



Important Items for the Planning Conference

We know that meaningful ceremonies do not just happen. They are well thought-out rituals that, at least for a day or two, demand your focus and your time. The first step for you in this process is the Planning Conference. Listed below are basic items that will be important for you to gather and have accessible. We will share an agenda of this conference with you to help you prepare. Remember, this planning needn't be a burden if you keep in mind that the energy you expend now to create a personalized, inclusive ceremony will help you and other mourners in your grief journeys for years to come.

If you should have any questions about any of the items listed below, please do not hesitate to contact the funeral home at (217) 483-9292.

- 1) **Social Security Number.** This will be required so we can notify the local Social Security office about the death of your loved one. The local Social Security office will also need the social security number and date of birth of a surviving spouse (if applicable). If there are any children under 19 years of age, or if any children are disabled, please notify us. This is relevant to Social Security Benefits. A person's Social Security number is also required on the death certificate of your loved one. Please note that we will assist you in obtaining necessary copies of their death certificate.

- 2) **Photograph.** This will be needed if you request a picture be placed with the obituary of your loved one and on the On-line Life Story, located on our website. If you choose to use a photo, it is recommended that it be recent and of good quality (however, we are able, in some cases, to make necessary improvement to photos). We are also able, on most occasions, to crop a loved one from a group photo, if necessary. If you choose not to place a photo along with the obituary, we do request a photograph for our use, which will be returned.

In addition to this photo, we ask that you provide us with 17 photos from throughout your loved one's life. We suggest, when possible, that these photos begin from when they were young and end at the present time. Try to include photos of your loved one with the people who were important to them. We will create a special keepsake for you and will return the photos to you prior to any ceremonies.

- 3) **Clothing.** We suggest you give thought to what type or style of clothing your loved one would wear. Their style of clothing is what would be most appropriate for public visitation or private family time to say goodbye. The following items of clothing are appropriate: underclothing, socks and outfit of choice. For ladies, socks, pantyhose, or knee-highs are preferred. You can bring

shoes if you wish. If your loved one wore eyeglasses, it would be important to bring those (if you are used to seeing your loved one wearing glasses, you may want those on for time of goodbye). If they used dentures, it would be helpful to have them. For jewelry or other memorabilia items, we can save and return any items as requested prior to final ceremonies. We will provide you a garment bag for your use in bringing these items to us in privacy.

- 4) **For Veterans.** We will need a copy of the DD214 Discharge Papers (Honorable Discharge). We will need these papers in order to secure an American Flag (if requested), for burial in Camp Butler National Cemetery and to assist in the application of any other possible Veterans benefits.
- 5) **Insurance Policies.** We know that financial matters are an important consideration in planning the ceremonies for your loved one. We will take time you to help ensure that the decisions you make today are ones you will be comfortable with following the ceremonies as well. If you plan to utilize insurance policies, please have them available. We have a verifying company that will process the policies for you to allow for payment. The verifying company makes sure that there are no loans against the policy, that the policy is still in force, and that the beneficiaries are still the same. The verifying company does charge for their service.
- 6.) **Power of Attorney for Healthcare.** In addition to managing healthcare decisions in the event that someone is unable, a Power of Attorney for Healthcare may also allow the agent named to direct the disposition of remains at the time of death. All decisions made by the agent with respect to the disposition of remains are binding and any funeral home, crematory, and cemetery that receives a copy is required to act accordingly.

If your loved one executed a Power of Attorney for Healthcare, please be sure to bring a copy of the completed, signed, and notarized document to the arrangement conference for retention by Staab Polk Memorial Home.

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If you should have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at (217) 544-4646.