



# Taylor County

## Board of County Commissioners'

### Policy Manual

Policy #:	Title:	Effective Date:
2008-16	Deceased Indigents Policy	02/03/2014

#### PURPOSE

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The purpose of this policy is to provide uniform guidelines pursuant to Chapter 406 of the Florida Statutes for the cremation or burial of deceased persons or remains unclaimed or which are required to be cremated or buried at public expense in a decent and dignified manner.

#### REFERENCE

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Florida Statute 406

#### POLICY

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**Cremation and Burial of Deceased Indigents.** The intent of this policy is to provide guidelines for deceased indigents in Taylor County in accordance with the County's statutory responsibility to do so as detailed in Florida Statute 406, in county funeral homes at a fee to be determined by the County.

The program applies to a deceased person who meets all the following criteria:

1. Pronounced dead in Taylor County or was a resident of Taylor County and determined by a Taylor County Funeral Home to be indigent.
2. Had no living relatives or no living relatives with adequate income or resources to afford a private cremation or burial.
3. Had relatives who cannot or will not accept responsibility for a burial or cremation.

Determination of indigence is the responsibility of the individual local Funeral Directors subject to approval by the County Administrator or his or her designee.

The following criteria pertain to indigent burial assistance in Taylor County.

1. The deceased does not have to have been a resident of Taylor County or the United States.
2. Bodies may not be transported into or out of Taylor County under this particular program.
3. A certified copy of the death certificate must accompany the request for payment from the Funeral Home.
4. Prior certification of indigence - the local funeral home will attempt to recover expense(s) from the following resources:
  - Social Security lump sum benefits.
  - Miscellaneous Resources, i.e, Nursing Homes, cash estates, assets in bank, life insurance, etc.

The Funeral Home is not to proceed without a signed purchase order. When a decision has been made on the request for payment of a funeral bill, the funeral home will be issued a purchase order authorizing payment of the cremation and notified telephonically of the approval.

- The maximum authorized payment to funeral homes for cremation is \$500.
- The maximum authorized payment to funeral homes for burial may vary depending on circumstances.

**Unclaimed dead bodies/remains disposition:** In accordance with Florida Statutes (F.S.), Section 406.50, the State Anatomical Board located at the University of Florida Health Science Center, must be immediately notified each time any public officers, agents, or employees of Taylor County and every person in charge of any prison, morgue, hospital, funeral parlor, or mortuary and all other persons coming into possession, charge or control of any dead human body or remains which are unclaimed or which are required to be directly cremated/buried at public expense.

Notification of the anatomical board is NOT required if the death was:

1. Caused by crushing injury,
2. Deceased had a contagious disease,
3. Autopsy was required to determine cause of death,
4. Body was in a severe state of decomposition,
5. Relative, by blood or marriage, claims the body for burial/cremation at the expense of the relative,
6. Any friend, or any representative of a fraternal society of which the deceased was a member, or a representative of any charitable or religious organization, or a governmental agency which was providing residential care to the indigent person at the time of his or her death claims the body for burial/cremation at their expense.

Such dead human bodies, as described in this chapter, shall be delivered to the anatomical board as soon as possible after death. All related transportation costs will be incurred by the University of Florida Health Science Center Anatomical Board.

Taylor County reserves the right and in accordance with the rules, laws and practices for disposing of such unclaimed bodies to cremate/bury the deceased person and to make a reasonable effort to locate relatives, prior to cremation/burial, from the point of approval by

the County Administrator's Office, up to a maximum of 10 days allowed to determine next of kin.

The Taylor County Board of County Commissioners, or designee, where such person dies, shall be considered a legally authorized person as defined in section 470.002, Florida Statutes. A person licensed under F.S. Chapter 470 or Chapter 497 shall not be liable for any damages resulting from the cremating of such body at the direction of the County's legally authorized person.

The person or entity in charge or control of the dead body or human remains shall make a reasonable effort to determine; whether or not the deceased person is entitled to burial in a national cemetery as a veteran of the Armed Forces and, if so, shall make arrangements for such services in accordance with the provisions of 38 C.F.R. For purposes of this subsection "a reasonable effort" includes contacting the Taylor County Veterans Service Officer or regional office of the United States Department of Veterans Affairs.

## **PROCEDURE**

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1. If an individual initiates a request for disposition services with the County rather than with a funeral home, the individual shall be advised to contact the funeral home of his/her choice, and if he/she indicates no preference, the County shall provide a referral to the nearest available provider of services.
2. After exhausting all possibilities for private compensation, the Funeral Home Director shall certify in writing that the deceased lacks the adequate income, assets, and/or support from friends or family to support a private cremation or burial. This certification of indigence along with a certified copy of the death certificate shall be submitted to the Office of the County Administrator to request approval for the payment of public funds under this program.
3. The County Administrator, or designee, shall review the request for indigence and payment and will authorize the issuance of purchase order to the requesting funeral home. The funeral home shall not proceed without an approved purchase order from the County.
4. Upon approval by the County Administrator, the funeral home shall notify the State Anatomical Board, if the deceased meets the criteria as set forth in section 406.50, Florida Statutes. If the body is accepted by the State Anatomical Board, the funeral home shall proceed according to subsection 406.50(2), Florida Statutes. The University of Florida Health Science Center Anatomical Board shall be responsible for the cost of preparation and transportation of the body to the Center. If the body is not accepted, the funeral home shall proceed with the cremation/burial of the deceased.
5. The funeral home shall submit an itemized invoice for payment to the Taylor County Finance Department, along with documentation that contact was made with the State Anatomical Board.
6. The County shall make payment in the amount indicated under Policy Guidelines within 30 days from receipt of the invoice.

**RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT**

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Office of the County Administrator

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**Sunset Date: none**

**Revised:** 11/03/2008  
02/04/2014  
03/02/2020