



**Service Expectations
for Body Transportation Services
performed on behalf of
the Office of the Chief Coroner and
the Ontario Forensic Pathology Service**

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1. Preamble

All Transfer Service Operators performing body transportation services on behalf of the Office of the Chief Coroner and the Ontario Forensic Pathology Service (OCC/OFPS), must, at a minimum, possess a “Transfer Service Operator – Class 2” license ([Funeral, Burial and Cremation Services Act](#) and [Ontario Regulation 30/11](#)). It is the responsibility of the Transfer Service Operator to comply with all licensing obligations.

This document sets out those aspects of body transportation services that are important in ensuring dignified, timely and appropriate handling of Human Remains on behalf of the OCC/OFPS.

The OCC/OFPS investigates deaths pursuant to the [Coroners Act](#) and requires body transportation services throughout the Province of Ontario to:

- o transport Human Remains for further investigation (autopsy); and
- o remove Human Remains from public places for storage and identification.

The Coroner or appointee under the Coroners Act typically attends the scene of a death to examine deceased persons/human remains. Police can act as an agent of the Coroner for the purposes of a death investigation.

Arrangements for body transportation are generally made by the investigating police services on behalf of the Coroner at the scene of a death, or by the OCC/OFPS Provincial Dispatch in Toronto. The Coroner provides instructions on where the Human Remains should be transported for post mortem examination or other reason.

Transfer Service Operators are compensated based on a fee Schedule set out in Schedule 4 of [Ontario Regulation 114/19](#) of the Coroners Act. Any fees outside of the Schedule require the prior written approval of the Regional Supervising Coroner.

2. Definitions

Act: Coroners Act

Coroner: The coroner as defined in the Coroners Act, or appointee with jurisdiction pursuant to s.16.1 of the Act

Human Remains: The body, bodies, body parts, human remains or remains

Law Enforcement Personnel: Representatives of the police service having jurisdiction over the scene of removal, including the investigating police officer(s) and/or police officer assisting the coroner pursuant to s.9 of the Act

Regional Supervising Coroner: The regional coroner as defined in the Coroners Act

Requestor: The person initiating the request for body transportation services (e.g. Law Enforcement Personnel, a hospital representative, a coroner, or personnel of the OCC/OFPS Provincial Dispatch)

Schedule: The fee schedule set out in Ontario Regulation 114/19 of the Coroners Act

Transfer Service Operator: The business entity providing body transportation services on behalf of the OCC/OFPS

3. Service Expectations

3.1. Response Time

3.1.1. Dispatch Time

Transfer Service Operators will dispatch a vehicle and personnel as soon as possible upon receiving a call from the Requestor. It is expected that personnel will be en route to the location of the Human Remains within approximately thirty (30) minutes after receiving notification from the Requestor. Should a Transfer Service Operator not be available within thirty (30) minutes, he/she should advise the Requestor of their unavailability so that an alternate Transfer Service Operator can be dispatched or, the thirty (30) minutes can be waived by the Requestor/Coroner.

Note: Transfer Service Operators should enquire and be provided with as much relevant information as possible at the time service is requested (e.g. size of Human Remains, terrain, obstacles, circumstances of the death and/or the scene).

3.1.2. Call Response Time

Response times will be no greater than the driving time, at a legal rate of speed, from the Transfer Service Operator's address to the scene of removal. It is understood that there may be delays in response time due to weather, road conditions, traffic or other factors. Transfer Service Operator personnel are asked to explain extraordinary delays to the Requestor.

3.2. Procedural & Operational Requirements

3.2.1. Minimum Personnel

To ensure respectful and dignified handling of the Human Remains, the Transfer Service Operator **must** respond to all calls for body transportation services by providing a minimum of two (2) personnel, unless otherwise instructed by the Coroner. This provision is for all locations/scenes across the province, and not just OCC/OFPS operated locations.

Note: It is recognized that the Transfer Service Operator may not have two personnel travel for transportation over longer distances. In such instances, it is incumbent upon the Transfer Service Operator to arrange for a second person to assist with off-loading the Human Remains at the destination upon intake and release. Responsibility and payment for this function rests with the Transfer Service Operator. OCC/OFPS staff have been instructed not to assist with off-loading at intake or transfer of Human Remains from their equipment to the equipment of the Transfer Service Operator upon release.

3.2.2. Scene of Removal

It is expected that Transfer Service Operator personnel will interact in a professional manner with Law Enforcement Personnel and all other first responders, the Coroner, and/or members of the public.

Transfer Service Operator personnel must follow all instructions of investigating Law Enforcement Personnel before entering in or onto a scene for the purpose of removing Human Remains.

3.2.3. Handling and Removal of Human Remains

Transfer Service Operator personnel will remove the Human Remains, in all different conditions, e.g., decomposed, burned or dismembered, in accordance with instructions provided by Law Enforcement Personnel and/or the Coroner. Reconciliation of the body parts shall be conducted by the Coroner. If further search of the scene is required the Coroner or Law Enforcement Personnel will instruct the Transfer Service Operator.

Transfer Service Operator personnel must follow all instructions provided by Law Enforcement Personnel and/or the Coroner regarding the handling of the Human Remains, any evidence associated with the Human Remains, and any personal possessions or property associated with the Human Remains. Larger items (e.g., walkers, luggage, etc.) should be left at the scene, at the hospital or in the care of Law Enforcement Personnel.

At no time will Transfer Service Operator personnel remove any evidence, personal possessions or property from the Human Remains unless

otherwise directed by the Coroner or Law Enforcement Personnel. Loose medications or narcotics found at the scene should not be put with the Human Remains or inside the body pouch. They should be left at the scene or with Law Enforcement Personnel.

A body pouch is required for every removal. The Transfer Service Operator is required to have a body pouch that will be of a sufficient quality and thickness as to allow for the effective transport of the Human Remains without unintentional opening, leakage of fluids, tearing, or malfunction of the zipper fastening system.

This does not include body pouches used by some facilities that employ an adhesive method for sealing. Human Remains originally placed in a substandard body pouch should remain in that body pouch. Both the substandard body pouch and the Human Remains must be placed in an adequate body pouch before transportation. Issues pertaining to the quality of the body pouch provided will be addressed with the individual Transfer Service Operator.

It is imperative that the Human Remains be handled in a professional and dignified manner, and placed within an adequate body pouch for transportation. After the Human Remains are placed in the body pouch, Transfer Service Operator personnel will not re-open the body pouch without prior approval from the Coroner. Upon arrival at the destination, Transfer Service Operators should not open the body pouch to document any clothing or personal possessions of the decedent. This shall be done at the scene in front of Law Enforcement Personnel/Coroner or hospital staff.

Unless otherwise directed by the Coroner, the body must be loaded, transported and delivered in the supine position (i.e. on his/her back), making every effort to minimize post-mortem trauma.

3.2.4. Hard to Access Locations and Multiple Bodies

If the Human Remains are found in a location that is difficult for the Transfer Service Operator's personnel to gain access, the Coroner may authorize removal and transportation by a party other than the Transfer Service Operator to the transfer vehicle.

This provision also applies to any scene of removal where there may be multiple bodies and the Transfer Service Operator is deemed by the Coroner to be unable to provide the required removal and transportation services in a timely, efficient and/or effective manner.

3.2.5. Documentation

When attending a scene, the Transfer Service Operator should obtain all documentation prepared by the Coroner. This can include, but is not limited to, a Warrant for Post Mortem and a Warrant to Bury. If the

Coroner is not present when the Transfer Service Operator arrives, all documentation should be given to an agent assigned to represent the Coroner. Upon arrival to the destination, Transfer Service Operators shall turn over all documentation obtained at the scene to the party taking possession of the Human Remains. This may include hospital security/morgue attendants and Dispatchers located at the Forensic Services and Coroners Complex (FSCC). Should a Transfer Service Operator not collect this documentation when at the scene initially, they will be required to return to the scene to obtain the documentation for delivery to the destination, at no additional charge.

When attending a forensic pathology unit to take possession of Human Remains for burial purposes, the Transfer Service Operator should provide the morgue attendant with documentation. This documentation should include the name of the Transfer Service Operator, the correctly spelt name of the decedent, name of next-of-kin providing authorization for release, their contact information and their relationship to the decedent. Failure to provide this paperwork will result in a decedent not being released.

3.2.6. Solicitation of Goods and Services

While performing services, Transfer Service Operator personnel must not solicit for sale any goods or funeral services. This pertains to the scene of removal, the place of delivery, the residence of the deceased person and/or while in the presence of any friend, relative or persons associated with the deceased person.

Solicitation includes, but is not limited to, any oral or written communications, representations or statements or the distribution of any material that would carry the name of any party that in any way might imply a solicitation for business or service.

3.3. Transportation of the Human Remains

3.3.1. Number of Bodies

Not more than one (1) body may be transported in a Transfer Service Operator vehicle, unless the Coroner directs that multiple removals are to be made from the same scene of removal, or as otherwise directed by the Coroner.

3.3.2. Transportation Time

Transportation of the Human Remains are to be made non-stop, directly from the scene of removal to the destination specified by the Coroner.

Transportation times will be no greater than the driving time, at a legal rate of speed, from the scene of removal to the destination specified by the Coroner. It is understood that there may be delays in transportation

due to weather, road conditions, traffic or other factors. Transfer Service Operator personnel are asked to explain extraordinary delays to the Requestor.

3.3.3. Filming and Recording Devices

While at a scene and transporting Human Remains, Transfer Service Operator personnel are prohibited from using filming and/or recording devices of any kind. This prohibition includes but is not limited to cameras, video cameras, recording features of any cellular and/or handheld device, audio recorders, and any other filming and/or recording devices.

3.4. Personnel Requirements

3.4.1. Security Screening

The Transfer Service Operator will ensure that all personnel handling or transporting Human Remains have undergone a police security check, have received clearance, and that the clearance is valid and has not expired.

If at any time an offence should occur that would render a member of the Transfer Service Operator's personnel police security check unsatisfactory, the Transfer Service Operator shall notify the OCC/OFPS, in writing, upon their awareness of this change in their security check status. The OCC/OFPS will review this information and may, at their discretion, deem that individual may no longer be suitable to provide body transportation services on behalf of the OCC/OFPS and will advise the Transfer Service Operator accordingly.

3.4.2. Personnel Requirements

Transfer Service Operator personnel must be able to perform all activities required to provide the service, which may include but is not limited to heavy lifting, hiking over rugged terrain, operating in various weather conditions and driving substantial distances.

Transfer Service Operator personnel must also be able to maintain composure while providing the service particularly at the scene of removal, which may include but is not limited to decomposed, burned or dismembered bodies as well as bodily fluids.

At no time while providing the service will Transfer Service Operator personnel be in possession and/or under the influence of illegal drugs, marijuana, alcohol and/or any other substance which may cause impairment.

All Transfer Service Operator personnel required to drive a vehicle used for transporting Human Remains must possess a valid government issued driver's license of the appropriate class.

3.4.3. Attire and Demeanour

It is expected that Transfer Service Operator personnel will maintain a professional appearance during the delivery of the service. Business casual attire or attire appropriate to the conditions for removal is acceptable, in keeping with acceptable professional standards for funeral services in Ontario.

Transfer Service Operator personnel must be respectful and follow acceptable professional standards for funeral services at all times, ensuring their actions are proper and consistent with acceptable business practices.

3.4.4. Photo Identification

All Transfer Service Operator personnel involved in providing the service must carry photo identification (either valid government issued photo identification or photo identification issued by the Transfer Service Operator). Photo identification must be presented upon request by the Coroner, Law Enforcement Personnel or personnel of the OCC/OFPS Provincial Dispatch.

3.4.5. Training Requirements

The Transfer Service Operator will ensure that its personnel are sufficiently trained and familiar with all provisions in this Service Expectations of the OCC/OFPS as well as all future information disseminated by these offices. It is expected that the Transfer Service Operator will establish a training protocol.

Training shall address personal safety procedures including, but not limited to, the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

3.5. Vehicles

3.5.1. Vehicle Requirements

All vehicles in use by the Transfer Service Operator must be intended for this purpose and must be in good, safe mechanical working order free of material damage and/or defects. It is expected that vehicles will be plain and unadorned.

The vehicle must provide privacy in concealing the Human Remains from public view.

The Transfer Service Operator will ensure the vehicle is equipped with a functional air conditioning unit which is capable of maintaining a recommended temperature of below twenty degrees Celsius (20°C), if transportation is to occur over a period of time which is likely to accelerate decomposition.

3.5.2. Vehicle Cleanliness

All vehicles in use by the Transfer Service Operator will have their vehicle interiors, particularly the area in which the Human Remains are transported, maintained in a tidy, clean and sanitary condition.

3.6. Equipment

3.6.1. Equipment Requirements

The Transfer Service Operator will provide and use all gurneys, stretchers, body pouches as well as all other equipment and supplies necessary for the extraction and removal of the Human Remains (including those in excess of 200 kilograms).

Note: As noted above, Transfer Service Operators should enquire and be provided with information on size of the Human Remains at the time service is requested.

Gurneys, stretchers and any other device used to move the Human Remains must be sturdy, in good repair and free of sharp edges. The Transfer Service Operator may be requested to replace or repair any defective or substandard equipment at their own expense within 30 days of notification.

3.6.2. Clothing and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

The Transfer Service Operator will ensure that their personnel are equipped with all necessary clothing including, but not limited to, jumpsuits, boots with rugged outdoor soles, as well as rubber and/or leather gloves.

The Transfer Service Operator will provide all personnel with all necessary PPE, including, but not limited to, disposable gloves, hand sanitizer, facial protection, and respirators.

3.7. Communication

3.7.1. Contact Number

The Transfer Service Operator will provide a single telephone number for a landline or cellular telephone to act as a first point of contact for dispatching body transportation services. The Transfer Service Operator's point of contact should be staffed 24 hours a day, seven (7) days a week or in accordance with a locally-based call schedule.

Pagers and/or answering machines are not acceptable unless such devices result in a return telephone call to the Requestor within no more than ten (10) minutes from the time the request is made or page is sent.

3.7.2. Two-Way Communication with Personnel

The Transfer Service Operator will establish a two-way communication system to maintain communications between their base of operations and all vehicles and assigned personnel at all times.

Use of cellular telephones is considered to be an acceptable two-way communication system. In areas where cellular services are not available, this requirement may be waived by the Coroner.

3.8. Record Keeping and Reporting

3.8.1. Body Transportation Records

The Transfer Service Operator will maintain complete and accurate records related to body transportation services, including:

- Date and time of Requestor's call;
- Location of pick up (i.e. scene of removal);
- Place of delivery;
- Date and time for receipt of custody of the Human Remains;
- Name of the deceased person;
- Name of the receiving personnel;
- Date and time for release of custody of the Human Remains; and
- Name(s) of any Transfer Service Operator personnel who attended the scene and/or handled the Human Remains.

3.8.2. Reporting of Body Transportation Records

The Transfer Service Operator will provide records pertaining to body transportation services upon request by the OCC/OFPS.

3.9. General Business Obligations

3.9.1. General Business Obligations

All Transfer Service Operators must, at a minimum, possess a "Transfer Service Operator – Class 2" license (Funeral, Burial and Cremation Services Act and Ontario Regulation 30/11).

It is the responsibility of the Transfer Service Operator to comply with all licensing and business obligations in the jurisdiction in which they operate and provide evidence of such upon request.

The Transfer Service Operator is required to carry appropriate insurance and provide evidence of such upon request.

As with every business entity or person that receives payment for services from the Province of Ontario, the Transfer Service Operator is expected to ensure all Federal and Provincial taxes are appropriately filed and paid.

4. Body Transportation Fees

Transfer Service Operators are compensated based on fees set out in Schedule 4 of [Ontario Regulation 114/19](#) of the Coroners Act.

It is recognized that, on a case by case basis, Transfer Service Operators will incur extraordinary costs related to providing safe body transportation (for instance, the need for an air-tight container to transport contaminated Human Remains). All such costs outside of the Schedule, which are reasonably incurred will be reimbursed by the OCC/OFPS. These should be discussed with and approved in writing by the Regional Supervising Coroner on call in advance of being incurred. Documentation and approval must accompany the associated invoice.

This section does not detail all fees outlined in the Schedule; only fees that require further explanation. For information on all fees outlined in the Schedule, please reference the regulation directly.

4.1. Body Transportation Fees

4.1.1. Flat Fee

The flat fee contained in the Schedule includes the following operational costs:

- Costs for vehicle lease, maintenance, insurance and fuel;
- Equipment, supplies and personal protective equipment (e.g. stretcher, gowns, laundry, cleaning supplies etc.);
- Staffing costs (two staff required per transport);
- Costs associated with Human Remains handling in accordance with universal precautionary standards for the prevention of disease transmission; and
- Overhead expenses (e.g. office supplies).

If the distance of the transfer for Trip 1 (e.g. base to scene, to post mortem location, back to base) falls within the flat fee, only the cost of Trip 1 will be approved for payment. Charges for the transfer from the location of the post mortem examination after completion of the post mortem examination, whether to a local or distant location, will not be accepted by the OCC/OFPS for payment.

4.1.2. Per Kilometre Fee

The per kilometer fee contained in the Schedule includes the following operational costs:

- Costs for vehicle lease, maintenance, insurance and fuel;
- Equipment, supplies and personal protective equipment (e.g. stretcher, gowns, laundry, cleaning supplies etc.);
- Staffing costs (two staff required per transport);
- Costs associated with Human Remains handling in accordance with universal precautionary standards for the prevention of disease transmission; and
- Overhead expenses (e.g. office supplies).

If the distance of the transfer for Trip 1 (e.g. base to scene, to post mortem location, back to base) exceeds the flat fee, the per kilometre fee is charged. Kilometres charged for Trip 2 (e.g. transfer from the location of the post mortem examination after completion of the post mortem examination) will be paid to an amount up to and including the kilometres charged for Trip 1.

4.1.3. Body Pouch

A body pouch is required for every removal. The Transfer Service Operator will be compensated for the cost of the body pouch, per the fee set out in the Schedule.

Some hospitals in Ontario provide an adequate body pouch for transportation. In this case, the cost of a body pouch will not be reimbursed. Should the Transfer Service Operator be required to provide a body pouch for pick-up from a hospital, an explanation is required on the invoice. See section 3.2.3 for further details on the body pouch.

4.1.4. Overnight Accommodations

If the transportation necessarily requires the attendant or attendants to seek overnight accommodation, the fee outlined in the Schedule may be charged. This circumstance shall only occur in consultation with the Regional Supervising Coroner. The invoice must be accompanied by documentation indicating approval of the overnight stay and a copy of the hotel invoice.

The fee accounts for the cost of the accommodation and related expenses, including meals associated with the overnight stay. This is a total fee per night and is not billable per attendant.

Billing for meals as part of a transfer, whether daytime or nighttime, will not be accepted under any other circumstance.

4.1.5. Transportation by Air

If the Coroner approves transportation by air, the Transfer Service Operator will be reimbursed the actual amount paid for the air transportation and necessary shipping container. The invoice shall include documentation supporting the cost.

In the case of transportation by air, the Transfer Service Operator may also invoice an additional administrative fee, as outlined in the Schedule.

Transfer Service Operators will be permitted to bill accordingly for each segment of the transport in connection with the transportation of Human Remains in shipping containers by air to the FSCC in Toronto:

1. Transfer Service Operator attends scene and transports the Human Remains to funeral home/storage facility for air transport preparation (includes crating) - invoice includes flat fee or mileage per the fee Schedule;
2. Transfer Service Operator transports the Human Remains to airport - invoice includes flat fee or mileage per the fee Schedule;
3. Transfer Service Operator receives the Human Remains from destination airport and transports to funeral home/storage facility and unpacks and prepares Human Remains for transfer to FSCC - invoice includes flat fee or mileage per the fee Schedule; and
4. Transfer Service Operator transports the Human Remains to the FSCC - invoice includes flat fee or mileage per the fee Schedule.

The same fee structure will be honoured for the return trip, if required. Transfer Service Operators may subcontract to a receiving Transfer Service Operator that meets our service expectations however; only the primary Transfer Service Operator will be permitted to invoice the OCC/OFPS for the transport. It is expected that the primary Transfer Service Operator will directly settle their accounts with the subcontracted Transfer Service Operator.

4.2. Boundaries for Southern and Northern Ontario

As illustrated in the following map, below are the boundaries, by road, distinguishing southern and northern Ontario:

- Healey Lake Road from Healey Lake easterly to its junction with Muskoka District Road 11
- Muskoka District Road 11 southerly to its junction with Lake Joseph Road
- Lake Joseph Road easterly to its junction with Highway 169
- Highway 169 easterly to its junction with Muskoka District Road 118W
- Muskoka District Road 118W through Bracebridge to its junction with Highway 11
- Highway 11 northerly to its junction with Highway 60 at Huntsville
- Highway 60 easterly to its junction with Highway 41
- Highway 41 northerly to Pembroke

The above-named highways to be included in Southern Ontario.

