

Ashe DSS Policies

UNCLAIMED BODIES

- A. A call is received from the facility that has the body (heretofore referred to as the “agency”).
- B. The agency that has the body should make reasonable efforts to contact relatives of the deceased or others who may wish to claim the body.
 - 1. The agency may contact the Department of Social Services (DSS) and request a search of files for any information that would lead to a relative referral. When doing so, Form A (Attachment A) should be completed by DSS and a copy made available to the agency upon request. This form can be completed by the Adult Services supervisor or designee and will be maintained by the Adult Services supervisor.
 - 2. Should a relative not be found to claim the body, the agency may request disposal by the DSS where the body is found.
 - 3. If a relative has refused to claim the body, they are asked to sign a statement that they have been informed and did refuse this responsibility. The agency or the DSS may procure this statement. Form B (Attachment B) is to be used for this purpose. Again, the Adult Services Supervisor or designee can complete the form and maintain it.
 - 4. The family MUST be made aware that if the body is claimed by DSS it will be cremated.
 - 5. When it is known or appears that no one is going to claim the body, the agency that has physical possession of the body or the local funeral home, DSS should immediately notify the Commission of Anatomy (COA) at 919-966-1134 to determine if they will accept the body. (*COA may take the body within ten days, but should be notified as soon as possible.)
 - 6. If the unclaimed body is of the Hispanic population, DSS will contact the NC Governor’s Office at 919-814-2005 for disposition.
 - 7. If a person dies at Baptist Hospital Bowman Gray School of Medicine, they may accept the body for disposition.
- C. When COA declines to receive the body, the DSS Director will authorize cremation, unless other provisions have been previously made. The Director can waive the required ten-day waiting period upon determination that the body of the deceased will not be claimed for final disposition within the ten days from said person’s death. Upon DSS Director’s approval, the Adult Services Supervisor or designee should complete Form C – the ten-day waiting period waiver form (Attachment C). This form should be signed by the Director. Forms are to be maintained by the Adult Services supervisor.
- D. The Ashe County DSS should contact vendors to secure the best price.
- E. The funeral home should send the bill to DSS. The decedent’s estate should be responsible for the cost when possible. A bill will be sent to the Ashe County Clerk of Court Office by the Adult Services Supervisor or designee, if an estate exists. If the estate cannot cover costs, the county of residence is responsible for the cost. If the county of residence is different from the county where the body is found, then DSS is to call that county prior to disposal to verify their cost

allowance and to notify them of the situation. If the deceased was transient or from out of state, the cost is the responsibility of Ashe County DSS.

- F. Copies of all forms used and any other documents or notes should be given to the Adult Services Supervisor for filing.

Attachment A

Form A

Unclaimed Bodies – Locating Relatives

Agency Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone and fax: _____

Deceased name: _____ SS #: _____

Medicaid County: _____

Date of Birth: _____

POA/Guardian/HCPOA: _____

Known family/friends/relatives (with phone and/or address)

Additional information on friends or relatives:

Attachment B

Form B

I, _____ of _____

Name

Relation

Deceased

am unable to arrange or pay for his/her burial or cremation. I give the Ashe County Department of Social Services permission to make arrangements for his/her burial as provided by NC GS 130A-415. I hold harmless the Ashe County Department of Social Services for any events arising from the burial or cremation of my _____.

Relation

Name

Signature

Date

Witness _____

Date _____

Sworn to and subscribed before me this _____ day of _____, _____.

Notary Public

My Commission Expires _____

Attachment C

Form C

Unclaimed Body

As the Commission of Anatomy (COA) has declined the body of _____,

Tracie McMillan, the Director of Ashe County Department of Social Services authorizes the cremation of _____ SS #_____. This is done under the provisions of GS 130A-415. The deceased has remained unclaimed after reasonable efforts and cremation can occur on or after _____ (date).

Check all that apply:

_____ This time period includes the ten-day waiting period as required by the State.

_____ This time period does not include the ten-day waiting period. The waiting period is being waived as it has been determined that no one will claim the body.

_____ The funeral home will send the ashes to: Ashe County DSS

150 Government Circle, Suite 1400

Jefferson, NC 28640

_____ Ashes will be disposed of by the funeral home.

Supervisor of Designee signature: _____

Date: _____
