# RESOLUTION NO. 478-12

## SETTING RATES PAID BY MADISON COUNTY FOR INDIGENT BURIALS

**WHEREAS,** Madison County is required by New York State Social Services Law 141 to provide a burial for indigent people by allowing burial items to be itemized as follows; and

**WHEREAS,** the Madison County Department of Social Services provides for burial when a temporary assistance recipient or other indigent person dies leaving no funds or insurance sufficient to pay the costs and there are no relatives, friends, or other persons liable or willing to take responsibility for the burial expense; and

**WHEREAS,** the Madison County Department of Social Services has established a limit on the amount of money that can be spent on the burial of indigent persons within Madison County and the limits defined below constitute an "indigent burial"; and

**WHEREAS,** if money is spent above the limits established herein, the burial is not an indigent burial and the Madison County Department of Social Services is prohibited from providing any money to the Madison County Funeral Directors of services rendered to a deceased indigent person; and

**WHEREAS,** the Madison County Funeral Directors express a desire to provide indigent burial services for the specified rates set forth herein, but further recognize that costs above and beyond the limits set forth in this agreement shall prevent the Madison County Department of Social Services from reimbursing the Directors of the Madison County Funeral Homes for any such burial expenses; and

**WHEREAS,** the same policy and rates shall also be set through the Veterans Agency of Madison County for veterans' burials;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the following policy for indigent burials in Madison County shall take effect January 1, 2013:

1. **DIRECT (IMMEDIATE) BURIALS:**

   A direct (immediate) burial shall include: local transfer of remains to funeral home, staff services, securing of necessary authorizations, an alternative container, one courtesy death notice in a newspaper providing such services of Funeral Director's choice, and one photocopy of a death certificate provided to the County. Direct burial prices do not include cemetery charges, minimum casket, or an outer interment receptacle if required.

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| **Basic Arrangement** | **$1,650** |

## 2. DIRECT CREMATION:

A direct cremation shall include: the local transfer of remains to the funeral home, staff services, securing of necessary authorizations, an alternative container for cremation, the return of the cremains to the funeral home or family as requested, one courtesy death notice in a newspaper providing such services of Funeral Director's choice, and one photocopy of a death certificate provided to the County. The County will not pay for vault, grave opening/closing or cemetery grave. The County will make an exception and pay for grave opening/closing if a grave is available for burial of cremains at no additional cost.

The direct cremation prices do not include the crematory charge.

**Basic Arrangement** **$1,550**

## 3. ANATOMICAL DONATION:

Anatomical donation shall include: Immediate body donation to the State University of New York for medical education and research, one courtesy death notice in a newspaper providing such services of Funeral Director's choice, and one photocopy of a death certificate provided to the County. The County will not pay for vault, grave opening/closing or cemetery grave. The County will make an exception and pay for grave opening/closing if a grave is available for burial of cremains at no additional cost.

**Basic Arrangement** **$1,300**

## 4. BURIALS/CREMATIONS ARRANGEMENTS AND SUPERVISION:

Basic arrangements include: the funeral director, licenses, registrations, other staff and personnel, equipment, facilities and general overhead (utilities, insurance, rent, taxes, maintenance) to respond to the initial request for service, the arrangement conference, preparation of remains (includes embalming), use of preparation room, limited use of funeral home facilities or church or cemetery for one hour of visitation or funeral or memorial (services and burial shall be held on a weekday or weekend at no additional funeral home cost), supervision of visitation or funeral or memorial, one courtesy death notice in a newspaper providing such services of Funeral Director's choice, one photocopy of a death certificate provided to the County, securing all necessary legal permits and authorizations and coordination of service plans with the parties involved in the final disposition of the deceased. Clothing is to be provided by the family or friends of the deceased whenever possible, but will otherwise be reimbursed by the County.

**Basic Arrangement** **$1,800**

5. **CASKETS AND ALTERNATIVE CONTAINERS:** Casket price (receipt or billing statement required) up to $525. Outer interment receptacles (receipt or billing statement required) up to $525.

6. **RELATIVE/FRIEND PURCHASE OF ADDITIONAL SERVICES, VISITATION, FUNERAL, MERCHANDISE, MEMORIAL OR OTHER CEREMONY:** Relatives and/or friends of the deceased are able to purchase, directly from the Funeral Director, visitation up to four hours from the funeral home's current general price list. Cash advance charges, other than cemetery or cremation, incurred for a funeral or memorial service at church, cemetery, funeral home, or other facility are the responsibility of the relatives and/or friends. The cost for additional services, staff, merchandise, and facilities for visitation will come from the funeral home's current general price list to not exceed $1,000.

7. **CREMATORY CHARGE:** Actual cost, verified by a receipt or billing statement, shall be paid by the County.

8. **GRAVE OPENINGS:** Actual cost, verified by a receipt or billing statement, shall be paid by the County.

9. **LOTS:** When no grave has been pre-purchased, grave purchase must be within Madison County and actual cost of the grave shall be paid by the County when verified by a receipt or billing statement.

10. **TRAVEL:** $2.00 per laden mile from place of death to funeral home and/or to any other necessary transportation. Payment shall be capped at $200 per funeral.

11. **WINTER VAULT STORAGE:** Actual cost, verified by a receipt or billing statement, shall be paid by the County.

12. **INCIDENTALS:**

    a. **Over-sized Casket:** Actual cost will be reimbursed by the County when verified by a receipt or billing statement.

    b. **Over-sized Vault:** Actual cost will be reimbursed by the County when verified by a receipt or billing statement.

    c. **Cemetery Equipment:** Actual cost will be reimbursed by the County when verified by a receipt or billing statement.

    d. **Clothing:** Actual cost will be reimbursed by the County, up to a limit of $75, when verified by a receipt or billing statement.

13. **COLLECTION OF FUNDS:** Collection of resources to be applied to burial costs shall be conducted by DSS or the Veterans Agency. Any funds received directly by the Funeral Home will be deducted from burial costs as outlined in this Agreement prior to County payment.

14. **SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES:** Special circumstances wherein additional charges may be incurred must be reviewed with the Commissioner or his designee, or the Veterans Agency Director or his designee, on a case-by-case basis for approval. Handling of a decomposed body is an example of a special circumstance and will be paid by the County upon receipt from the Funeral Director for actual costs incurred.

15. **CONTRIBUTIONS:** Upgrading of described casket and/or vault is not allowed. Relatives or friends assume responsibility for the entire cost of burial arrangements should they wish to arrange a more expensive casket and/or vault for the deceased than authorized by the County.

**General Policy:**

Indigent burials must be prior authorized by the County at the time funeral arrangements are made. **NO EXCEPTIONS WILL BE HONORED.** Services and burial must be held on a weekday, unless prior authorized by the County at no additional costs. If funeral arrangements need to be made on a holiday or weekend, the County must be contacted on the next workday. Failure to obtain prior approval from the County will result in denial of payment for burial expenses by the Department of Social Services or the Veterans Agency. In no case will the County be liable for more than the amounts listed herein. Contact number for approval requests is (315) 366-2211 (Department of Social Services) or (315) 366-2395 (Veterans Agency). A member of the family or a representative (including the Funeral Home Director) will be required to complete a DSS burial application and face-to-face interview with an agency representative or meet with the Veterans Agency representative in order to determine eligibility for an indigent burial.

Dated: December 27, 2012

John Salka, Chairman
Social and Mental Health Services Committee