



Current as of Monday, March 30, 2020

How Shomrei Neshama of Greater Washington, P.A. is responding to COVID-19 in our community

In these uncertain times, we wanted to reach out to you personally about what we are doing here at Shomrei Neshama of Greater Washington, P.A. to keep you, your loved ones, and our staff safe. In response to the information provided by global and local health authorities (including the Centers for Disease Control and the World Health Organization) and Governor Hogan's Executive Order regarding COVID-19 coronavirus, as of today:

- Only graveside funerals are permitted.
- Our website is available to leave condolence messages for families.
- Family arrangements will be handled via "Family Link", our virtual meeting tool and by telephone.

We do not take this decision lightly but do so in the interest of protecting our entire community. We take great pride in our level of service and in our commitment to our families and community. These safety measures will help protect our community and our team members as well. Please know that in this difficult and stressful time we are here to assist in any way we can while we keep families and our funeral home staff members safe. There are also older members of our community-often members of the immediate family-who are at greater risk. Therefore, you will see some precautionary measures being put into place if we are assisting you with a funeral. We are constantly communicating with other funeral homes, assisted living facilities, nursing homes, hospice facilities, religious facilities and the medical examiners in various states about best practices during this crisis.

We will assist families with future memorial services (once the health risk has passed).

What you can do:

1. If you are sick, please stay at home. This extends to shiva houses. Please call the family upon a loss of their family member to express your condolences or post a message on our website.
2. If you have older family members, people in your family who are immunocompromised or/and people with underlying conditions, please encourage them not to attend funerals or shiva houses.
3. Limit contact with other funeral attendees, even with family. Practice social distancing by not shaking hands, not kissing (even on the cheeks), and not hugging. Consider elbow bumps or other alternatives in order to greet people.
4. If you have a cough or sneeze, please cover your nose and mouth with a tissue, dispose of it and wash your hands immediately.
5. As always, wash your hands carefully and WELL.

Safety is a critical concern and we are regularly communicating with the National Funeral Directors Association (NFDA), CDC, local government offices and other organizations. This is an evolving situation and as additional information about COVID-19 becomes available we will adjust as required. We encourage everyone to follow us on Facebook. Our Facebook page will be used to post resources for grieving families, as well as ongoing updates about additional resources as they become available.

(Reminder: each cemetery has their own policies)

Thank you for your understanding,

Ed Sagel, Owner

Al Bloomfield, Owner

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