

## Relief Available: NFDA Volunteers Available to Support Funeral Homes With Caring for the Dead During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Brookfield, Wis. – The National Funeral Directors Association (NFDA) is proud that nearly 900 funeral professionals – from licensed funeral directors to students and apprentices – have expressed a willingness to offer on-the-ground help to their colleagues during the COVID-19 pandemic. NFDA urges funeral homes that are in need of assistance and want volunteer support to reach out – assistance is available.

Funeral homes that are members of their state association should relay those needs to their state association, which will relay those needs to NFDA. NFDA and the state association will work to ensure all requests are met.

Funeral homes that are not members of their state associations should contact Kim Klotz at NFDA ( [kklotz@nfda.org](mailto:kklotz@nfda.org) or 800-228-6332) and describe their needs and provide complete contact information (funeral home name and city/state; contact name, funeral home phone number, cell phone number and email address).

“We’ve been able to call up nearly 600 volunteers to serve in states where funeral homes or government agencies are in need of assistance with caring for the dead,” said Anna Bernfeld, senior vice president of member relations. “We still have many more volunteers who are eager to help their colleagues in need and are ready to deploy immediately. Please don’t be afraid to speak up if you could use extra support during this difficult time.”

Volunteers are serving in the following states:

- *New York*
  - On April 8, the names of 8 licensed funeral directors from the state of New York were provided to the New York State Funeral Directors Association (NYSFDA), which is managing requests for assistance from funeral homes in the New York City area.
  - On April 11, the names of 113 additional licensed funeral directors (from outside of the state of New York) were sent to NYSFDA.
  - On April 9, the names of 115 students and apprentices were sent to the New York City Office of Emergency Management (OEM) to help hospitals ensure decedents in their custody are treated respectfully until funeral homes conduct transfers.
  - On April 16, the names of 112 students and apprentices were provided to the New York City OEM to assist with caring for decedents in the custody of hospitals.
- *New Jersey*
  - On April 10, the names of 23 volunteers – 16 licensed funeral directors from New Jersey and 7 students and apprentices – were forwarded to the New Jersey State Funeral Directors Association, which is managing requests for assistance from funeral homes.
- *Michigan*

- On April 10, NFDA sent the names of 15 licensed funeral directors from the state of Michigan to the Michigan Funeral Directors Association (MFDA), which is managing requests for help from funeral homes.
- On April 17, the names of 30 funeral directors were given to MFDA, which is working with the Community Health Emergency Coordination Center and the Michigan Emergency Operations Center. These volunteers will work to ensure decedents are safely and respectfully transferred from hospitals to temporary sheltering facilities.
- *North Carolina*
  - On April 16, the names of 76 students and apprentices were sent to the North Carolina Office of Emergency Management. These volunteers will work to ensure decedents are safely and respectfully transferred from hospitals to temporary sheltering facilities.
- *Washington, D.C.*
  - On April 27, the names of 10 funeral directors and students were sent to the Washington, D.C. medical examiner's office who will share the names with the D.C. Medical Reserve Corps and the D.C. Department of Health to help ensure decedents are ensure decedents are cared for in a safe, respectful manner.

NFDA is grateful to the Funeral Service Foundation and its COVID-19 Crisis Response Fund, which is reimbursing expenses incurred by volunteers during their service (e.g., transportation, lodging and meals) that are not covered by any other funder or agency.

For those who are unable to volunteer, they can support volunteer and other response efforts through a gift to the Funeral Service Foundation's COVID-19 Crisis Response Fund. The fund has two pillars of support: emergency assistance and grief support. Designed to be flexible, the fund will provide grants for immediate needs within funeral service including emergency response to significant loss of life; grants to organizations providing services and resources to families with unresolved and complicated grief due to loss during this crisis; and grants for other important needs as funeral service continues to serve families during this rapidly evolving crisis. For more information about the fund, to make a contribution or to apply for a grant, visit [www.funeralservicefoundation.org](http://www.funeralservicefoundation.org).

NFDA is the world's leading and largest funeral service association, serving more than 20,000 individual members who represent nearly 11,000 funeral homes in the United States and 49 countries around the world. NFDA is the trusted leader, beacon for ethics and the strongest advocate for the profession. NFDA is the association of choice because it offers funeral professionals comprehensive educational resources, tools to manage successful businesses, guidance to become pillars in their communities and the expertise to foster future generations of funeral professionals. NFDA is headquartered in Brookfield, Wis., and has an office in Washington, D.C. For more information, visit [www.nfda.org](http://www.nfda.org).