

Guidance for Families and Friends

Funeral and Burial Services While Physical Distancing

This guide was created to help you and your family feel comfortable and safe while physically distancing from others not living in your household during funerals or burials. Our traditional practices remain critically important to us and our tribe – any changes that have been made to our customary practices are to keep our community safe during this difficult time.

Here are some things to expect while attending a funeral and/or burial during the COVID-19 pandemic:

- This will be a **smaller gathering**, due to the possibility of spreading COVID-19. The numbers of people allowed at a viewing vs. during the funeral service vs. being outside at a burial may all be different, based on the space in each setting. Our goal is to make sure that different households of people can be at least 6 feet apart from one another.
- **Please bring and wear a face mask** during all services. This will help avoid spreading the COVID-19 virus by anyone who may not be showing signs or symptoms of the virus, but who can still spread it.
- Practicing **physical distancing** will be important. Stand or sit with at least 6 feet of distance between yourself and other people who are not part of your immediate household.
- It is highly recommended that **no gatherings take place after the services**, like a large-group meal or giveaway.

We know it is difficult to change our traditional ways of remembering our loved ones. Here are some ideas that may help you grieve and honor your loved one during this time:

- Use a video conferencing platform (such as Zoom, Skype, FaceTime, etc), to virtually connect with family members, traditional healers, Elders and the greater community to host a virtual wake or gathering where people can share songs, prayers, and stories.
- Create a memorial page or group on Facebook to post and/or share memories, stories, and photos of your loved one.
- Create an online photo album through a platform like Google Photos for everyone to share photos and create a slideshow in their memory.
- Journal, plant a tree in the person's memory, or donate to a cause or charity that they cared about.

We know these changes are hard for many of us. We appreciate your help keeping our community safe during this difficult time.