

# Message from Tla'amin Legislature re: Funeral Services

## Grieving & Loss - and Protecting those you Love

Grief is a normal response to losing someone important to you. When a loved one dies, it is important for friends and family to be able to share stories and memories of the person and how they influenced their lives. The COVID-19 pandemic has affected the ability of friends and family to come together in person and grieve in our traditional ways, and has been all of our experience for most of 2020 as Tla'amin Nation continues to experience loss of life.

Hosting gatherings in and around the wake or funeral have recently been identified as a huge risk to all our nation members who either are participating, or have been in direct contact with those that did participate in high-risk activities or did not adequately protect themselves.

Finding new ways to connect and support each other while physically distancing is a necessity. Here are some examples:

- Invite people to call you, or host conference calls with family members and friends to stay connected.
- Ask family and friends to share stories and pictures with you via phone, video chat, email, text message, photo sharing apps, social media, or mailed letters.
- Create a virtual memory book, blog, or webpage to remember your loved one, and ask family and friends to contribute their memories and stories.
- Coordinate a date and time for family and friends to honor your loved one by reciting a selected poem, spiritual reading, or prayer from within their own households.
- COVID-19 does not need to affect the wishes of your deceased family member or friend, as they will continue to be honored.

Tla'amin Legislature requires the following protocols be followed to proceed with utmost safety for funerals or cremation services. This protocol will remain in place during these challenging times at Tla'amin Nation, and until Public Health provides further direction.

### **The required protocols are:**

- **Viewing**
  - Arrange a schedule with Stubberfield at the chapel at the Funeral Home for a small private family viewing. If you are expecting larger numbers from

the community, ensure a limited number of people in the chapel allowing for physical distancing

- No shaking hands or hugging
- Masks are mandatory
- **Preparing the burial site**
  - Tla'amin Nation will organize to have the burial site excavated by machine as much as possible, supported by a worker or two who are following the guidelines – masks, physical distancing.
- **Service at the Gazebo**
  - Physical distancing
  - No shaking hands or hugging
  - Masks are mandatory for **all** attendees
- **Procession to Cemetery**
  - That the casket not be removed from the hearse for the duration of the entire funeral including the procession to the cemetery.
  - Physical distancing for all participants in the procession to the cemetery.
- **Pall Bearers instructions at Cemetery**
  - The casket will be carried the shortest distance possible by the Pall Bearers who will be wearing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) – masks; eye protection or face shield and gloves. Hand sanitizer and wipes will be on hand to clean before and after the casket is moved to the burial site.
- **Donations: E-Transfer preferred**
  - Family would organize an email address and share it with community for those who wish to e-transfer funds to support associated costs.
- **Post-Funeral Luncheon and Burning**
  - For both of these activities, please keep your bubble as small as possible recommending that these include immediate family only.

***\*Salish Centre and other public buildings are not an option***

**Contact Tla'amin Health for support services at 483-3009.**