

Registrar's COVID-19 Update

Preparing for the next surge in deaths

BAO

Bereavement
Authority of
Ontario

Ready...together

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Thank you for serving families, following directives and guidance

- ❖ Your professional and caring work is saving lives
- ❖ COVID-19 infections may have peaked – for now
- ❖ **But we know death trails the infection rate**
 - **The peak in deaths is still ahead**
- ❖ Following the rules, the EDR, and remaining vigilant during the peak is vital to everyone's safety

Today's Agenda

1. Expedited Death Response (EDR) process
2. Medical Certificates of Death (MCOOD)
3. Cemeteries
4. PPE use and fees
5. Prepaid funeral contracts
6. Questions and Answers

EXPEDITED DEATH RESPONSE

OCC TEAM - Toll Free: 1 (833) 915-0868

Toronto: 1 (647) 792-0440

Email: occteam@ontario.ca



Dedicated hospital/LTC staff (EDRT) facilitates contact with family and Funeral Home within 1 hour (3 hrs for LTC). EDRT ensures MCOD is available or notifies OCC Team.



OCC team is advised and prepares EMCOD (in case one is not with decedent).



FH attends hospital/LTC staging area and gives stretcher to hospital/LTC staff. (FH supplies pouch to LTC.) FH receives disinfected, pouch with deceased & takes into their care.



Transfer to FH. Disinfect stretcher and equipment



At FH, confirm identity of body. Prepare decedent for disposition.



FH obtains EMCOD if one not provided at hospital. FH completes Form 15 and transmits docs to local registrar to obtain Burial Permit



FH transfers to final disposition

EDR

Applies to

- ❖ Hospitals
- ❖ Long-term care (LTC) facilities



EDR

Does not apply to

❖ Retirement homes

- Note that: Retirement homes do not have to bag and tag deceased residents and move them to the transfer staff at the entrance doors, even if the retirement home is attached to an LTC facility.

❖ Hospices

❖ Homes

- apartments, condos, houses



EDR / Retrievals

We know there has been some inconsistent behaviour

- ❖ But overall, the EDR process has been enormously successful.

Retrieval of bodies

- ❖ A few mosques are wanting to return to picking up their decedents from hospitals and LTC
 - **This is contrary to our BAO guidance, done in consultation with Imam Shaykh Imran Ally.** [Guidance for Handling Human Remains – Muslim Community](#) was posted on our website on March 27.
 - “The **BAO strongly recommends that only licensed individuals** or others working on behalf of a licensed funeral establishment operator or transfer service operator **participate in the handling of human remains**; especially those human remains who have died from complications due to having been infected by COVID-19.”

Medical Certificate of Death

- ❖ We've heard that there have been **MCOD delays** for funeral directors ready to transfer bodies to funeral homes
- ❖ **Some hospitals** are not contacting Ontario Chief Coroner's (OCC) team – as they are supposed to under the **EDR**
- ❖ **Call us at the BAO** if/when you encounter this issue
- ❖ We will follow-up with the OCC

Medical Certificate of Death

- ❖ **You must have the Medical Certificate of Death (M COD) Statement of Death and burial permit before disposition can take place**
- ❖ Funeral homes must not proceed with disposition unless they have the M COD , Form 15 and burial permit
 - Do not proceed in the hopes of getting documents later

Cemeteries

- ❖ **Different rules:**
 - Among municipalities / within municipalities by different operators
- ❖ Some have closed to the public, while others are open
- ❖ Cemeteries must do what is safe for their staff, visitors and properties
- ❖ **The BAO supports the decisions made by cemetery operators** to control access to their properties.
- ❖ They have become default parks in the minds of the public over the years and especially these days – when actual parks are closed

Cemeteries

Maximum numbers of people allowed together

❖ **5** for people visiting a cemetery

❖ **10** for people at a gravesite funeral service

Personal Protective Equipment

Remember to complete the provincial government's Critical Supplies and Equipment survey. New portal and login - eblast sent on Thursday.

A few don'ts –

❖ Don't overuse your PPE

- Use it when necessary and only for staff who need it for certain tasks

❖ Don't overuse body bags

- For example, **no triple bagging** – this is unnecessary and a waste of valuable protective equipment

Personal Protective Equipment

COVID-19 Fees Directive issued April 30

- ❖ “...there are times when the protective measures required for the remainder of your operations are anything but routine. If the costs associated with those measures are **above and beyond** your normal practice, **then you are entitled to recover these costs.**”
- ❖ “Charges for infection control should meet the following tests:
 - **Detailed on the price list** and explained to the consumer
 - Itemized in detail and **not a flat-fee** or described as “COVID fee.”
 - **For recovery of real costs for infection control above and beyond routine services**
 - **Apply to all contagious cases**, (SARS, hepatitis, etc.) not just COVID-19.”

Personal Protective Equipment

COVID-19 Fees Directive issued April 30

- ❖ **Politics** – 2 MPPs sent their letter to the media and on Twitter on May 5
 - Alleged in the letter and in the [Toronto Star](#) that there is “price gouging by funeral-service providers”
- ❖ This is not true. The BAO addressed this in the media saying:
 - There have been **no complaints**
 - The directive was a response to the need for **a standard way** to charge for **extraordinary PPE** during this time that would be clear to families (consumers)

Prepaid funeral contracts

- **If one or two supplies or services are cancelled** (example: limo and catering)
 - Deletions are minor and don't really affect the type of service provided
 - Remainder of prepaid contract could remain intact and guarantee could be honoured on balance of services and supplies
 - Issue refund on cancelled services & supplies (original price paid + interest earned)
- **If the type of service is changing** (e.g. from a "visitation and service" to a "direct burial/cremation")
 - Deletions represent a substantial change to the prepaid contract, which would result in a void of the guarantee
 - Operator would execute a new "at-need" contract at the time of death for actual services and supplies provided
 - Excess funds to be returned to the estate or other person indicated in the prepaid contract

Questions?

Thank you all for the professional, caring work you do everyday.

❖ **Ready Together** - BAO COVID-19 info page

<https://thebao.ca/covid-19-update-links/>