Board of County Commissioners

Leon County, Florida

Policy No. 98-25

Title:	Disposition of Unclaimed and Indigent Bodies
Date Adopted:	~~February 27, 2007~~ June 28, 2011
Effective Date:	~~February 27, 2007~~ June 28, 2011
Reference:	Florida Statutes, Ch. 406.50 – 406.53
Policy Superseded:	Policy No. 98-25, "Disposition of Unclaimed and Indigent Bodies," revised February 27, 2007; Policy No. 98-25, "Disposition of Unclaimed Bodies," adopted October 13, 1998; Policy No. 83-3, "Disposition of Unclaimed Bodies," adopted June 14, 1983

It shall be the policy of the Board of County Commissioners of Leon County, Florida, that Policy No. 98-25, ~~entitled~~ "Disposition of Unclaimed Bodies," revised February 27, 2007, is hereby repealed and superseded, and a revised Policy is hereby adopted in its place, to wit:

Leon County has the responsibility of burying unidentified, unclaimed, and indigent persons who die in Leon County and do not have: the financial means to finance disposition; an identified next of kin; and, next of kin ~~are un~~able to pay for the disposition of the deceased; and, unidentified or unclaimed bodies.

1. ~~The person or entity in charge or control of the dead body or human remains shall make a reasonable effort to determine:~~

   a. ~~The identity of the deceased person and shall further make a reasonable effort to contact any relatives of such deceased person.~~

   b. ~~Whether or not the deceased person is entitled to burial in a national cemetery as a veteran of the armed forces and, if so, shall make arrangements for such burial services in accordance with the provisions of 38 C.F.R. For purposes of this subsection, "a reasonable effort" includes contacting the County veterans' service office or regional office of the United States Department of Veterans Affairs.~~

2. ~~Such dead human body, as described in this chapter, shall be delivered to the anatomical board as soon as possible after death.~~

3. ~~Nothing herein shall affect the right of a medical examiner to hold such dead body or remains for the purpose of investigating the cause of death, nor shall this chapter affect the right of any court of competent jurisdiction to enter an order affecting the disposition of such body or remains.~~

4. ~~In the event more than one legally authorized person claims a body for interment, the requests shall be prioritized in accordance with s. 732.103.~~

5. ~~For purposes of this chapter, the term "anatomical board" means the anatomical board of this state located at the University of Florida Health Science Center, and the term "unclaimed" means human remains or a dead body that are not claimed by a legally authorized person, as defined in s. 497.005, for interment at that person's expense.~~

I. Purpose:

To provide for a uniform policy and procedure for the decent and dignified disposition of unclaimed or indigent deceased persons or human remains, in accordance with Florida Statutes, Chapter 406, or as may be amended from time to time.

II. Definitions:

For the purposes of this Policy, all terms herein shall have the same meaning as set forth in Florida Statutes §§ 406.50 – 406.53, or as may be amended from time to time.

III. Policy:

A. As required by Florida Statute, Chapter 406, § 406.50, or as may be amended from time to time, in the event the County finds itself in charge or control of human remains or a dead body, that is unclaimed or requires disposal at public expense, shall, with reasonable effort to:

1. determine the identity of the deceased person;
2. contact any relatives of such deceased person; and,
3. Determine whether the deceased person is entitled to burial in a national cemetery as a veteran of the armed services.

B. In the event the County finds itself in charge or control of human remains or a dead body that is unclaimed or requires disposal at public expense, the County shall immediately notify the anatomical board, except in the instances provided for in Florida Statutes §§ 406.50 and 406.53.

C. For purposes of this chapter, the term "anatomical board" means the anatomical board of this state located at the University of Florida Health Science Center, and the term "unclaimed" means human remains or a dead body that is not claimed by a legally authorized person, as defined in s. 497.005, for interment at that person's expense.

D. Except as provided for in Florida Statutes, Chapter 406, the County shall deliver such human remains or dead body, as described in Florida Statute § 406.50, to the anatomical board as soon as possible after death.

E. Nothing herein shall affect the right of a medical examiner to hold such human remains or dead body for the purpose of investigating the cause of death, nor shall this chapter affect the right of any court of competent jurisdiction to enter an order affecting the disposition of such body or remains.

F. When an individual, local hospital, or funeral home initiates a request for disposition services, staff of the Leon County Health and Human Services Department (HHS) interviews the next of kin to determine the eligibility for the Indigent Burial Program.

G. In the event the County finds itself in charge or control of the human remains or dead body that required disposal at public expense, shall, prior to having any body buried or cremated, make a reasonable effort to determine the identity of the body and shall further make a reasonable effort to contact any relatives of the deceased person.

1. In the event the deceased person remains unclaimed, the County shall bury the deceased person on County property in a decent and dignified manner. All burials shall comply with all rules and regulations set forth in Florida Statutes governing the burial of human remains.

2. In the event a relative of the deceased person is contacted, the County shall make a reasonable effort to accommodate the request of the relative. In the event more than one legally authorized person claims a body for interment, the requests shall be prioritized in accordance with Florida Statute § 732.103.

H. Prior to rendering approval, the relative, friend, or responsible party shall complete and submit to HHS the Indigent Burial Screening and Next of Kin Statement forms for eligibility determination. Approval may be granted if:

1. The deceased died in Leon County.

2. The deceased is found to be indigent and is required to be disposed of at public expense.

3. There are no living relatives, friends, or responsible parties claiming responsibility for disposition of the deceased.

4. There are living relatives, friends, or responsible parties who are also found to be indigent.

I. Within 24 hours of receipt of all completed forms and supporting documentation, HHS shall advise the applicant if they meet the eligibility guidelines as well as the guidelines set forth in Florida Statutes, Chapter 406.

J. Individuals approved for the Indigent Burial Program are buried at the Leon County Paupers Cemetery, which is maintained by the Leon County Public Works Department (LCPWD).

1. LCPWD shall be responsible for preparation of the burial site at the County's Paupers Cemetery.

2. Upon request, LCPWD shall coordinate gravesite visits with the deceased individual's family members, in accordance with the LCPWD policies and procedures.

3. LCPWD shall maintain burial plot records and cemetery grounds of Leon County's Pauper Cemetery.

K. Upon approval by HHS, the funeral home shall notify the State Anatomical Board, if the deceased meets the criteria as set forth in Section 406.50, Florida Statutes. The University of Florida Health Science Center Anatomical Board shall be responsible for the cost of preparation and transportation of the body to the Center. If the body is not accepted, the funeral home shall proceed with retrieving the dead body from the morgue, preparing the deceased for burial, and transport the deceased individual to Leon County's Pauper Cemetery for burial on the selected date and time.

1. The funeral home shall provide disposition of each body in accordance to all applicable laws and statutes.
2. HHS shall make payment according to the approved fee schedule within 30 days of receipt of proper invoicing from the vendor.

Service		Fee
Adult Burial	(12 years and older)	$650
Adult Cremation	(12 years and older)	$400
Child Burial	(1 year -11 years old)	$400
Child Cremation	(1 year -11 years old)	$300
Infant Burial	(Birth – 11 months old)	$300
Infant Cremation	(Birth – 11 months old)	$250

Revised 6/28/2011