



March 20, 2020

To: State and Local Health Departments Funeral, Cemetery,
and Cremation Regulatory Agencies

Re: Inclusion of Death-care Professionals in All COVID-19 Orders

On behalf of CCC Members,

In light of many Health Departments, State and other local agencies issuing various orders ranging from size restrictions of public gatherings all the way to shelter-in-place orders, the Catholic Cemetery Conference (CCC) is requesting that all orders include death-care professionals as essential business.

Currently, most orders are identifying that only essential activities and businesses to be open. Included in these orders are health care operations as well as other businesses related to general health and essential infrastructure. CCC believes all death-care professionals - this would include funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries, as well as the suppliers to these businesses - are related and essential infrastructure. We encourage any new orders to specifically identify the death-care professions as an essential business and function. By clarifying that death-care professionals are an essential business and function, it will avoid any confusion.

Properly identifying death-care professionals will allow them to remain in a position to aid in this crisis. It is also important so they can receive needed supplies, and also have priority access to Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) as this crisis continues. Identifying death-care professionals as essential public health workers also follows a recent Memorandum on Identification of Essential Critical Infrastructure Workers During COVID-19 Response, which was issued by the US Department of Homeland Security on March 19, 2020.

(<https://www.cisa.gov/publication/guidanceessential-critical-infrastructure-workforce>)

CCC suggests the use of the following language in any orders:

For the purposes of this Order, "Essential Businesses" means: Death-care Professionals and Essential Infrastructure, including licensed funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries, as well as all suppliers of funeral products to funeral service providers, which provide essential services that are critical to the health, safety and sanitation of the community.

If you have any questions, please contact us at (708)202-1242.

Sincerely,

Richard P. Peterson, CCCE, CCE
President, CCC Board of Directors

David J. LaBarre, M.A., M.S.
Executive Director

The Catholic Cemetery Conference is the pre-eminent resource for all Catholic Cemeteries. We are a Roman Catholic faith network committed to cemetery advocacy and education.