



Sponsor a Coffin

Funerals are an unfortunate expense that all families will experience at some time, but hopefully not too often.

The cost of a casket can be a significant proportion of the funeral expense. While traditional caskets range from \$1600 to \$4000, even a cardboard coffin costs from \$350 + GST. Many in our communities struggle to meet this cost.

In our spirit of benevolence, Freemasons have a unique opportunity to assist individuals and communities in several ways:

- If your lodge is aware of a family who have a bereavement and who are struggling financially then consider applying through the District Charity Officer for a Freemasons Charity Fast Track Grant administered by way of a loaded petrol and/or supermarket card, thereby freeing up funds to meet the casket costs. Be aware of the need to support the Widow or Widower to ensure they obtain their full entitlements from WINZ (refund of funeral costs to \$2000, living alone allowances etc.).
- Many communities have a 'Men's Shed' – approach them about covering the cost of the materials for them to construct a simple casket which can be held on standby to be donated to a worthy recipient. The lodge members could undertake the painting of the casket.
- As a variation on the above, the death of a small child, especially a still-born birth, is a traumatic time for a family. Donating the cost of materials for such caskets for the Men's Shed or perhaps a skilled Freemason, to construct, and then presenting to the local hospital to be used at appropriate times would be a good project.
- In several communities 'Coffin Clubs' have been established where people come together to assist each other construct and decorate their own casket. As Freemasons offer to partner these groups with both management and financial support. Alternatively your lodge could establish a 'Coffin Club' in your community as a meaningful community project.

