

PRESS RELEASE: HOWARD FUNERAL HOME

This decision has come after much consideration and consultation with multiple agencies. This isn't something that we want to do, but feel is absolutely necessary.

The owners and staff of Howard Funeral Home are keeping apprised of the current situation and are following all requirements and guidelines of health and government officials. While there have been only a few cases of the coronavirus confirmed in Missouri, that number is increasing, and out of an abundance of caution, we are proactively instituting the following policy:

For the family, as always, call us. As funeral professionals, we are staying abreast of all the latest information from public health officials, though it is ever changing. We remain prepared to serve. It is important to know, we are still able to care for your loved one as usual, including preparation of your loved one for viewing. As far as making arrangements, we will meet with you in any way that you are comfortable, whether in person or via email or telephone. We are still here to help you. Please know that you can still memorialize your loved one. We will work with you to find an option that meets the needs of your family, although it may look different than "normal."

Effective March 17, 2020 we will not be able to offer any public visitations or services until the restriction guidelines from the Center for Disease Control are updated. We will only have private services for immediate family only. We will be able to live stream the service to our website and through our facebook page at the agreement of the family.

Please understand that this decision is not an easy decision to make as we understand that the grieving process is very personal and very hard. We encourage the community members to reach out to the family via phone calls, emails, social media, etc. and support them in that manner.

Howard Funeral Home feels that it is imperative that we follow the suggested guidelines from our local, state, and national leaders to do our part in stopping the spread of this unprecedented virus. We have watched the events in Italy unfold and do not want to see the same type of situation happen in the United States. While some may feel that this decision is "overreacting", we feel that after careful consultation with public health officials and local and state agencies that this is the proactive way to do our part, but most importantly, the right decision for the safety and wellbeing of our communities.

If you are part of the immediate family that will be attending a service, please adhere to the following suggestions to protect all involved:

If you are sick or not feeling well, have a persistent cough or sneeze, a fever or other health issues, please do not attend. While this is good advice always, it is especially important during this time of heightened concern. Those over 70 years of age are at a greater risk. You can send your condolences in the mail or through our website (if you have that capability) and we will forward it to them. The family will understand.

If, while at a funeral, you feel a cough or sneeze coming on, be sure to cover your nose and mouth, if possible, move away from other people and be sure to wash and sanitize your hands right away.

Avoid, hugging, kissing, and shaking hands. While we know this is difficult to do at a service, everyone will understand.

Likewise try to maintain a safe distance from others as much as possible under the circumstances. No one will think you are being rude.