

An Essential Guide to Death Care

Locally owned, women-led

Natural, compassionate care
for the deceased

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Introduction and Table Of Contents

At KORU, we offer personalized, eco-friendly burial, cremation, and funeral ceremonies that honour both the deceased and those who gather to remember them.

We're here to walk alongside you and help you mourn, remember, and care for your deceased in a way that feels authentic, personal, and connected.

This guide explains what to do when someone dies and what it looks like to work with us through the deathcare process. Inside, you'll find:

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What to Do When Someone Dies

Generally, when someone dies, we feel we must immediately have their body moved and we behave as if in a state of emergency.

Although there may be a feeling of urgency, **there is no rush**. You can take time to be with your emotions, be with your dead and let the new state of being sink in. This statement may come as a surprise to many, but in fact, at KORU we encourage it.

Once you've had a chance to be with the new reality, know that **you have options that you are in control of**.

You can choose:

- Whether to hire a deathcare (funeral services) provider or not. It's legal in BC for families to handle all after-death arrangements on their own.
- The best provider to work with, based on aligned values, budget and location.

There are circumstances where other parties must be consulted about initial care for the deceased body. If that is your circumstance, reach out for guidance.

“Who do I inform first?”

1. By law, the deceased body may not be moved until death has been pronounced and permission has been provided by the **executor** or **legal next of kin**. **The exception to this is if the coroner service or police are involved.**

2. If the death was accidental (ie: motor vehicle accident) or otherwise completely unexpected, **911 must be called** and **emergency responders** will attend followed by a **coroner**.

3. If the death was not accidental, was expected and happened in a private residence, **do not call 911**. Instead, contact the **family doctor** or **nurse practitioner** who was familiar with the deceased person in life. They need to pronounce the death before any further action can be taken.

“How do I determine the executor or legal next of kin?”

If the person who died has a Will, there will be an appointed executor.
If there isn't a Will, follow the BC government guidelines on page 13.

“What do I do after death has been pronounced?”


In BC, deaths are pronounced by doctors, registered nurses (RNs), and coroners.

After pronouncement, you can take some time to think about **where** and **when** you would like your family member's body to be moved, or if you want to have them moved initially at all.

Family members or caregivers who have been appointed by a medical professional under the Expected Death in the Home protocol (EDITH) can forego the immediate need to have a death pronounced prior to moving the body to another location. In this case, a doctor or RN will still need to be informed so that they can produce an official pronouncement for registration of death.

Here's what to consider after the death has been pronounced:

- Is there anyone who wasn't present at the time of death but who may want to say goodbye before anything else takes place?
- If you prefer to keep your dead at home, do you have the support and understanding of how to care for their body?
 - Guidance can be provided **in advance** of a death by a funeral director, death doula, or elder in your community with that experience.
 - In-person, paid guidance **after death** can only be from a funeral director.
 - See page 11 for more information on **home vigils** and **home funeral** practices.

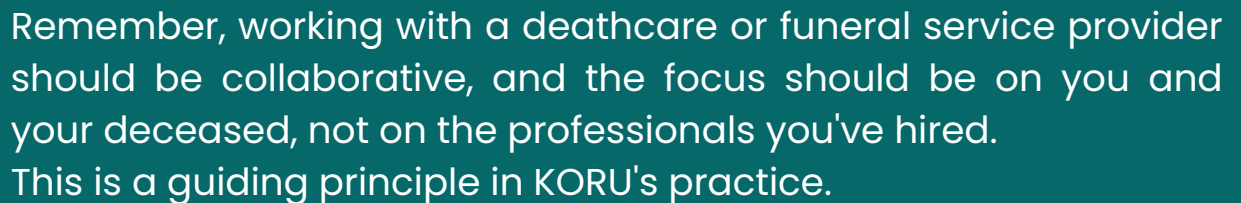


Once you have made decisions about the "where" and "when", feel free to contact us to discuss your choices. We can meet to talk about next steps for cremation, burial and ceremony.

What to know if you're using our services

When you first call us, we will ask you:

- The full legal name of the deceased.
- Where did they die? Is that currently where their body is located?
- When would you want to arrange for transportation of the body?
- Before transportation occurs, do you need assistance to bathe and dress the person who has died?
- Who is the executor or legal next of kin and what is their contact information?
- As the caller, what is your name and your contact information?
- What are your initial concerns or considerations?
- Would you prefer to meet with KORU's staff in-person or by video or phone call?



Remember, working with a deathcare or funeral service provider should be collaborative, and the focus should be on you and your deceased, not on the professionals you've hired. This is a guiding principle in KORU's practice.

Other questions our team will ask you

- Would you like to help us bathe and dress your person who has died?
- Would you like us to cut a lock of hair to provide to your family?
- Should we provide a high-resolution fingerprint copy and access to have that print engraved on memorial items?
- Should we provide postmortem DNA collection and preservation services?
- What ceremony services are important and needed for you and your family? For example:
 - Private time with your person who died
 - Public viewing
 - Traditional funeral
 - Being present for the cremation (witness cremation)
 - Green burial
 - A celebration of life or other kind of memorial service
 - A combination of ceremony services
- If cremation is chosen, would you like to receive solidified ashes (services provided by Parting Stone: www.partingstone.com) or loose in an urn?

Optional items to provide to KORU


- A recent photograph
- Clothing for the deceased
- Personal items to place with them, such as photos, letters, flowers, blankets, sea shells. For those who are cremated or choose green burial, we ask that plastic and metal items be omitted or greatly reduced.
- Documentation for prepaid cremation or burial or funeral services, even if it's with a different funeral provider
- Cemetery documentation
- Copy of the valid Will
- Obituary notice (written text and photos for online placement)

Vital Statistics

To register a death with BC Vital Statistics and to fill out the necessary documentation for cremation or burial, personal information needs to be collected about the deceased person. This includes:

- Legal name at birth
- Address
- Social Insurance Number
- BC Personal Health Number (care card)
- Date and place of birth (city, province and/or country)
- Parents' names, including the mother's maiden name, and their places of birth
- Marital status
- Spouse's full legal name (even if divorced, separated or predeceased)
- Occupation, years in occupation and industry related to it
- Executor or legal next of kin's full legal name and contact information.

This can be submitted directly at www.korucremation.com/vital-statistics-form

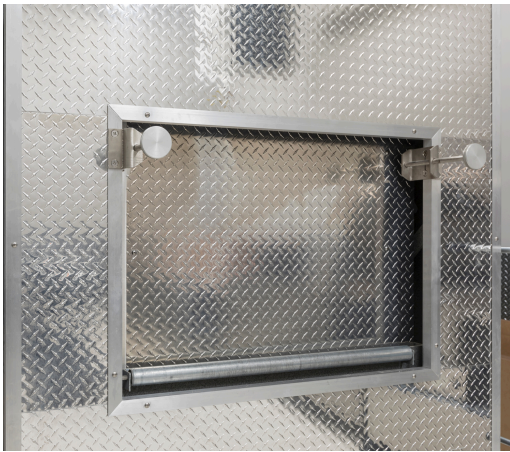


We will issue and help to determine the number of original death certificates needed to begin settling estate matters. We will also provide a comprehensive estate trustee program to guide you through the many required tasks.

Our Services

Our services revolve around three core elements: cremation, burial, and ceremony, each available in a range of forms. Throughout our time together, we'll help you navigate the decisions related to these options.

Cremation



*In other jurisdictions, **aquamation**, a greener, water-based form of cremation, is available. At the time of this printing, it is not a legal option in British Columbia.*

Flame cremation is one of two legal forms of disposition in British Columbia (the other is burial).

Some families choose to focus on essential arrangements first, leaving ceremony or ritual for a later time when they feel ready.

Cremation can also include sacred and meaningful rituals that honour the person who has died and acknowledge the impact of their death on those they leave behind.

Witness Cremation refers to a service where family and friends are present at the crematorium to witness the start of the process. This intimate experience offers a powerful way to bring ceremony, connection, and reverence to the cremation.

Burial

We offer a range of meaningful burial options to honour family, faith and cultural traditions and the environment, including:

- Conventional, in-ground, whole-body burial
- Above-ground entombment in a mausoleum
- Green burial or natural burial

While we will assist with the planning of the burial, the plot will need to be purchased directly from the cemetery of your choice.



Conservation of land can be an important aspect of green or natural burial grounds, unlike with conventional burial.

“What is a green or natural burial?”

In recent years, many people have sought to return to ancient traditions by choosing green and natural burials over cremation or conventional methods.

These methods return a body to the earth in as natural a state as possible, allowing the earth to decompose the body, contributing to the renewal of the environment. On the right are certain practices that must be adhered to, to remain true to the principles of green and natural burial.

Some cemeteries will adhere to the first three of these principals, and not #4 or #5. They are often referred to as "hybrid green burial cemeteries". For a list of local cemeteries that have either hybrid or green burial cemetery status, please go to www.korucremation.com/burial/

Five Principals of Green Burial:

1. No embalming
2. Direct earth burial
3. Simple memorialization (communal rather than individual headstones or grave markers)
4. Ecological restoration and conservation
5. Optimized land use

KORU Cremation | Burial | Ceremony is one of a select number of funeral homes that meet the criteria for providing green funeral service by the Green Burial Council.

Terramation (Natural Organic Reduction)



Ngaio on tour at Return Home, in front of a demonstration terramation vessel (the vessel would contain the deceased's remains throughout the terramation process).

Natural organic reduction (also referred to as NOR or terramation) is the process of gently transforming human remains into soil.

Our neighbours to the south in Washington State made a momentous decision to offer this as a form of disposition. Since then, a number of other American states have legislated NOR in their jurisdiction. At the time of this printing, no province in Canada has followed suit.

We have a working relationship with **Return Home**, a terramation deathcare business in Auburn, WA. This enables our client community to access this “green” form of disposition. For more information on this, please contact us directly.

Ceremony



Thoughtful, intentional ceremonies create connection and meaning, and support you through the reality of death.

Ceremony can take many different forms, from a traditional church service to a free-form outdoor memorial.

We believe that any activity carried out with intention can be considered ceremonial. Some examples:

- Reciting a verse from a song while lighting a candle
- Setting a place at the dinner table for the one who has died and having a special toast during your meal in their honour
- Going out into the natural world, choosing a stone or piece of wood that reminds you of a connection with your person and releasing it into a body of water
- Being involved in the final cleansing and dressing ritual of the one who has died.

When you set your intention, the rest will come, and it doesn't have to be overdone to be meaningful.

We encourage people to consider different ceremonies and rituals for different groups at different times. It is common for the needs of the immediate family and close circle of friends to be different from the wider circles of people.

Whatever your culture, circumstance or challenge, we're here to help you care for, remember, mourn and celebrate your dead in a way that is fitting for you.

You decide how much guidance you would like from us, and we will step in to support that.

Celebrants or ceremonialists are trained in ceremony. They not only carry the service on the day of, but spend time meeting with you, learning about your person who has died and writing a customized ceremony that fits your vision of how to memorialize, pay tribute to and honour your dead.

“What should I consider when planning a ceremony?”

- What is the intention of your gathering and who should be included based on that intention?
- Where will it take place? Church, public or private garden, special event venue, a private residence?
- Who will lead or carry the ceremony? A family member, friend, clergy person or a trained celebrant?
- What day and time is best? Keep in mind that weekends are popular no matter where your ceremony is. Be prepared to have a back-up date and time.
- Will it be a fully in-person gathering, a virtual service or a combination of the two?
- Will the burial or cremation be woven into the ceremony, either on a different day or on the same day?
- Who will organize and plan all of the details? KORU and their affiliated partners or family and friends?

“What should I expect after the service?”

This is one of the times when the reality of your loved one's death can really hit hard. The busyness of the immediate after-death services has come to an end and now the everyday living begins.

Don't be afraid, embarrassed or too shy to reach out for support at this time. You will need it. Whether it comes from professional grief counsellors or therapists, your network of family and friends, or a combination of these groups, it is important to realize that your life has forever changed. The wisdom and kindness of others may be your lifeline back into a new way of living.

Be gentle with yourself. Take the time you need. Pay attention to your physical needs, as they are often a reflection of our inner workings.

Our team can provide referrals to you for other professionals who we know and trust. Call or email us, or find more support at korucremation.com/resources.

Home Vigils and Home Funerals

Deathcare can be provided by family and friends, rather than hiring professionals. Our advice is that you follow some basic steps to be prepared so that you are not overwhelmed when the time comes.

We can't overstate enough how important it is to plan ahead if you are considering doing the deathcare work yourself. There are many helpful resources, from online guides, to books, to talking to people who have done it or have knowledge about the process. Most importantly, talk to your family and friends about your plans and enlist their help, as you will need it.

A hybrid home funeral/vigil may be a comfortable compromise. This means that you could hire KORU to look after transportation needs and all administrative requirements, allowing time to focus on the ceremonies and rituals that are important for you and your family.

Home Funeral Checklist:

1. If the person dies outside of the family home, you will need a private transfer permit to move the deceased body from the place of death. Apply to CPBC (Consumer Protection of BC) for the permit.
2. Once your deceased person is at home, you will need to provide physical care to the body (washing, dressing, positioning of the body) and most importantly, you will need to keep the body and the room as cool as possible until the burial or cremation.
3. Before the burial or cremation can take place, register the person's death with Vital Statistics BC. This will require providing personal information about the deceased, including supplying government-issued ID, and obtaining the Medical Certification of Death from the doctor or nurse practitioner.
4. Schedule the burial or cremation with the cemetery or crematorium. Complete the paperwork beforehand (for burial, interment authorization; for cremation, cremation authorization). The person responsible for completing this paperwork is the legal representative of the deceased (Executor named in a Will, or, if no Will, the legal next of kin. See page 13).
5. Provide a burial casket or cremation casket that meets BC provincial guidelines as well as the cemetery or crematorium's requirements.
6. Transfer the deceased to the crematorium or cemetery on the planned day and time (a transfer permit must be obtained for this transfer as well).
7. Pay the cemetery or crematorium prior to the disposition.
8. For cremation, make a plan to return to the crematorium to collect the ashes.
9. Between all of the "business" of looking after things, find time to just be with your person who has died, your family and friends to mourn and celebrate together.

Planning in Advance

After reading through this, you'll likely recognize the enormous scope of decisions that one is required to make when someone dies. For some, the thought of having to do that while the grief is raw and fresh is terribly daunting. **To mitigate that stress, know that it is possible to plan in advance with KORU, including prepayment.**



Prepaying with KORU is an option you may want to explore. To find out if it is the right choice for you, please call us.

Pre-plan in six easy steps:

1. Call or email to get to know us and our services. **We'll send you a complimentary pre-planning guide, upon request.**
2. Schedule an in-person meeting at home or at our office or a virtual meeting by phone or video call.
3. Pick the services you want and choose a payment option.
4. Sign paperwork and provide payment details.
5. Keep copies of all documents stored safely.
6. Tell the people who need to know about your plans so that they are prepared (the executor named in the Will; immediate family members).

Notes:



The following is an excerpt from THE CREMATION, INTERMENT AND FUNERAL SERVICES ACT: CONTROL OF DISPOSITION

5.1. Subject to this section and section 8 (3) (b) (i) [requirement for authorization before funeral service or disposition], the right of a person to control the disposition of the human remains or cremated remains vests in, and devolves on, the following persons in order of priority:

- (a) the personal representative named in the will of the deceased;
- (b) the spouse of the deceased;
- (c) an adult child of the deceased;
- (d) an adult grandchild of the deceased;
- (e) if the deceased was a minor, a person who was a legal guardian of the person of the deceased at the date of death;
- (f) a parent of the deceased;
- (g) an adult sibling of the deceased;
- (h) an adult nephew or niece of the deceased;
- (i) an adult next of kin of the deceased, determined on the basis provided by sections 89 and 90 of the Estate Administration Act;
- (j) the minister under the Employment and Assistance Act or, if the official administrator under the Estate Administration Act is administering the estate of the deceased under that Act, the official administrator;
- (k) an adult person having a personal or kinship relationship with the deceased, other than those referred to in (b) to (d) and (f) to (i).

5.2. If the person at the top of the order of priority set out in subsection (1) is unavailable or is unwilling to give instructions, the right to give instructions passes to the person who is next in priority.

5.3. If, under subsection (1), the right to control the disposition of human remains or cremated remains passes to persons of equal rank, the order of priority

- (a) is determined in accordance with an agreement between or among them, or;
- (b) in the absence of an agreement referred to in paragraph (a), begins with the eldest of the persons and descends in order of age.

5.4. A person claiming that he or she should be given the sole right to control the disposition of the human remains or cremated remains may apply to the Supreme Court for an order regarding that right.

DEFINITION OF SPOUSE

Spouse means a person who:

- (a) is married to another person,
- (b) is united to another person by a marriage that, although not a legal marriage, is valid at common law, or
- (c) has lived and cohabited with another person in a marriage-like relationship, including a marriage-like relationship between persons of the same gender, for a period of at least 2 years immediately before the other person's death.

REBIRTH NEW BEGINNINGS
SPIRITUAL REJUVENATION PEACE
HARMONY ENDLESS MOTION
RETURNING TO THE POINT OF ORIGIN
AWAKENING GROWTH NURTURING



Locally owned, women-led Meet the women behind KORU

Ngaio Davis, founder and principal owner of KORU, is a deathcare practitioner at heart, inspired by her rich Maori heritage in end-of-life rituals. She has been practicing for more than 20 years, licensed as both a funeral director and embalmer. She started out in the corporate world of funeral services before being called to create her own practice where she relishes the freedom to spearhead meaningful and courageous conversations in this realm.



Rebecca Peckham is a deathcare guide and fully licensed funeral director and decedent care specialist. She is honoured to serve families in her community and the wider community of Metro Vancouver, nurturing creativity and connection through an holistic deathcare approach. Outside of her work in mortuary care, Rebecca is a multimedia artist with a passion for creating art from collage and found objects.

We invite people to meet with us at our practice and we will gladly make a trip to come to your residence or other place that is comfortable for you.

Deathcare Choices Worksheet



Eco Conscious
Locally Owned
Led by Women

www.korucremation.com
604-324-8285 or 604-770-1471
info@korucremation.com

DEATHCARE CHOICES FOR CREMATION, BURIAL OR TERRAMATION						
Selection	Decisions That Need to be Made				Status	
Disposition	<input type="checkbox"/> Cremation Flame-based is currently the only option.	<input type="checkbox"/> Conventional Burial Burial or entombment in a casket and / or burial vault.	<input type="checkbox"/> Green Burial Environmentally conscious burial in a biodegradable shroud or casket. No embalming.	<input type="checkbox"/> Terramation (NOR) Human remains are transformed into soil through a controlled composting process.	<input type="checkbox"/> Decided <input type="checkbox"/> Undecided <input type="checkbox"/> Need More Info	
If Cremation	<input type="checkbox"/> Cemetery Interment The urn is buried or placed in an above-ground structure (columbarium or mausoleum crypt).	<input type="checkbox"/> Solidified Remains The ashes are transformed into a collection of small river stone shaped rocks.	<input type="checkbox"/> Sea Burial When the ashes are formed into an artificial reef and deployed in the ocean.	<input type="checkbox"/> Scattering When the ashes are scattered on land or in the water.	<input type="checkbox"/> Keep Urn Home Consider that at some point the final disposition for the ashes will need to be decided.	<input type="checkbox"/> Decided <input type="checkbox"/> Undecided <input type="checkbox"/> Need More Info
Service Types	<input type="checkbox"/> Witness Cremation: Attending at the crematorium to spend time with the deceased, seeing the casket placed, and watching the start of the cremation. <input type="checkbox"/> Celebration of Life: A contemporary, custom service, before or after one dies with the participation of family and friends, often secular. <input type="checkbox"/> Funeral: Deceased is present in a closed or open casket, at church or other service venue, secular or religious. <input type="checkbox"/> Memorial: A service without the deceased present, ashes may be present, at church or other service venue, secular or religious. <input type="checkbox"/> Graveside: A service at the cemetery graveside for full body burial or interment of ashes, secular or religious. <input type="checkbox"/> Viewing Service: Private or everyone welcome time to be with and pay respects to deceased person in a private home, at funeral home, in church or other service venue. <input type="checkbox"/> Home Vigil / Funeral: When the family gathers in a private space with the deceased body present either for a brief time or multiple days. <input type="checkbox"/> Hybrid or Virtual: Live streaming and/or recording any of the above services or creating an unique digital service to share with others remotely. <input type="checkbox"/> Receptions: Refreshments are served separately from or as a part of a service, private or everyone welcome, in a family home, event venue or restaurant.				<input type="checkbox"/> Decided <input type="checkbox"/> Undecided <input type="checkbox"/> Need More Info	
Physical Body Care	<input type="checkbox"/> Essential Natural, non-invasive	<input type="checkbox"/> Complete Personal Care Natural care with bathing, and dressing	<input type="checkbox"/> By Family By family in a private home setting.	<input type="checkbox"/> Family Assisted With assistance by trained KORU staff, in KORU's facility or in private home.	<input type="checkbox"/> Other Options <input type="checkbox"/> Lock of Hair Cuttings <input type="checkbox"/> Digital Fingerprint <input type="checkbox"/> DNA Memorials	<input type="checkbox"/> Decided <input type="checkbox"/> Undecided <input type="checkbox"/> Need More Info
Additional Service Options	<input type="checkbox"/> Flowers	<input type="checkbox"/> Candles	<input type="checkbox"/> Memorabilia	<input type="checkbox"/> Music, live or recorded	<input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper Obituary	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Live, potted plants	<input type="checkbox"/> Photo(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Video or Slideshow	<input type="checkbox"/> Celebrant - professional	<input type="checkbox"/> Online Obituary (complimentary)	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Memorial Cards	<input type="checkbox"/> Memory Board	<input type="checkbox"/> Clergy Person	<input type="checkbox"/> Family or Friend as MC		
Merchandise Caskets	<input type="checkbox"/> Cremation Casket Purchased or homemade combustible casket or coffin.	<input type="checkbox"/> Burial Casket Purchased or homemade casket or coffin. Made from solid wood, metal, wood composite or biodegradable materials. Carrying handles.	<input type="checkbox"/> Shroud Fabric enclosure made with sewn in carrying handles, if used in place of a burial casket.	<input type="checkbox"/> Casket or Urn Vault Outer container that encloses casket or urn. Made from concrete, fiberglass, metal or plastic. May be required.	<input type="checkbox"/> Cemetery Markers or Headstones Upright Granite Flat Granite Bronze on Granite or Concrete Base	<input type="checkbox"/> Decided <input type="checkbox"/> Undecided <input type="checkbox"/> Need More Info
Cremation Urns	<input type="checkbox"/> Biodegradable	<input type="checkbox"/> Brass	<input type="checkbox"/> Bronze	<input type="checkbox"/> Handcrafted	<input type="checkbox"/> Urn Vault (may be required)	<input type="checkbox"/> Decided <input type="checkbox"/> Undecided <input type="checkbox"/> Need More Info
	<input type="checkbox"/> Jewelry Urns	<input type="checkbox"/> Family Provided / Made	<input type="checkbox"/> Scattering	<input type="checkbox"/> Wood		
Things to Bring	<input type="checkbox"/> Government ID	<input type="checkbox"/> Personal Effects	<input type="checkbox"/> Photograph	<input type="checkbox"/> Cemetery Documents		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Clothing	<input type="checkbox"/> Vital Statistics Info	<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Pay Documents			

Our hope is that this document will be a guide to help you with the myriad decisions that need to be made. Our KORU staff are here to work with you at your pace and in a manner that is best for you. We can be flexible in how we communicate with you, whether it is in-person, by phone, by email, video conference call or a combination of these things.

KORU is passionate about sharing our commitment to leaving a lighter footprint in the practice of our work with our clients. We focus on sourcing sustainable or Canadian made products. We contribute to clean energy projects through Bullfrog Power and Tree Canada.



Scan the QR code to view KORU's pricing bundles

KORU Cremation | Burial | Ceremony
131-618 East Kent Avenue South, Vancouver, BC V5X 0B1

Contact Us

We are available 24/7 when there has been a death.

The best way to notify us is to call.

604-324-8285 (Vancouver)

604-770-1471 (North Shore)

For all other inquires, conversations and advice, please email us at info@korucremation.com or call during our regular business hours, Monday to Friday, 10:00 am to 5:00 pm. If we are unable to speak with you when you call, please leave a message and we will return your call in a timely manner.

Our place of practice is located at
**131-618 East Kent Avenue South,
Vancouver, BC V5X 0B1**