

# FUNERAL CONSUMERS ALLIANCE OF RHODE ISLAND

## RI General Price List Survey: 2024

### Introduction

Early last year, the Funeral Consumers Alliance of Rhode Island (FCA-RI) sent letters to Rhode Island Funeral Homes requesting copies of their latest General Price List (GPLs) so that we could bring our Price List Survey figures up-to-date. Later in the year, we sent follow-up letters and made telephone calls or personal visits to those funeral homes who had not yet responded to our request. The "RI General Price List Survey: 2024" which follows is the result of this effort.

It presents cost comparisons related to burial or cremation among vendors in Rhode Island. We have made every effort to be as accurate and as consistent as possible. We welcome any corrections that are appropriate and will make these changes on our website: [www.funerals-ri.org](http://www.funerals-ri.org)

As we receive current pricing data from additional facilities, we will add that information to the survey. We have tried in every instance to offer a consistent basis for comparison, e.g., a uniform standard of four hours for viewing and funeral home settings for funeral and memorial services. To avoid misunderstanding, and because prices may change without notice, we recommend that consumers always consult with individual vendors before finalizing any arrangements. Note that the date entered below a funeral vendor's name is the date of the GPL used in compiling this survey.

### The Funeral Rule for General Price Lists (GPLs)

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'Complying with the Funeral Rule', a Federal Trade Commission publication to help funeral directors, clarifies who is entitled to a GPL:

"You must give the General Price List to anyone who asks, **in person**, [emphasis supplied] about funeral goods, funeral services, or the prices of such goods or services. ... You must give a GPL to all persons who inquire about funeral arrangements. This may include competitors, journalists, and representatives of businesses, religious societies, government agencies, or consumer groups. ... The triggering event for giving out the GPL is a face-to-face meeting. The face-to-face meeting can occur anywhere, not just at the funeral home."

The Funeral Rule, enacted by the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) on April 30, 1984, dictates what information must be included on the General Price List required of all funeral directors. A GPL must include specific categories of services, options open to the buying public and specific disclosures regarding the services and options provided. Additional information not required by law may also be included. We note that the General Price Lists provided to FCA-RI for this survey range from one-page handouts to more lavish folders and booklets. Accuracy and adherence to the Funeral Rule are more important than these formal distinctions.

## General Price List Survey

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To simplify comparisons among funeral homes, we present all funeral homes in alphabetical order within discrete geographical areas. The survey comprises information available to consumers on GPLs from Rhode Island funeral directors in accordance with the Funeral Rule. Definitions of the common terms used in the Survey are listed in the table at the end of this Summary.

Arrangements cited in this Survey may not always be the least costly in a category of service. For example, funerals or memorial services staged outside a funeral home may be a less expensive option than what we have included in our survey. Many funeral directors have also created special packages which may be good value.

Consumers must, as with any purchase, be careful to understand the various categories of services so that, for example, they avoid double payment for a single service and understand clearly what an actual purchase entails. For example, the receiving or transferring of remains between two funeral homes does not include possible flight costs, and cemetery expenses are not included in our survey.

The Funeral Consumers Alliance of Rhode Island recommends pre-planning (not to be confused with pre-paying) so that one can make clear business decisions in advance, free of the emotional turmoil which often accompanies grief.

FCA-RI realizes, without judgment, that individual taste and means will determine the sorts of arrangements that members will choose. Our survey, nonetheless, enables people to select economical arrangements for disposition of the deceased. Visits to individual establishments will further permit consumers to observe first-hand the range of styles offered by different funeral directors.

We note once again: consumers should, in every instance, check both prices and services with those funeral directors whose services they are considering.