

9530

I N A S S E M B L Y

March 10, 2016

Introduced by M. of A. ABINANTI -- read once and referred to the Committee on Corporations, Authorities and Commissions

AN ACT to amend the not-for-profit corporation law, in relation to disposition of unclaimed cremated remains of a veteran

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, REPRESENTED IN SENATE AND ASSEMBLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

1 Section 1. Section 1517 of the not-for-profit corporation law, as
2 added by chapter 579 of the laws of 2006, is amended to read as follows:
3 S 1517. Crematory operations.
4 Cemetery corporations that operate a crematory shall have the follow-
5 ing duties and obligations:
6 (a) Maintenance and privacy. (1) A crematory facility shall be main-
7 tained in a clean, orderly, and sanitary manner, with adequate venti-
8 lation and shall have a temporary storage area available to store the
9 remains of deceased human beings pending disposition by cremation, the
10 interior of which shall not be accessible to the general public.
11 (2) Entrances and windows of the crematory facility shall be main-
12 tained at all times to secure privacy, including (i) doors shall be
13 tightly closed and rigid; (ii) windows shall be covered; and (iii)
14 entrances shall be locked and secured when not actively attended by
15 authorized crematory personnel.
16 (b) Cremation process. (1) The cremation process shall be conducted in
17 privacy. No person except authorized persons shall be admitted into the
18 retort area, holding facility, or the temporary storage facility while
19 the remains of deceased human beings are being cremated. Authorized
20 persons, on admittance, shall comply with all rules of the crematory
21 corporation and not infringe upon the privacy of the remains of deceased
22 human beings.
23 (2) The following are authorized persons: (i) licensed, registered
24 funeral directors, registered residents, and enrolled students of mortu-
25 ary science; (ii) officers and trustees of the cemetery corporation;
26 (iii) authorized employees or their authorized agents of the cemetery
27 corporation; (iv) public officers acting in the discharge of their
28 duties; (v) authorized instructors of funeral directing schools; (vi)

EXPLANATION--Matter in *ITALICS* (underscored) is new; matter in brackets
[] is old law to be omitted.

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1 licensed physicians or nurses; and (vii) members of the immediate family
2 of the deceased and their authorized agents and designated represen-
3 tatives.

4 (c) Identification of deceased human beings. (1) No crematory shall
5 cremate the remains of any deceased human being without the accompanying
6 cremation permit, required pursuant to section four thousand one hundred
7 forty-five of the public health law which permit shall constitute
8 presumptive evidence of the identity of the said remains. In addition,
9 all crematories situated outside the city of New York, must comply with
10 paragraph (b) of subdivision two of section four thousand one hundred
11 forty-five of the public health law pertaining to the receipt for the
12 deceased human being. From the time of such delivery to the crematory,
13 until the time the crematory delivers the cremains as directed, the
14 crematory shall be responsible for the remains of the deceased human
15 being. Further, a cremation authorization form must accompany the permit
16 required in section four thousand one hundred forty-five of the public
17 health law. This form, provided or approved by the crematory, must be
18 signed by the next of kin or authorizing agent attesting to the permis-
19 sion for the cremation of the deceased, and disclosing to the crematory
20 that such body does not contain a battery, battery pack, power cell,
21 radioactive implant, or radioactive device, if any, and that these mate-
22 rials were removed prior to the cremation process.

23 (2) Upon good cause being shown rebutting the presumption of the iden-
24 tity of such remains, the cremation shall not commence until reasonable
25 confirmation of the identity of the deceased human being is made. This
26 proof may be in the form of, but not limited to, a signed affidavit from
27 a licensed physician, a member of the family of the deceased human
28 being, the authorizing agent or a court order from the state supreme
29 court within the county of the cemetery corporation. Such proof shall be
30 provided by the authorizing agent.

31 (3) The crematory shall have a written plan to assure that the iden-
32 tification established by the cremation permit accompanies the remains
33 of the deceased human being through the cremation process and until the
34 identity of the deceased is accurately and legibly inscribed on the
35 container in which the cremains are placed.

36 (d) Opening of container holding the remains of the deceased human
37 being. (1) The casket, alternative container, or external wrappings
38 holding the remains of the deceased human being shall not be opened
39 after delivery to the crematory unless there exists good cause to
40 confirm the identity of the deceased, or to assure that no material is
41 enclosed which might cause injury to employees or damage to crematory
42 property, or upon reasonable demand by members of the immediate family
43 or the authorized agent.

44 (2) In such instances in which the casket, alternative container, or
45 wrappings are opened after delivery to the crematory, such action shall
46 only be conducted by the licensed funeral director or registered resi-
47 dent delivering the remains of the deceased human being and if neces-
48 sary, with the assistance of crematory personnel and a record shall be
49 made, which shall include the reason for such action, the signature of
50 the person authorizing the opening thereof, and the names of the person
51 opening the container and the witness thereto, which shall be retained
52 in the permanent file of the crematory. The opening of the container
53 shall be conducted in the presence of the witness and shall comply with
54 all rules and regulations intended to protect the health and safety of
55 crematory personnel.

(e) Ceremonial casket cremation disclosure. In those instances in which the remains of deceased human beings are to be delivered to a crematory in a casket that is not to be cremated with the deceased, timely disclosure thereof must be made by the person making the funeral arrangements to the crematory that prior to cremation the remains of the deceased human being shall be transferred to an alternative container. Such signed acknowledgement of the authorizing person, that the timely disclosure has been made, shall be retained by the crematory in its permanent records.

(f) Transferring remains. (1) The remains of a deceased human being shall not be removed from the casket, alternative container, or external wrappings in which it is delivered to the crematory unless explicit, signed authorization is provided by the person making funeral arrangements or by a public officer discharging his or her statutory duty, which signed authorization shall be retained by the crematory in its permanent records.

(2) When the remains of a deceased human being are to be transferred to an alternative container, the transfer shall be conducted in privacy with dignity and respect and by the licensed funeral director or registered resident who delivered those remains and if necessary, with the assistance of crematory personnel. The transferring operation shall comply with all rules and regulations intended to protect the health and safety of crematory personnel.

(g) Commingling human remains. The cremation of remains of more than one deceased human being in a retort at any one time is unlawful, except upon the explicit, signed authorization provided by the persons making funeral arrangements and the signed approval of the crematory, which shall be retained by the crematory in its permanent records.

(h) Processing of cremains. (1) Upon the completion of the cremation of the remains of a deceased human being, the interior of the retort shall be thoroughly swept so as to render the retort reasonably free of all matter. The contents thereof shall be placed into an individual container and not commingled with other cremains. The cremation permit shall be attached to the individual container preparatory to final processing.

(2) A magnet and sieve, or other appropriate method of separation, may be used to divide the cremains from unrecognizable incidental or foreign material.

(3) The incidental and foreign material of the cremation process shall be disposed of in a safe manner in compliance with all sanitary rules and regulations as byproducts.

(4) The cremains shall be pulverized until no single fragment is recognizable as skeletal tissue.

(5) The pulverized cremains shall be transferred to a sealable container or containers whose inside dimension shall be of suitable size to contain the entire cremains of the person who was cremated.

(6) The prescribed sealable container or containers shall be accurately and legibly labeled with the identification of the human being whose cremains are contained therein, in a manner acceptable to the division of cemeteries.

(i) Disposition of cremains. The authorizing agent shall be responsible for the final disposition of the cremains. Cremains must be disposed of by placing them in a grave, crypt, or niche, by scattering them in a designated scattering garden or area, or in any manner whatever on the private property of a consenting owner or by delivery to the authorizing agent or a person specifically designated by the authorizing agent. Upon

1 completion of the cremation process, if the cemetery corporation has not
2 been instructed to arrange for the interment, entombment, inurnment or
3 scattering of the cremains, the cemetery corporation shall deliver the
4 cremains to the individual specified on the cremation authorization form
5 or the funeral firm of record. The delivery may be made in person or by
6 registered mail. Upon receipt of the cremains, the individual receiving
7 them may transport them in any manner in the state without a permit, and
8 may dispose of them in accordance with this section. After delivery, the
9 cemetery corporation shall be discharged from any legal obligation or
10 liability concerning the cremains. If, after a period of one hundred
11 twenty days from the date of the cremation, the authorizing agent has
12 not instructed the cemetery corporation to arrange for the final dispo-
13 sition of the cremains or claimed the cremains, the cemetery corporation
14 may dispose of the cremains in any manner permitted by this section. The
15 cemetery corporation, however, shall keep a permanent record identifying
16 the site of final disposition. The authorizing agent shall be responsi-
17 ble for reimbursing the cemetery corporation for all reasonable expenses
18 incurred in disposing of the cremains. Upon disposing of the cremains,
19 the cemetery corporation shall be discharged from any legal obligation
20 or liability concerning the cremains. Except with the express written
21 permission of the authorizing agent, no person shall:

22 (1) dispose of cremains in a manner or in a location so that the
23 cremains are commingled with those of another person. This prohibition
24 shall not apply to the scattering of cremains at sea, by air, or in an
25 area located in a cemetery and used exclusively for those purposes; and

26 (2) place cremains of more than one person in the same temporary
27 container or urn.

28 (j) DISPOSITION OF UNCLAIMED CREMATED REMAINS OF A VETERAN. (1) PURSU-
29 ANT TO THE REQUIREMENTS OF PARAGRAPH (I) OF THIS SECTION, IF, UPON
30 COMPLETION OF THE CREMATION PROCESS, THE CEMETERY CORPORATION HAS NOT
31 BEEN INSTRUCTED TO ARRANGE FOR THE INTERMENT, ENTOMBMENT, INURNMENT OR
32 SCATTERING OF THE CREMAINS OF AN INDIVIDUAL KNOWN TO BE A VETERAN AND
33 PROVIDED A DILIGENT EFFORT HAS BEEN MADE TO LOCATE AND NOTIFY THE NEXT
34 OF KIN OR AUTHORIZING AGENT THAT SIGNED THE CREMATION AUTHORIZATION FOR
35 THE DECEASED VETERAN, AFTER A PERIOD OF ONE HUNDRED TWENTY DAYS FROM THE
36 DATE OF THE CREMATION, WHERE THE AUTHORIZING AGENT HAS NOT INSTRUCTED
37 THE CEMETERY CORPORATION TO ARRANGE FOR THE FINAL DISPOSITION OF THE
38 CREMAINS OR CLAIMED THE CREMAINS, THE CEMETERY CORPORATION MAY ALSO
39 DISPOSE OF THE CREMAINS IN ANY MANNER PERMITTED BY THIS SECTION OR BY
40 RELINQUISHING POSSESSION OF VETERANS' CREMAINS FOR DISPOSITION BY A
41 VETERANS' ORGANIZATION THAT QUALIFIES AS A SECTION 501(C)(3) OR
42 501(C)(19) TAX EXEMPT ORGANIZATION UNDER THE INTERNAL REVENUE CODE, OR A
43 FEDERALLY CHARTERED VETERANS' SERVICE ORGANIZATION. THE CEMETERY CORPO-
44 RATION, HOWEVER, SHALL KEEP A PERMANENT RECORD IDENTIFYING THE VETERANS'
45 ORGANIZATION RECEIVING THE REMAINS AND THE SITE DESIGNATED FOR FINAL
46 DISPOSITION BY THE ORGANIZATION. THE METHOD OF DISPOSITION SHALL BE MADE
47 PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION AND SHALL BE DIRECTED TO A SECTION OF A CEME-
48 TERY CORPORATION WHERE VETERANS ARE MEMORIALIZED BY A VETERAN'S MARKER
49 IF ELIGIBLE, A VETERANS' SECTION OF A CEMETERY CORPORATION OR A VETER-
50 ANS' CEMETERY IF THE DECEASED VETERAN IS ELIGIBLE FOR INTERMENT IN SUCH
51 A MANNER. SUCH INTERMENT, ENTOMBMENT, INURNMENT OR SCATTERING OF THE
52 CREMAINS OF AN INDIVIDUAL KNOWN TO BE A VETERAN BY SUCH A VETERANS'
53 ORGANIZATION SHALL OCCUR WITHIN SIXTY DAYS. THE AUTHORIZING AGENT SHALL
54 BE RESPONSIBLE FOR REIMBURSING THE CEMETERY CORPORATION OR THE VETERANS'
55 ORGANIZATION FOR ALL REASONABLE EXPENSES INCURRED IN DISPOSING OF THE
56 CREMAINS. UPON DISPOSITION OF THE CREMAINS, THE CEMETERY CORPORATION AND

1 THE VETERANS' ORGANIZATION AS DEFINED IN THIS SECTION SHALL BE
2 DISCHARGED FROM ANY LEGAL OBLIGATION OR LIABILITY CONCERNING THE
3 CREMAINS. EXCEPT WITH THE EXPRESS WRITTEN PERMISSION OF THE AUTHORIZING
4 AGENT, NO PERSON SHALL:

5 (I) DISPOSE OF CREMAINS IN A MANNER OR IN A LOCATION SO THAT THE
6 CREMAINS ARE COMMINGLED WITH THOSE OF ANOTHER PERSON. THIS PROHIBITION
7 SHALL NOT APPLY TO THE SCATTERING OF CREMAINS AT SEA, BY AIR, OR IN AN
8 AREA LOCATED IN A CEMETERY AND USED EXCLUSIVELY FOR THOSE PURPOSES; AND

9 (II) PLACE CREMAINS OF MORE THAN ONE PERSON IN THE SAME TEMPORARY
10 CONTAINER OR URN.

11 (2) FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS PARAGRAPH, "DILIGENT EFFORT" SHALL MEAN A
12 REASONABLE EFFORT, AND INCLUDES A CERTIFIED LETTER, DELIVERY RECEIPT
13 REQUESTED, MAILED TO THE NEXT OF KIN OR AUTHORIZING AGENT THAT SIGNED
14 THE CREMATION AUTHORIZATION.

15 (K) Crematory operation certification. Any employee of a crematory
16 whose function is to conduct the daily operations of the cremation proc-
17 ess shall be certified by an organization approved by the division of
18 cemeteries. Proof of such certification must be posted in the crematory
19 and available for inspection at any time. Any new employees of a crema-
20 tory required to be certified under this section shall be certified
21 within one year of their employment. Any employees of a crematory
22 required to be certified under this section and retained prior to the
23 effective date of this paragraph shall be certified within one year of
24 such effective date. Renewal of such certification shall be completed
25 every five years from the date of certification.

26 S 2. This act shall take effect November 11, 2017.