

Navigating advanced planning

A guide to help you explore burial,
cremation and funeral options.



Introduction

Did you know that you can save your loved ones from difficult decisions and financial stress by planning your end-of-life wishes ahead of time?

There is a lot to consider when it comes to planning end-of-life wishes. Do you want to have a traditional burial or be cremated? What about funeral services or a reception? It might sound a bit daunting, but we're here to help.

In this guide, we'll walk you through the basics of advanced planning, so you can feel confident and at ease knowing that everything is taken care of.

WHAT WE WILL COVER

- 1.** The basics of advanced planning, including all of the benefits offered
- 2.** Choosing a burial option, from traditional in-ground burials with a casket, to mausoleums and cremation burials.
- 3.** Arranging a funeral service or memorial ceremony
- 4.** How to get started with advanced planning with the help of our trusted family service counselors



CHAPTER 1

The basics of advanced planning

What is advanced planning?

Advanced planning is making important decisions and setting up end-of-life plans ahead of time. Planning ahead creates closure for both you and your loved ones and comes with very helpful advantages.



Relieve emotional burden

Planning in advance allows you to make important decisions about your end-of-life arrangements now, so your loved ones won't have to face those tough choices during an already difficult time.



Choose how you will be celebrated

Advanced planning gives you the chance to create a memorial plan that truly reflects who you are, your life, values and your legacy.



Ensure financial preparedness

Planning ahead with your budget in mind ensures your end-of-life arrangements are meaningful and affordable, while also sparing your loved ones financial stress and disagreements on how to manage final expenses.

Pre-planning your final wishes in three steps



1 Self-reflection and goals

Start by thinking about what truly matters to you, your values, preferences and what you'd like for your farewell. Imagine how you want your loved ones to celebrate you and use that to guide your plan.

2 Understand your options

Take the time to explore the different funeral and memorial options available to find what feels right for you. In this guide, we will walk you through the options and benefits of each so you can feel confident in your decisions. For more detail visit [memorialplanning.com](https://www.memorialplanning.com).

3 Reach out to our family service counselors

Our counselors are a phone call or live chat away to answer questions and guide you through the pre-planning journey.

An illustration of a person with short brown hair, wearing a white t-shirt and dark pants, sitting in a field of large, vibrant green plants. The person is looking towards the right. The background features rolling green hills and a light blue sky with several white, fluffy clouds. The overall style is clean and modern.

CHAPTER 2

Choosing burial or cremation

Traditional burial options

Cemetery burials provide a permanent place for loved ones to visit and remember in a natural and peaceful setting.

In-ground burial

In-ground burial is the most familiar type of burial. These burials include a designated grave, a casket, a customizable marker or monument, an outer burial container and the opening and closing of the grave.

Above-ground burial

Above-ground burial, also known as entombment, provides an alternative for those who prefer not to be buried in the ground. Mausoleums are large, above-ground structures that house caskets in individual crypts or compartments.



Why choose burial?



Traditional way to say goodbye

Burials provide a traditional and comforting way to honor you or a loved one, offering a familiar and respectful way to say goodbye. It also aligns with many religious beliefs and traditions.



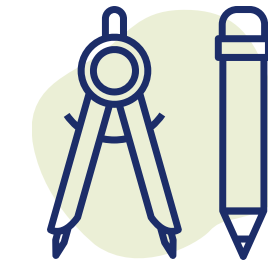
Permanent memorial to visit

Burials offer a lasting tribute and a special place where family and friends can visit, reflect and keep memories alive. It's a comforting way to create a space for ongoing connection.



Natural & peaceful setting

Burials offer a serene and beautiful environment for the final resting place, providing a tranquil space for reflection and remembrance.



Advanced planning flexibility

From selecting your final resting place to choosing a casket and other arrangements, we're here to help you pre-plan to make it easier for you and your loved ones.

Cremation options

Cremation is a meaningful and flexible option if you're considering an alternative to traditional burial. Once the cremation is complete, you can choose to have the ashes placed in a cemetery plot, columbarium niche, community or private mausoleum, or kept in an urn. Cremation also offers other creative ways to memorialize yourself.



Traditional cremation

This service provides loved one the chance to have a final viewing before the cremation. It includes the opportunity for family and friends to attend a viewing in a ceremonial casket and usually features a service with readings and a eulogy.

Memorial cremation

With memorial cremations, the body isn't present at the service because the cremation happens soon after death. This means you don't need to rush to schedule anything right away. In addition, you can spare your loved ones from having to make decisions around the costs of preservation and caskets, making it an affordable option.

Simple cremation

A simple cremation is a straightforward option without any viewings, memorial services or receptions, focusing on the essentials.

Why choose cremation?



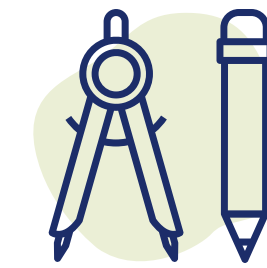
Time flexibility

Families can choose to hold a service at a later date, providing flexibility to accommodate schedules and time to create a more personalized event.



Memorialization options

Our cremation options are designed to celebrate your life, and are flexible to align with your religious beliefs and family traditions. We're here to help create something special that will be cherished by your loved ones for generations.



Advanced planning advantages

Cremation offers diverse ways to honor life through unique memorials, all of which are easiest to coordinate when planned in advance. We're here to assist you in navigating these options.

A stylized illustration of a lighthouse on a cliff. The lighthouse is white with red horizontal stripes and a dark red top section with a lantern room. To its left is a small white house with a red roof and a chimney. A winding path leads from the foreground towards the lighthouse. The cliff is green with some yellow and white flowers. The sea is blue with white waves. The sky is light blue with white, wavy clouds.

CHAPTER 3

Personalized funeral services



About funeral services

Funeral services are heartfelt ceremonies where family and friends come together to honor, remember and say their final goodbyes.

These services can range from formal to informal and can be shaped by the unique wishes and cultural backgrounds of the person who has passed and their loved ones. It's a special time to celebrate a life and support each other through the grieving process.

Funeral service options

Viewing and visitation

A viewing, in the context of a funeral, is when the body of the deceased is presented for friends and family to pay their final respects. Typically held in a funeral home, this solemn event allows loved ones to gather, offer condolences and find closure in their grief.

Memorial services

A memorial service is a ceremony to honor and remember the deceased. Held at various locations, such as a funeral home, church, or family home, it differs from a traditional funeral as the body is usually not present. Memorial services often include eulogies, readings and music to celebrate the deceased's life and legacy.

Committal or graveside services

A committal or graveside service is a ceremony at the cemetery where the deceased will be buried or interred. It includes final rites and prayers, it includes final rites and prayers, often led by clergy, family member or friend, and may involve lowering the casket or placing an urn. This gathering allows family and friends to say their final goodbyes.

Reception

A gathering after the memorial service allows attendees to share memories, offer support and find solace together. Often held at a community, event center or reception hall, it provides a comforting space for mourners to connect, reflect, and bond over the life of the deceased.

Why plan a funeral?



Honors and celebrates life

Funerals are meant to highlight the deceased's unique personality, achievements and positive impact through personalized services.

Provides closure and healing

A funeral service allows family and friends to gather, share memories, and say goodbye, which is essential for emotional healing and acceptance.

Offers support and community

Funerals unite friends, family, and community, providing crucial collective support for comfort and strength during grief.

Advanced arrangements are available

We offer you the freedom to select services that align with your preferences. Planning provides your family with peace of mind that you have made all of these decisions ahead of time and saves your loved ones from guessing how you would like to be honored.



CHAPTER 4

Schedule a meeting with us



450+ locations and growing

We are trusted by thousands of families across 24 states and territories in navigating the challenges of end-of-life planning. Our mission is to create supportive spaces where individuals and families can find solace, meaning and hope in the midst of loss.

Let's plan your final wishes, call us at

844-808-3310



Find your preferred location

Scan the QR code or visit [memorialplanning.com/locations](https://www.memorialplanning.com/locations) to schedule an appointment with one of our counselors.

What you'll get when you meet one of our counselors



Free, no obligation consultation

Our professionals are ready to help you get started with advanced planning of your final wishes. We're flexible and can meet you wherever you're most comfortable—at home, in our office, or virtually.

Guidance and support

We'll help you navigate the planning process with care, ensuring that your decisions reflect your values and bring peace of mind to you and your loved ones. With personalized attention, we're here to make this important planning as seamless and thoughtful as possible.

Full understanding of options and ongoing support

We're here to answer any questions you might have and highlight the flexible options that come with advanced planning. After our consultation, we'll be committed to providing ongoing support and help you put your plans into place.

Schedule your appointment today to receive our FREE guidebooks.

Our guidebooks offer essential tools to confidently plan your final arrangements, organize key documents, and determine your preferred funeral and end-of-life plans.



Family planning guide



Cremation guidebook

Honoring your life story is our life's work

We create supportive spaces where individuals and families can find solace, meaning and hope in the midst of loss.



The Memorial Planning brand name used to identify a network of licensed funeral, cremation and cemetery providers that include affiliates of Everstory Partners, 955 Keller Road, Suite 1500, Altamonte Springs, FL 32714. With over 450 locations, Memorial Planning providers proudly serve over 66,000 families a year.

Learn more at everstorypartners.com, memorialplanning.com, or (877) 791-9993.