

# The National Society of Allied and Independent Funeral Directors

## Code of Practice

### 1. General Conduct and Presentation

- 1.1 Members must conduct themselves in a totally professional manner, and behave sensitively, with courtesy and complete dignity at all times, both privately and professionally.
- 1.2 Members shall provide the highest professional standards in all elements of the service they provide to each individual client(s).
- 1.3 Members shall treat as confidential all information obtained in relation to their clients and carry out their duties with total regard for the laws of privacy and data protection.
- 1.4 Members must establish and interpret client needs without exploiting their vulnerability or exerting any pressure on them.
- 1.5 Members will be responsible for all the decisions and actions taken by their staff in relation to the provision of funeral services and the ancillary services they offer.
- 1.6 Members shall conduct themselves in a courteous and professional manner in all dealings with clients, taking into account their religious and cultural needs.
- 1.7 Members shall not try to persuade clients to choose an expensive or elaborate funeral when a less expensive funeral is more appropriate to their circumstances.
- 1.8 No member shall act in any way whereby a conflict of interest may arise with the Society or its objects.
- 1.9 No members shall do anything that might prejudice the good name and reputation of the Society.

### 2. Marketing of Funeral and Associated Services.

- 2.1 *Advertising and Promotions.*

All advertising and promotional activities must comply with the following Codes of Practice at all times:  
The British Code of Advertising Practice.  
The British Code of Sales Promotion Practice.  
Ofcom – Office of Communications. The Independent regulator and competition authority for the UK communications industries.  
Any other relevant Codes or Legislation.
- 2.2 *Soliciting for Business.*

Members shall not solicit or offer any inducement of any nature for instructions for funeral services or any other associated services (i.e: pre-paid funeral plans, memorials etc); nor shall they engage or reward any other party - whether an individual, a partnership, a company or other formal or informal association or group - to do so on their behalf.
- 2.3 *Public Image.*

Members must ensure they convey a wholly professional image to the general public both through the delivery of the services they offer and by ensuring that all public relations activities are appropriate and sensitive in regard to their professional responsibilities.
- 2.4 *Transparency of Ownership.*

Members must prominently display details of the ultimate ownership of their business both outside and inside each premises and on all literature, business stationery and on all advertising and promotional material.
- 2.5 *Displaying the Society's Logo*

Members must prominently display at all of their branches the Society's logo to indicate to the public adherence to the Code of Practice. Copies of the Code must also be available at all of their premises for clients to inspect and/or take away.

### 3. Communication on Funeral Matters Relevant to 3<sup>rd</sup> Parties

- 3.1 Members should ensure that all literature and information relevant to other related services such as the local Registrar and bereavement associations are readily available to their clients.
- 3.2 Members should communicate and co-operate with the relevant authorities, institutions, professions and voluntary organisations so

they themselves can advise their own contacts/clients or patients on funeral matters.

### 4. Information and Choice.

- 4.1 Members will provide a choice of at least four coffins at varying prices, one of which will be an inexpensive and plain type, which must be shown in a brochure and displayed in a showroom wherever practicable.
- 4.2 Members must explain their full range of services relevant to the particular client, including the availability of a simple funeral before giving them a written estimate.
- 4.3 Clients must receive full advice on all the actions, including registration, they need to take in relation to the death and the funeral.

### 5. Prices and Price Lists.

- 5.1 Prices must be fair and reasonable in relation to the particular goods or services supplied, thereby ensuring clients receive fair value at all times. Price lists, detailing all the services offered must be prominently displayed, so they can easily be seen by all visitors to the premises.
- 5.2 Such price lists must also be available for clients to take away with them or to be presented and left with them when a home visit is made.

### 6. Provision of Estimates and Invoices

- 6.1 *Terms and Conditions*

Members shall make clients aware of their Terms and Conditions of Trading, which ideally should be printed on the estimate given to them. Alternatively, copies should be sent to clients or made available for clients to inspect.
- 6.2 *Provision of the Estimate.*
  - 6.2.1 Clients must be provided with a detailed written estimate at the time of arranging the funeral or, if that is not achievable then as soon as practicable afterwards. Where a consumer requests an estimate, in writing or otherwise, at an earlier stage (e.g. during an initial meeting or over the telephone), members should provide this as far as is practicable to do so. Members should make sure that clients confirm their acceptance of the estimate formally, as long as possible before the funeral takes place.
  - 6.2.2 All estimates must at least give the following details of the Funeral Director's charges:
    - Professional fees.
    - Removal of the deceased.
    - Coffin or Casket (including fittings and interior).
    - Embalming/Hygienic Preparation.
    - Hearse(s).
    - Limousine(s).

Where only an approximate cost can be given, it must be made clear that this may vary. The 'confirmed' cost must be supplied to the client as soon as possible.

- 6.2.3 All estimates must also itemise each disbursement cost, including:
  - Cemetery/Crematorium fees.
  - Doctors' fees.
  - Minister of Religion or Officiant.
  - Church and associated fees.Where only an approximate cost can be given, it must be made clear that this may vary. The 'confirmed' cost must be supplied to the client as soon as possible.
- 6.2.4 Any additional items, which arise or are instructed after the estimate has been issued, must be authorised by the client prior to them being charged to their account.
- 6.2.5 A revised estimate, showing the changes made and the alterations to costs must be issued wherever practicable, where the client varies their original instructions, and again the client should formally confirm their acceptance of such changes.

