

## **SHOULD I PRE-PAY MY FUNERAL EXPENSES?**

This is a good question and it is usually asked by members hoping to lock in the cost of a funeral at today's prices. In this way, members try to save their family or executor(s) from having the bother to make arrangements after their death.

### **FIRST, WE RECOMMEND: PLAN YOUR FUNERAL OR MEMORIAL SERVICE.**

We encourage you to record your wishes with the Memorial Society of BC on its Arrangement Form so that it may be easily available to your family. Tell them where your Arrangement Form is located.

### **SECOND, THERE ARE A NUMBER OF OPTIONS AVAILABLE FOR PROVIDING FUNDS FOR YOUR FUNERAL OR MEMORIAL SERVICE:**

1. An insurance policy provides money upon the death of the insured. The insurance is paid to the beneficiary and it is tax free. This avoids additional probate process and fees and the savings can be used for funeral or for other expenses. A registered insurance agent can provide a variety of options.

2. You can set up a trust fund, or a personal savings account, specifically for funeral costs. Ask your banker about funds that could be available immediately upon your death, again, without having to go through probate.

3. Your estate may be eligible for Canada Pension Plan death benefits – up to \$2500, depending on your pension plan contributions. For information call: 1-800-277-9914.

4. You may decide to pre-pay some funeral expenses with a particular Funeral Provider. The consumer pays either a lump sum, or monthly payments, and, within twenty-one days the money is placed in a trust account administered by a B.C. savings institution. This fund becomes the property of the funeral home.

### **IF YOU DECIDE TO PRE-PAY THERE ARE IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS:**

a) The Funeral Provider may go out of business, or move prior to your death.

b) You may move away from the area.

c) The services paid for may not cover all of the costs that will be incurred at the time of death. In fact, there are some services that cannot be included in the contract. This includes those aspects that are provided by a third party: catering, flowers, or a Minister; GST; charges for obituaries/death certificates.

At the time of arranging pre-payment, you should inform yourself about what you are going to need and what the costs may be, and what services are **not** included or guaranteed.

d) If you change your mind and ask for a refund *after* thirty days the Provider is entitled to keep twenty percent of the money you have paid.

e) Unless you let your family or executor, know about such a pre-payment, there is a possibility that it may not be used as you intended; approximately 20% of pre-payments are never claimed.

WHATEVER YOU DECIDE TO DO, IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOUR FAMILY, FRIENDS, AND/OR EXECUTOR(S) KNOW WHAT YOUR WISHES ARE AND WHAT ARRANGEMENTS YOU MAY HAVE MADE IN ADVANCE. DISCUSSING THIS WITH THEM IS NOT ALWAYS EASY OR WELCOMED, BUT IT BECOMES A GREAT HELP TO THOSE WHO MUST MAKE ARRANGEMENTS FOR YOUR SERVICE.

**COMPLETE THE MSBC ARRANGEMENT FORM AND RETURN IT TO OUR OFFICE. WE WILL KEEP THE ORIGINAL AND SEND A COPY TO YOU TO BE USED AT THE TIME OF YOUR DEATH. YOU MAY CHANGE THE FORM AT ANY TIME AT: 1-888-816-5902**