

Industry Backgrounder: Cremation, Interment and Funeral Services in BC

Overview

BC consumers making end-of-life choices or dealing with the death of a loved one can be assured that there are laws to protect them. In British Columbia, funeral sector professionals and the services they offer are governed under the [Business Practices and Consumer Protection Act](#) (BPCPA), the [Cremation, Interment and Funeral Services Act](#) (CIFSA) and the [Cremation, Interment and Funeral Services Regulation](#). This includes the licensing of cemetery and crematorium operators, funeral providers, funeral directors, funeral embalmers and apprentices.

Cremation, interment and funeral services law in BC

Consumer Protection BC enforces certain laws and regulations for cremation, interment and funeral services in the province. The law protects consumers by:

- Requiring detailed contracts of funeral services to be provided
- Requiring proper authorizations be in place prior to funeral services being delivered
- Requiring businesses to meet prescribed facility requirements
- Requiring the respectful handling of human remains

Cremation, interment and funeral services by the numbers

	2022	2023	2024
Consumer inquiries ¹	426	583	819
Licenses issued and renewed	1,211	1,228	1,175
Compliance inspections	104	33	66
Investigations closed	32	8	48

Business obligations and consumer rights

By law, cremation, interment and funeral service providers:

¹Volumes are based on each unique contact point logged by our tracking system, not on combined interactions with consumers on certain issues. Not all inquiries handled were within our mandate.

- Must not provide services unless they have received authorization from the person who, under the law, has [the right to control the disposition of the human remains](#).
- Are not allowed to phone consumers or come to a consumer's home to sell funeral arrangements unless invited to do so (and if the consumer decides to do so, the request must be made at least 24 hours in advance).
- Must include specific information in funeral services contracts, including an itemized listing of all goods and services purchased and any other costs involved. With a prepaid funeral contract, consumers have cancellation rights.
- Must display, and provide a clear schedule of rates, if requested.
- Must follow specific provisions for preneed funeral services contracts, including the requirement that prepaid money be held in trust.

Consumer tips

1. **Check licensing status.** By law, anyone offering cremation, interment or funeral services in BC must be licensed. Visit Consumer Protection BC's website to [check a licence](#).
2. **Ask what services are included in the price.** To be an informed consumer, read your contract carefully and keep a signed copy, and find out what is included and what is extra. For example, the cost of funeral services often does not include the sale of a cemetery lot, a grave or a memorial marker, such as a headstone, tombstone, monument or plaque.
3. **Share the details of your wishes.** Let your loved ones know your wishes. If you purchased a preneed cemetery or funeral services contract, share the details with your family and ensure the information is in your will. Remember that under BC's consumer protection laws, you have preneed contract cancellation rights, too.

Enforcement actions

To maintain the integrity of our investigative processes, we do not share detailed information about open files. Visit the [Enforcement Actions section of our website](#) to explore our recent licensing and enforcement actions.

For more information

Explore www.consumerprotectionbc.ca for more information for both consumers and regulated businesses. Additional statistical information is also available in our [Annual Reports](#). We also share information and consumer tips on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#) and in [our blog](#).