting congregation to attend luncheon/gathering after ceremony)

- [ ] Make sure all checks and honorariums are written out and distributed to a propriate persons well in advance of service (clergy, musicians, church sextons)

For the Cemetery Committal Service

- [ ] Contact cemetery at least two days in advance of service to schedule burial

- [ ] Pay cemetery fee for grave opening and closing and ask if there are any other requirements such as an urn vault, weekend fee or use of cemetery chapel fee

- [ ] Decide on location of committal at cemetery (graveside, cemetery chapel)

- [ ] If deceased was a veteran, schedule military honors (make sure to bring flag)

- [ ] Designate someone to bring urn to gravesite or cemetery chapel along with flowers and any other items to be used (portable sound system for music or clergy)

- [ ] Make sure flowers have been delivered to gravesite and professionally displayed

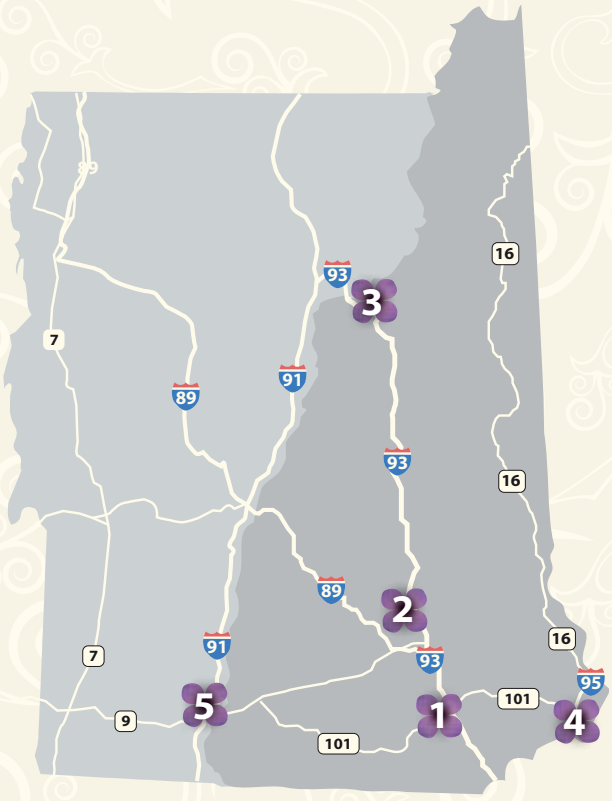
- [ ] Designate a person to make any necessary announcements such as a luncheon following

- [ ] Make arrangements for any special events such as balloon or butterfly releases, bagpiper or other personalized tribute

- [ ] Make arrangements for lettering on monument or marker or if there is no marker, then purchase monument

For the Reception

- ☐ Reserve any facilities to be used
- ☐ Choose and book a caterer or designate who will be preparing food
- ☐ Notify all invitees of the reception time, date, dress code and expectations
- ☐ Organize any performances/readings



1. Manchester - Main Office

243 Hanover Street
Manchester, New Hampshire 03104

2. Boscawen Office

172 King Street
Boscawen, New Hampshire 03303

3. Littleton Office

101 Union Street
Littleton, New Hampshire 03561

4. Hampton Office

861 Lafayette Road, Unit 2
Hampton, NH 03842

5. Brattleboro Office

57 High Street
Brattleboro, VT 05301

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of New Hampshire

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603-622-1800 ✻ 800-493-8001
www.csnh.com ✻ info@csnh.com

Mailing Address: 243 Hanover St., Manchester NH, 03104

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