

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 2570



**INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVES RALPH WENDEL P. TULFO
AND JOCELYN P. TULFO**

AN ACT
GRANTING FREE FUNERAL SERVICES TO EXTREMELY POOR FAMILIES
AND FIFTY PERCENT (50%) DISCOUNT FROM FUNERAL SERVICES TO
INDIGENT FAMILIES NATIONWIDE, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Article II, Section 9 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution provides for adequate social services for all. Among these, funeral services has been a common dilemma, most especially to poverty-stricken families who cannot afford a decent interment for their departed relatives.

Every funeral shall be in keeping with the social position of the deceased, as stated in Article 306, Title X of the Civil Code of the Philippines. It practically follows that a funeral rite depends on the social and financial status of the deceased or the surviving family. Given the difficult economic circumstances and the costly amount of funeral services in the country, there is a call for a definite solution to such predicament.

For instance, funeral essentials such as caskets usually range between PhP3,000 to PhP100,000; clothing ranges between PhP1,000.00 to PhP3,000; memorial chapel rentals range between PhP1,000 to PhP10,000 per night; funeral ceremonies range between PhP8,000 to PhP500,000; food and refreshments range between PhP5,000 to PhP30,000; memorial lots range between PhP1,000 to PhP10,000,000; burial-related services amount up to PhP50,000; while cremation start at around PhP70,000 and may reach up to PhP100,000, with a columbarium priced from PhP20,000 to PhP250,000.¹

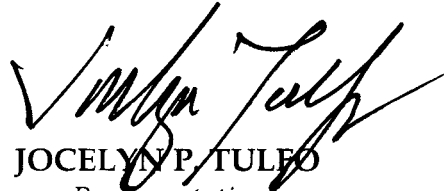
¹ Moneymax Editorial Team, "Cost of Dying in the Philippines: How Much Does a Funeral Cost?", Moneymax, 5 April 2022, <https://www.moneymax.ph/personal-finance/articles/funeral-cost-philippines>.

Living is already expensive enough that dying should not have to be. In the essence of humanity and in order to preserve one's dignity, even in death, there shall be granted an opportunity for the underprivileged, having low to no income at all, to have access to free or discounted funeral services.

In view of the foregoing, the urgent passing of this bill is earnestly sought.



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JOCELYN P. TULFO
Representative
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*Be it enacted by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress
assembled:*

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* - This Act shall be known as the "Free Funeral Services
Act".

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* - It is the policy of the State to promote a just and
dynamic social order that will ensure the prosperity and independence of the nation
and free the people from poverty through policies that provide adequate social services,
promote full employment, a rising standard of living, and an improved quality of life
for all. As part of fulfilling this, the State shall give free funeral services to extremely
poor families.

SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms.* - The following terms as used in this Act shall mean the
following:

- (a) *Poor* refers to those whose income falls below the poverty threshold as defined by
the National Economic Development Authority (NEDA) and/or who cannot

1 afford in a sustained manner to provide their minimum basic needs of food,
2 health, education, housing, or other essential amenities of life as defined under
3 Republic Act No. 8425, otherwise known as the "Social Reform and Poverty
4 Alleviation Act". The Community-Based Monitoring System (CBMS) established
5 under Republic Act No. 11315 of the local government unit (LGU), with the
6 supervision of the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), shall be used to
7 determine the degree of indigency of the family, whether indigent or extremely
8 poor;

9
10 (b) *Funeral Services* refers to preparation of funeral documents, embalming, viewing,
11 interment or burial services, cremation and inurnment services, including the
12 provision of a casket or urn, as the case may be, offered by mortuaries. The
13 standard package of funeral services will cover:

- 14
15 (1) Transfer of deceased from place of death to the mortuary for embalming and
16 applying of cosmetics within a 25-kilometer radius of mortuary;
17 (2) An ordinary plain casket and casket stand for viewing of body or urn in case
18 of cremation;
19 (3) Two (2) to three (3) days viewing outside the funeral chapels such as the
20 Barangay Hall or residence of the family;
21 (4) Use of funeral viewing equipment;
22 (5) Use of funeral vehicle for interment within a 25-kilometer radius from the
23 place of viewing to the place of burial; and
24 (6) Unless for compelling reasons, interment only on weekdays and on official
25 time, Monday to Friday, 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m, except on regular holidays;
26 and

27
28 (c) "At-need" means at the time of death or after a death has occurred.

1 **SEC. 4. *Free Funeral Services for Extremely Poor Families.*** – Free funeral services
2 shall be provided for extremely poor families by accredited mortuaries anywhere in the
3 country. The said free services shall be given to only one (1) family member per month
4 per mortuary branch: *Provided*, said funeral service does not exceed the cost of the
5 mortuary's minimum funeral service package: *Provided, further*, That the grant of the
6 free funeral services under this Act is without prejudice to the right of the beneficiary
7 to avail of upgraded funeral services given by the mortuary. The difference in cost shall
8 be borne by the family of the deceased.

9
10 **SEC. 5. *Discounted Funeral Services for Indigent Families.*** – A fifty percent (50%)
11 discount on funeral services shall be granted to indigent families by mortuaries
12 anywhere in the country, but shall be applicable only to at-need funeral services:
13 *Provided*, said funeral service does not exceed the cost of the mortuary's minimum
14 service package. The grant of a discount under this Act is without prejudice to the right
15 of the beneficiary to avail of other financial assistance given by the government.

16
17 **SEC. 6. *Requirements for Availing Free or Discounted Funeral Services.*** – Before an
18 indigent or extremely poor family can avail of the free or discounted funeral services,
19 the following documents shall be submitted: (a) certificate of indigency issued by the
20 barangay or the local social welfare office of the LGU, stating whether the family is
21 either indigent or extremely poor as defined under Section 3: *Provided, however*, That the
22 certification shall not be a requirement before any member of the family of the deceased
23 could avail the services of the mortuary; (b) death certificate; and (c) funeral contract
24 between the beneficiary-family, the accredited mortuary, and the authorized
25 Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) personnel.

26
27 **SEC. 7. *Reimbursement.*** – Mortuaries granting discounted or free services to indigent
28 or extremely poor beneficiaries may seek reimbursement for the cost of the services
29 from any field office of the DSWD. The reimbursement will be based on the stipulations

1 of the signed contract between the poor family, the mortuary, and the authorized
2 DSWD personnel.

3
4 **SEC. 8. *Lead Agency.*** – The DSWD shall be the lead agency in the implementation of
5 the provisions of this Act and shall engage the funeral services of the mortuaries in the
6 country.

7
8 **SEC. 9. *Role of the Local Government Units.*** – Notwithstanding the preceding
9 section, the LGUs are enjoined to fulfill their devolved function as mandated by
10 Republic Act No. 7160, otherwise known as the “Local Government Code”, in
11 providing assistance to indigent and extremely poor families in their respective areas at
12 their own expense. Further, the LGUs will waive fees and charges which include burial
13 or interment permit, cremation permit, transfer permit, disinterment permit, and cost
14 of death certificate.

15
16 **SEC. 10. *Appropriations.*** – The amount necessary to implement the provisions of this
17 Act shall be charged against the allocation in the General Appropriations Act (GAA) of
18 the DSWD.

19
20 **SEC. 11. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** – Within six (6) months from the
21 effectivity of this Act, the Secretary of the DSWD shall, in coordination with the
22 Department of Interior and Local Government and the Philippine Mortuary
23 Association, with the participation of the LGUs, promulgate the necessary rules and
24 regulations to carry out the provisions of this Act.

25
26 **SEC. 12. *Separability Clause.*** – If any portion or provision of this Act is declared void
27 or unconstitutional, the remaining portions or provisions hereof shall not be affected by
28 such declaration.

1 **SEC. 13. *Repealing Clause.*** – Any provision of law or regulations inconsistent
2 herewith is hereby repealed, modified, or amended accordingly.

3
4 **SEC. 14. *Effectivity.*** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication
5 in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

6
7 *Approved,*