Funeral Orders SOP

# Purpose:

To ensure all funeral orders are handled with the utmost respect and professionalism, adhering to proper etiquette and meeting delivery requirements for services held at funeral homes, churches, community centers, and for orders delivered to family homes.

# 1. Terminology for the Deceased

Use of 'The Late':  
When taking an order for a funeral service, always refer to the deceased as 'The Late [Name]' to demonstrate respect and proper etiquette.  
- If this phrasing is not specified on an online order, edit the system, card, and all printed materials to reflect 'The Late.'  
- Note: 'The Late' should only be used for services, not for home deliveries.

# 2. Address Verification and Purpose of Delivery

Verify the Address:  
Double-check the address provided on the order. If the client lists only an address and omits the name of a funeral home or church (particularly for online orders), confirm whether the order is for a service or a family home.  
- For Service Deliveries: Use 'The Late [Name]' on the card and delivery label.  
- For Home Deliveries: Use only the family name without 'The Late.'  
- If unsure, consult the obituary or contact the funeral home to clarify.

# 3. Obituary and Visitation Times

Check the Obituary:  
Upon receiving the order, promptly look up the obituary to confirm the time of the first visitation. Often, clients may provide only the funeral service time and omit visitation details.  
- Critical: Ensure that the delivery is scheduled at least 2 hours before the first public visitation.

# 4. Delivery Timing

Service Deliveries:  
Funeral flowers must be delivered no later than 2 hours before the first public visitation. Families often hold a private viewing 1 hour prior, and funeral directors need time to arrange the room in advance.  
- If flowers are delivered during a private viewing, the director will not disrupt the room to place the flowers.  
  
Church Deliveries:  
Many churches remain closed until just before the service, often opening only 30 minutes prior. It is important to verify whether the service is managed by a funeral director or the church staff and confirm the preferred delivery time and location.  
- Always call the church to clarify delivery details for church services.

# 5. Funeral Home and Church Coordination

Confirm Delivery Locations:  
For services at churches that are still managed by a funeral director, flowers may need to be delivered directly to the funeral home. Always confirm the specific location and delivery time.  
  
Funeral Home Delivery Doors:  
Most funeral homes have a designated flower delivery entrance, usually located at the back or near a garage. Deliver flowers through this designated entrance rather than the main entrance used for services.

Double-check the correct spelling of the deceased's name in all communications, printed materials, and the card accompanying the flowers.

When leaving flowers in the designated flower delivery room or garage at the funeral home, ensure the temperature is appropriate for fresh flowers. Do not leave flowers in a room where the temperature is below 6°C. If you are concerned about the temperature, communicate directly with the funeral director to confirm a safer location for the flowers.

# 6. Substitutions and Product Availability

Product Availability:  
Confirm at the time of order that all required hard goods and fresh flowers are in stock to fulfill the order.  
  
Substitution Protocol:  
If substitutions are necessary, immediately contact the sender to suggest appropriate alternatives, ensuring the arrangement remains suitable for a funeral.

# 7. Residential Sympathy Arrangements

Home Delivery Arrangements:  
If a traditional funeral tribute is ordered for delivery to a family home, recommend a more suitable design such as a large vase or container arrangement. Guide the client toward a tasteful arrangement appropriate for a home setting, as many are unaware of customary practices.

# 8. Local Funeral Home Preferences

Establish Relationships:  
Build relationships with local funeral homes by contacting them to understand their preferred procedures for flower deliveries. This fosters rapport and can streamline future deliveries by aligning with each funeral home's preferences.