COVID-19 Guidance for Visiting Cemeteries

The death of a loved one is hard for families, from planning, preparing for, and attending funerals, and visiting cemeteries to honour and remember the deceased person. During the COVID-19 pandemic, how we attend funerals and visit cemeteries has changed out of a need to follow the recommended public health measures to prevent and reduce the spread of COVID-19. The decisions to close or limit access to a cemetery are within the rights of the cemetery director and/or manager, and are aligned with the directives issued by the Bereavement Authority of Ontario.

This fact sheet provides guidance for cemetery directors and/or managers who have their cemeteries open to the public during the pandemic to help reduce the spread of COVID-19 in the community. It is important to note that visitors must continue to adhere to the Provincial Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act regulation that limits gatherings to five people. Cemeteries can impose further restrictions on access, if deemed necessary.

Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) Measures

- Cemetery directors should review their IPAC policies and procedures to ensure they are consistent with professional best practices, including guidance provided by the Bereavement Authority of Ontario.
- Staff should be trained and familiar with the IPAC policies and procedures, including additional precautions relating to COVID-19 and occupational health and safety guidelines.
- Enhance the cleaning of public spaces, including frequently touched surfaces. More information cleaning and disinfecting can be found here.

Visitation process

- Implement a schedule to minimize crowding by staggering visitation times.
- Create a Visitors Record, which includes a sign-in and sign-out system to track who has visited the cemetery. This will help with any contact tracing by Toronto Public Health should a visitor contract COVID-19. This visitor record should include:
  - full name of each person who was at the cemetery and contact information (phone number and email); and
  - date and time the person visited the cemetery.
- Inform visitors that anyone exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 (e.g. fever, new or worsening cough, difficulty breathing), or who has had contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19, may NOT enter the cemetery.
- Post self-screening, physical distancing, and how to protect yourself posters at all entrances and exits.

Prevention practices for visitors

- Practice physical distancing:
  - Maintain a six feet (two metres) distance from others at all times.
  - If space allows, have no more than five people at the gravesite, at any given time (this is particularly important for gravesites that are close together),
- Wash your hands before and after visiting the grave site. If you are unable to wash your hands, use an alcohol-based hand-sanitizer with an alcohol concentration of at least 70%.
• **Cover your cough** or sneeze into a tissue. Immediately throw the tissue in the garbage and wash your hands. If you don't have a tissue, sneeze or cough into your sleeve or arm
• Avoid touching your face, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.

**More information**
For more information, visit our website at [www.toronto.ca/COVID19](http://www.toronto.ca/COVID19) or call us at 416-338-7600.

**References**