

2023 NFDA Member General Price List Study

2023



## National Funeral Directors Association 2023 Member General Price List Study

### Background and Objectives

NFDA has tracked the cost of the American adult funeral since at least 1960 and has periodically tracked data related to the FTC General Price List (GPL) since the Funeral Rule went into effect in 1984.

The objective of tracking GPL and related data for the *NFDA 2023 Member General Price List Study* and previous NFDA GPL studies has been to develop an accurate historical record of the cost of the American adult funeral. In addition, the studies summarize and compare national and census district GPL-related data.

**Definition of adult funeral with burial:** *Funeral with viewing and ceremony, including the following products and services: basic services fee, removal/transfer of remains to funeral home, embalming and other preparation of the body, use of facilities and staff for viewing and for a ceremony at the funeral home, hearse, service car/van, basic memorial printed package and metal casket.*

**Definition of adult funeral with cremation:** *Funeral with viewing and ceremony, including the following products and services: basic services fee, removal/transfer of remains to funeral home, embalming and other preparation of the body, use of facilities and staff for viewing and for a ceremony at the funeral home, service car/van, basic memorial printed package, cremation fee, alternative cremation container, and urn. It should be noted that this definition changed slightly in 2023. Cremation casket was replaced with alternative cremation container because it was deemed more accurate. Any historical references or comparisons in this report have been modified to reflect this change.*

### Methodology

A survey was mailed to 5,219 NFDA-member funeral homeowners on July 7, 2023, to gather General Price List and other related data. Members also had the option of completing the survey online. A link to complete the survey was emailed to all main contacts with a valid email address, posted three times in the *NFDA Bulletin* (electronic newsletter), and a reminder to complete the survey was emailed to all main contacts as well.

Of the potential respondents, 809 members anonymously completed the survey (474 mail and 335 online), which accurately reflects NFDA's total membership (with 95% confidence) within a range of  $\pm 3.4\%$ . Responses also accurately reflect NFDA's membership by U.S. census district.

As in previous NFDA General Price List studies, the wide range of variability between highest and lowest reported GPL prices across the United States and within census districts is addressed by providing median, minimum and maximum GPL statistics. Since the median is not affected by high and low extremes, it is the statistic usually referred to when estimating an average dollar amount.

- **Median:** price where half of all prices for the item fall below and half are above
- **Minimum:** lowest price quoted
- **Maximum:** highest price quoted

<b>EXAMPLE</b>	<b>Median</b>	<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Maximum</b>	<b># of Responses</b>
Nondeclinable basic services fee	\$2,495	\$400	\$6,755	855

## Executive Summary

Over the past two years, the cost of a funeral with burial has increased 5.8%, and the cost of a funeral with cremation has increased 8.1%. According to the U.S. Department's Bureau of Labor Statistics, the overall U.S. inflation rate over the same time period was 13.6%.

Selected key findings from the 2023 Member General Price List study:

- The cost of a direct cremation (container provided by the funeral home) has increased by 7.8%, while the cost of an immediate burial (container provided by funeral home) has increased by 6.4% since 2021.
- Approximately 32.3% of NFDA members own their own crematory; an additional 5.7% plan to build their own crematory in the next five years.
- The biggest cost increases since 2021 were for the use of a limousine (20.8%), the use of a service car or van (16.7%), and the removal/transfer of remains to the funeral home (12.9%).
- The cost of metal burial caskets and urns did not experience any increases since 2021.
- The cost of a funeral (for both burial and cremation) is highest in the New England, West North Central, and Middle Atlantic census districts.
- The cost of a funeral (for both burial and cremation) is lowest in the Mountain, East South Central, Pacific and West South Central census districts
- Firms located in town/rural areas tend to charge less for funerals with burial and cremation compared to larger size cities.
- 95% of firms are independently owned and operated and 67.1% are corporations.
- The typical firm employs:
  - Two full-time, dual-licensed employees
  - One full-time funeral director
  - One full-time embalmer and/or
  - Two full-time, non-licensed employees.
- 47.1% of firms offer their own virtual funeral capabilities.
- Only 11.8% of firms offer alternative methods of disposition (i.e. alkaline hydrolysis or natural organic reduction).
- In 2022, the median caseload of responding firms was 180 cases. Of those cases, 55.0% were embalmed.
- 69.0% of firms update their GPL at least once per year; 2.7% update it every five years or more.
- Only 43.4% of funeral homes offer funeral packages. Of those that do, the package price of a casketed adult funeral with a viewing and burial has increased by 7.1%, and the package price of a casketed adult funeral with a viewing and cremation has increased 5.8%.
- Firms with smaller caseloads are significantly less likely to offer funeral packages compared to firms with larger caseloads. Firms in large and moderately sized cities are more likely to offer funeral packages.

Many factors contribute to the final determination of how an individual firm prices its goods and services, including the firm's business philosophy and the market in which it operates.

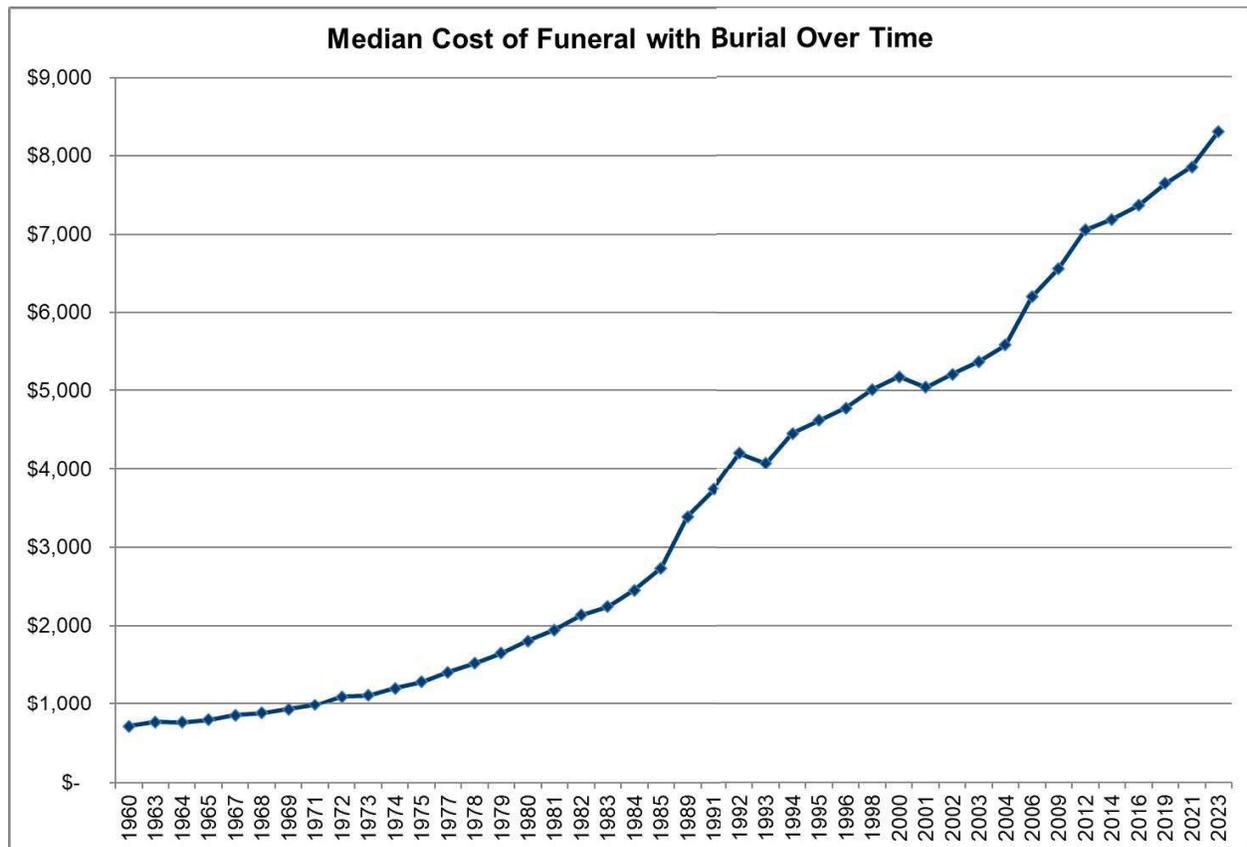
## Historical Cost of Adult Funeral With Burial (Without Vault) 1960-2023

The cost of an adult funeral includes the following general items only and is based on historical data from surveys of U.S. funeral homes. Items include:

- Nondeclinable Basic Services Fee
- Removal/transfer of remains to funeral home
- Embalming
- Other preparation of the body
- Use of facilities/staff for viewing
- use of facilities/staff for ceremony at funeral home
- hearse
- service car/van
- Basic memorial printed package
- Metal casket

Not included: vault (outer burial container), cemetery and/or crematory charges, and monument or miscellaneous cash-advance items, such as flowers or obituaries. *Note: Studies are not conducted each year.*

1960s	Cost	1970s	Cost	1980s	Cost	1990s	Cost	2000s	Cost	2010s	Cost	2020s	Cost
1960	\$708	-	-	1980	\$1,809	-	-	2000	\$5,180	-	-	-	-
-	-	1971	\$983	1981	1,949	1991	\$3,742	2001	5,047	-	-	2021	\$7,848
-	-	1972	1,097	1982	2,138	1992	4,207	2002	5,211	2012	\$7,045	-	-
1963	763	1973	1,116	1983	2,247	1993	4,077	2003	5,374	-	-	2023	\$8,300
1964	757	1974	1,207	1984	2,457	1994	4,456	2004	5,582	2014	7,180	-	-
1965	790	1975	1,285	1985	2,737	1995	4,626	-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-	1996	4,782	2006	6,195	2016	\$7,360	-	-
1967	850	1977	1,412	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1968	879	1978	1,522	-	-	1998	\$5,020	-	-	-	-	-	-
1969	\$926	1979	\$1,653	1989	\$3,392	-	-	2009	\$6,560	2019	\$7,640	-	-



## Detailed Costs of 2023 Adult Funeral With Burial

### Based on 2023 Median Reported GPL Prices

*Funeral with a viewing and ceremony at the funeral home includes the following most typical elements:*

Nondeclinable Basic Services Fee	Use of Facilities/Staff for Ceremony at Funeral Home
Removal/Transfer of Remains to Funeral Home	Hearse
Embalming	Service Car/Van
Other Preparation of the Body	Basic Memorial Printed Package
Use of Facilities/Staff for Viewing	Metal Casket

Not included: vault, cemetery, monument/marker or miscellaneous cash-advance charges.

Item	2023 National Median Price
Nondeclinable basic services fee	\$2,495
Removal/Transfer of remains to funeral home	\$395
Embalming	\$845
Other preparation (e.g., casketing, cosmetology, dressing, grooming)	\$295
Use of facilities/staff for viewing	\$475
Use of facilities/staff for funeral ceremony	\$550
Hearse	\$375
Service car or van	\$175
Printed materials (basic memorial package)	\$195
<b>Subtotal Without Casket and Vault</b>	<b>\$5,800</b>
Metal burial casket (Avg. charge for most frequently purchased item)	\$2,500
<b>TOTAL WITH CASKET</b>	<b>\$8,300</b>
Vault (Average charge for most frequently purchased item)	\$1,695
<b>Total With Vault</b>	<b>\$9,995</b>

*Median - The amount at which half of the figures fall below and half are above.*

## Detailed Costs of 2023 Adult Funeral With Cremation

### Based on 2023 Median Reported GPL Prices

*Funeral with a viewing and ceremony at the funeral home includes the following most typical elements:*

Nondeclinable Basic Services Fee	Service car/van/utility vehicle to transport to crematory
removal/transfer of remains to funeral home	Basic memorial printed package
embalming	Cremation fee
Other preparation of the body	Alternative cremation container
Use of facilities/staff for viewing	Urn
Use of facilities/staff for ceremony at funeral home	

Not included: vault, cemetery, monument/marker or miscellaneous cash-advance charges.

Item	2023 National Median Price
Nondeclinable basic services fee	\$2,495
Removal/Transfer of remains to funeral home	\$395
Embalming	\$845
Other Preparation (e.g., casketing, cosmetology, dressing, grooming)	\$295
Use of facilities/staff for viewing	\$475
Use of facilities/staff for funeral ceremony	\$550
Service car or van	\$175
Printed materials (basic memorial package)	\$195
Cremation fee (third party)	\$400
<b>Subtotal Without Alternative Cremation Container and Urn</b>	<b>\$5,825</b>
Alternative cremation container	\$160
Urn	\$295
<b>TOTAL WITH ALTERNATIVE CREMATION CONTAINER AND URN</b>	<b>\$6,280</b>

*Median - The amount at which half of the figures fall below and half are above.*

### % Change in Funeral Costs With Burial Over Past Two Years

Item	2023 National Median Cost	2021 National Median Cost	Percent Change from 2021 to 2023
Nondeclinable basic services fee	\$2,495	\$2,300	8.5%
Removal/Transfer of remains to funeral home	\$395	\$350	12.9%
Embalming	\$845	\$775	9.0%
Other preparation (e.g., casketing, cosmetology, dressing, grooming)	\$295	\$275	7.3%
Use of facilities/staff for viewing	\$475	\$450	5.6%
Use of facilities/staff for funeral ceremony	\$550	\$515	6.8%
Hearse	\$375	\$350	7.1%
Service car or van	\$175	\$150	16.7%
Printed materials (basic memorial package)	\$195	\$183	6.8%
<b>Subtotal Without Casket and Vault</b>	<b>\$5,800</b>	<b>\$5,348</b>	<b>8.5%</b>
Metal burial casket (Avg. charge for most frequently purchased item)	\$2,500	\$2,500	0.0%
<b>TOTAL WITH CASKET</b>	<b>\$8,300</b>	<b>\$7,848</b>	<b>5.8%</b>
Vault (Average charge for most frequently purchased item)	\$1,695	\$1,572	7.8%
<b>Total With Vault</b>	<b>\$9,995</b>	<b>\$9,420</b>	<b>6.1%</b>

Median - The amount at which half of the figures fall below and half are above.

### % Change in Funeral Costs With Cremation Over Past Two Years

Item	2023 National Median Price	2021 National Median Price	Percent Change from 2021 to 2023
Nondeclinable basic services fee	\$2,495	\$2,300	8.5%
Removal/Transfer of remains to funeral home	\$395	\$350	12.9%
Embalming	\$845	\$775	9.0%
Other Preparation (e.g., casketing, cosmetology, dressing, grooming)	\$295	\$275	7.3%
Use of facilities/staff for viewing	\$475	\$450	5.6%
Use of facilities/staff for funeral ceremony	\$550	\$515	6.8%
Service car or van	\$175	\$150	16.7%
Printed materials (basic memorial package)	\$195	\$183	6.8%
Cremation fee (third party)	\$400	\$368	8.8%
<b>Subtotal Without Alternative Cremation Container and Urn</b>	<b>\$5,825</b>	<b>\$5,365</b>	<b>8.6%</b>
Alternative cremation container	\$160	\$150	6.7%
Urn	\$295	\$295	0.0%
<b>TOTAL WITH ALTERNATIVE CREMATION CONTAINER AND URN</b>	<b>\$6,280</b>	<b>\$5,810</b>	<b>8.1%</b>

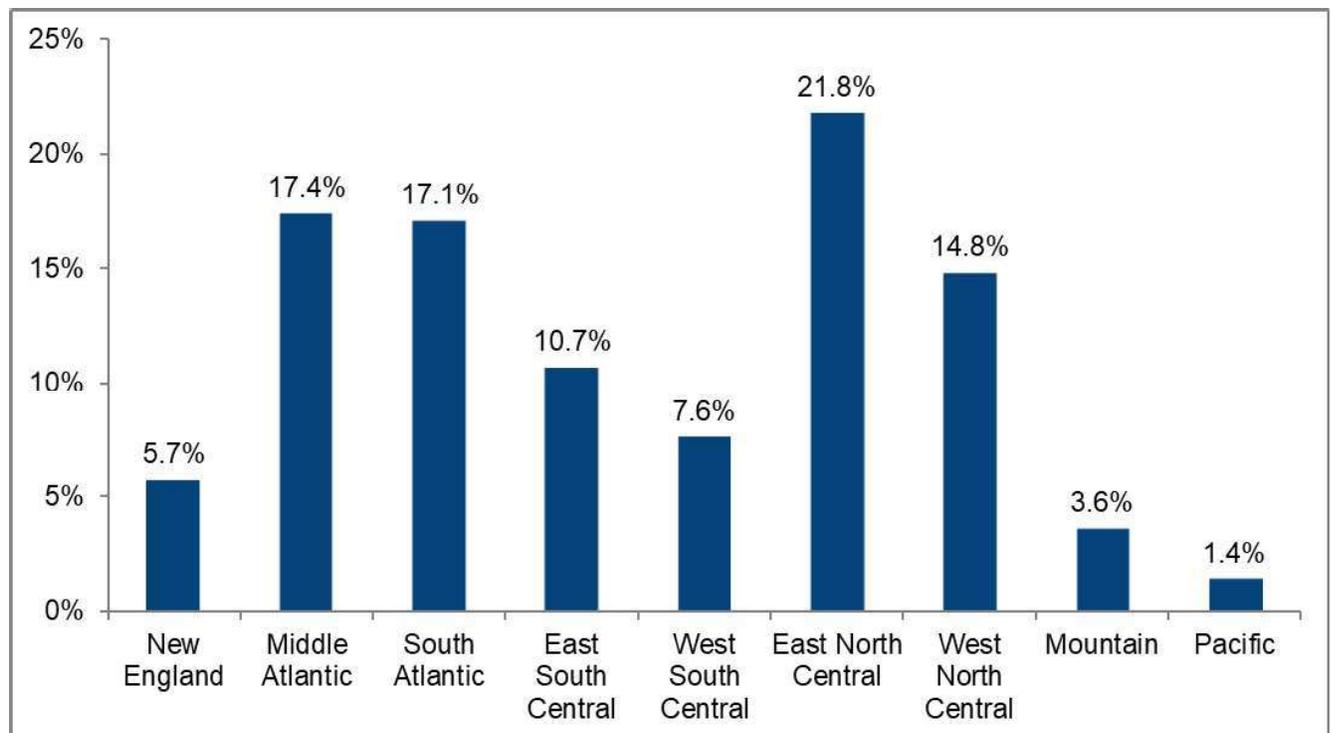
Median - The amount at which half of the figures fall below and half are above.

## Census District Information

Survey responses accurately reflect NFDA membership by U.S. Census Districts (defined below).

Facility Locations by U.S. Census Districts								
New England	Middle Atlantic	South Atlantic	East South Central	West South Central	East North Central	West North Central	Mountain	Pacific
5.7% (n=46)	17.4% (n=140)	17.1% (n=138)	10.7% (n=86)	7.6% (n=61)	21.8% (n=176)	14.8% (n=119)	3.6% (n=29)	1.4% (n=11)
Connecticut	New Jersey	Delaware	Alabama	Arkansas	Illinois	Iowa	Arizona	Alaska
Maine	New York	Florida	Kentucky	Louisiana	Indiana	Minnesota	Colorado	California
Massachusetts	Pennsylvania	Georgia	Mississippi	Oklahoma	Michigan	Kansas	Idaho	Hawaii
New Hampshire		Maryland	Tennessee	Texas	Ohio	Missouri	Montana	Oregon
Rhode Island		North Carolina			Wisconsin	North Dakota	Nevada	Washington
Vermont		South Carolina				South Dakota	New Mexico	
		West Virginia				Nebraska	Utah	
		Virginia				Wyoming		

### Percent of Responses From Each Census District

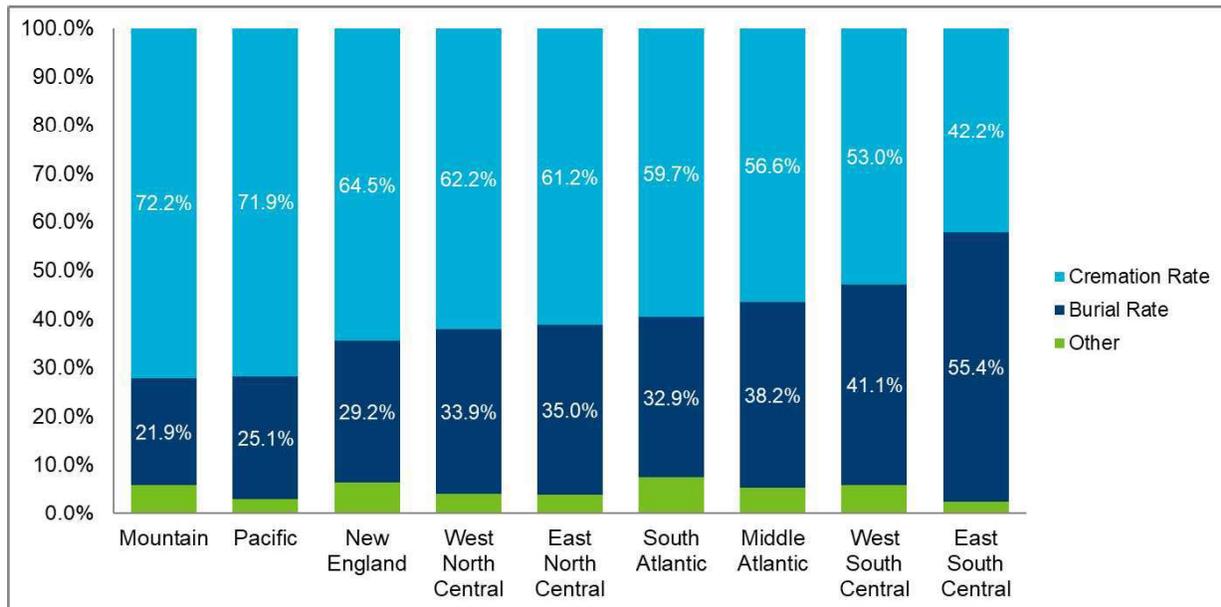


## Census District Information

Number of Survey Responses by State							
State	Count	State	Count	State	Count	State	Count
AK	0	IL	41	NC	27	SC	17
AL	18	IN	27	ND	5	SD	8
AR	13	KS	19	NE	25	TN	29
AZ	7	KY	31	NH	4	TX	33
CA	8	LA	7	NJ	40	UT	2
CO	4	MA	15	NM	3	VA	25
CT	15	MD	19	NV	2	VT	2
DE	7	ME	5	NY	35	WA	1
FL	7	MI	29	OH	52	WI	27
GA	27	MN	26	OK	8	WV	9
HI	0	MO	18	OR	2	WY	5
IA	18	MS	8	PA	65		
ID	5	MT	2	RI	5		

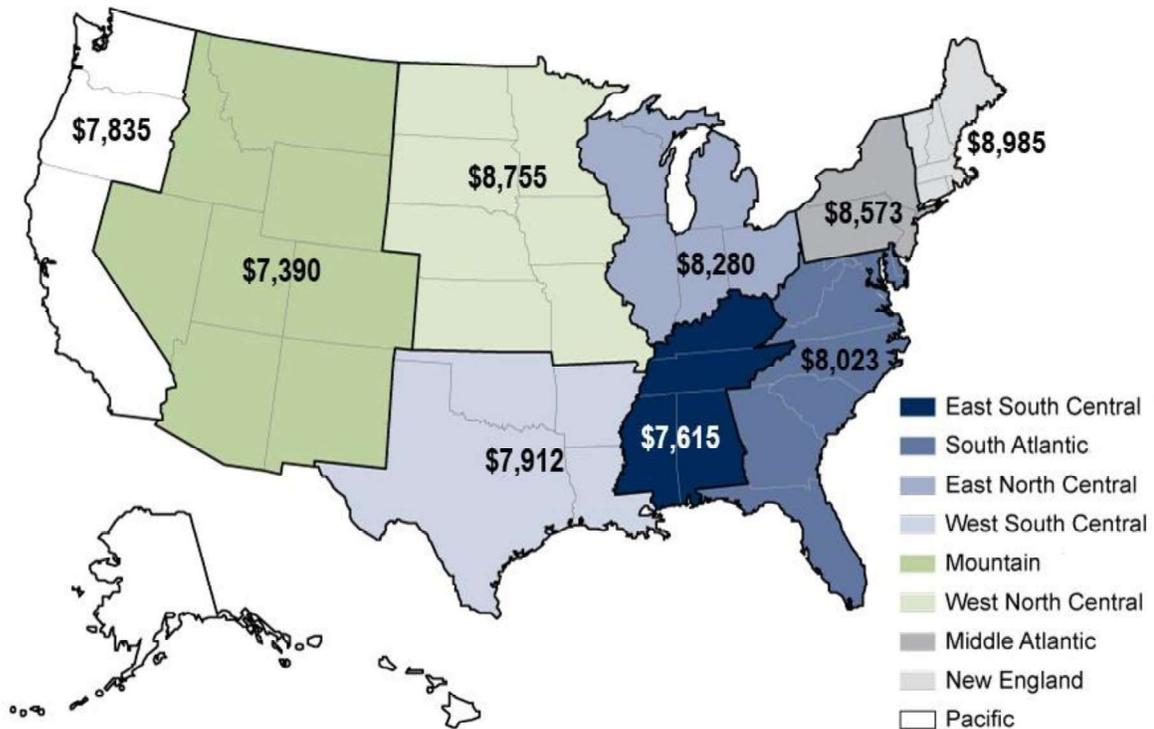
## 2023 Cremation and Burial Rates by Census District

Source: 2023 NFDA Cremation and Burial Report



## Median Cost of a Funeral Followed by Burial by Census District (National Median = \$8,300)

\*Results for the Mountain and Pacific Census Districts should be interpreted with caution due to low sample size.

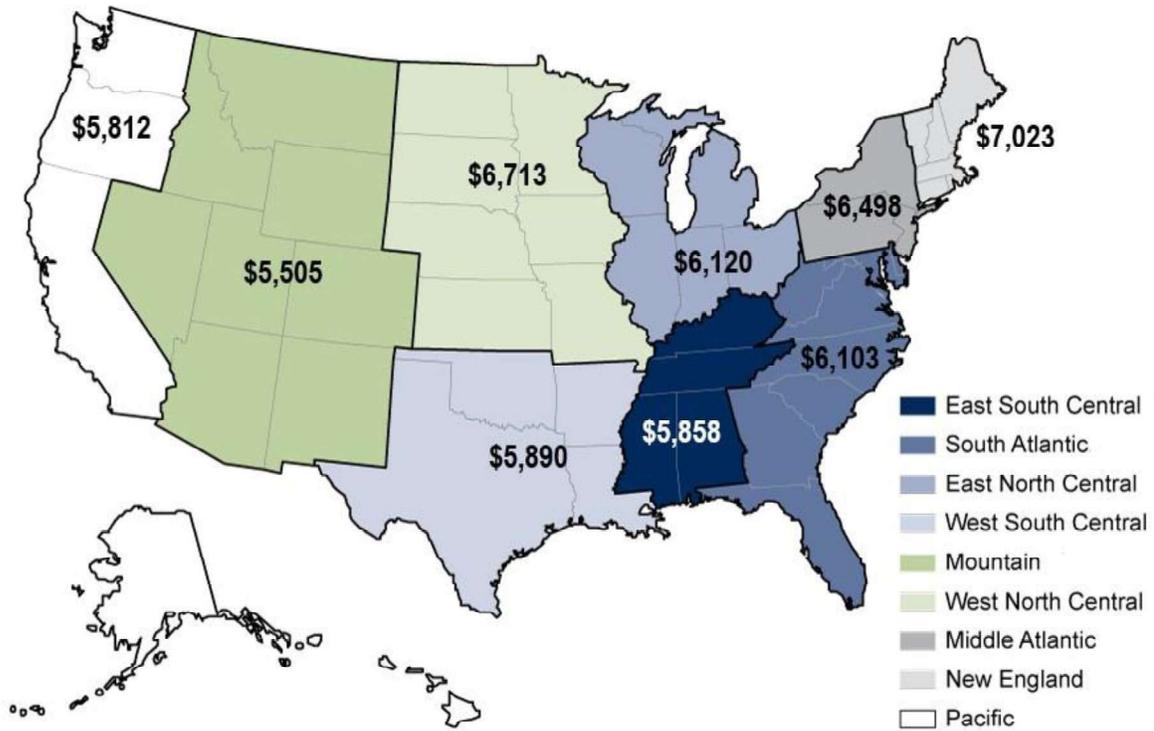


Median costs are based on standard definition of adult funeral (page 7), including the following items:

- Nondeclinable Basic Services Fee
- Removal/transfer of remains to funeral home
- Embalming
- Other preparation of the body
- Use of facilities/staff for viewing
- Use of facilities/staff for ceremony at funeral home
- Hearse
- Service car/van
- Basic memorial printed package
- Metal casket

## Median Cost of a Funeral Followed by Cremation by Census District (National Median = \$6,280)

**\*Results for the Mountain and Pacific Census Districts should be interpreted with caution due to low sample size.**



Median costs are based on standard definition of adult funeral (page 8), including the following items:

- Nondeclinable Basic Services Fee
- Removal/transfer of remains to funeral home
- Embalming
- Other preparation of the body
- Use of facilities/staff for viewing
- Use of facilities/staff for ceremony at funeral home
- Service car/van
- Basic memorial printed package
- Cremation fee
- Alternative cremation container
- Urn

## National Firm Profile



### Funeral Home Characteristics

**Median 2022 caseload of responding firms was 180 cases.**

**Median percentage of cases that were embalmed was 55.0%.**

#### Frequency of Updating GPL

- 9.1% every 6 months
- 59.9% every year
- 22.3% every 2 years
- 4.6% every 3 years
- 1.5% every 4 years
- 2.7% every 5 years or more

#### Primary facility location

- 7.3% large city (population over 500,000)
- 21.0% moderate city (population 50,000 – 499,999)
- 35.5% small city (population 10,000 – 49,999)
- 36.1% town/rural (population less than 10,000)

#### Firm structure

- Median number of years a firm has been in business: 80
- Median number of years a firm has been in the same family: 48
- 94.8% of firms are independently owned and operated
- 67.1% of firms are corporations

Does your firm also own or offer the following products or services?	Own	Third-party	Do not offer
Aftercare	30.3%	40.8%	29.0%
Alternative methods of disposition (i.e., alkaline hydrolysis or natural organic reduction)	1.9%	9.9%	88.2%
Catering	5.7%	34.1%	60.2%
Celebrant	21.5%	43.5%	35.0%
Cemetery	12.8%	54.5%	32.7%
Crematory	31.1%	53.3%	15.6%
Community/event center	15.3%	29.9%	54.8%
Flower shop	3.7%	61.0%	35.3%
Green funeral services/burials	31.0%	21.8%	47.2%
Headstones, markers, monuments	27.2%	53.2%	19.6%
Insurance company	12.4%	55.1%	32.4%
Pet services	12.2%	20.7%	67.1%
Preneed	71.8%	27.0%	1.2%
Rental/ceremonial caskets for cremation with viewing	86.3%	4.3%	9.4%
Therapy dog	11.8%	4.7%	83.4%
Virtual funerals	47.1%	15.5%	37.5%



## Average Funeral Home Characteristics (continued)

### Median number of full-time employees at firm\*

- 2 dual license (average 2.96)
- 1 funeral director only (average 1.83)
- 1 embalmer only (average 1.76)
- 2 non-licensed staff (average 3.38)

### Median number of part-time employees at firm\*

- 1 dual license (average 1.44)
- 1 funeral director only (average 1.49)
- 1 embalmer only (average 1.68)
- 4 non-licensed staff (average 5.05)



## Burials

### Median number of burials conducted in 2022\*

- 3 immediate burials (average 7.28)
- 5 burials with memorial service (average 111.52)
- 75 casketed adult funerals with viewing and burial (average 102.09)



## Cremations

### Median number of cremations conducted in 2022\*

- 35 direct cremations (average 61.03)
- 25 cremations with memorial service (average 38.84)
- 12.5 casketed funerals with viewing and cremation (average 23.63)

### Crematory ownership

- 32.3% own a crematory
- 62.0% use third-party crematory
- 5.7% use third-party crematory but plan to build own within next 5 years

*\* Median: The amount at which half of the figures fall below and half are above. Average (arithmetic mean): the total of figures divided by the number of figures for a given variable. For some variables, the average is also listed for informational purposes.*