



DISTRICT 21 MEDICAL EXAMINER'S OFFICE

LEE-HENDRY-GLADES COUNTIES

Rebecca A. Hamilton, M.D.

District Medical Examiner

Accredited by



MEMORANDUM

TO: Pete Winton, Assistant County Manager
Anne Henkel, Principal Management Analyst

FROM: Rebecca A. Hamilton, M.D.

RE: Cremation Fee Increase

DATE: October 7, 2021

The District 21 Medical Examiner's Office is requesting an increase in the cremation authorization fee charged by the Lee County Board of County Commissioners. The current cremation authorization fee is \$50 (Lee County Ordinance No. 15-07 adopted April 21, 2015). We are requesting an increase in the fee to \$60. Pursuant to Florida Statute 406.11, all cremations within our jurisdiction must be reviewed. Many cremation requests require staff to request medical records, speak with families and treating physicians to determine if the cause of death is accurate as noted by the certifying physician or, if necessary, assume jurisdiction of the death as the death was not properly reported to our office.

The following outlines the continued increase in cremation authorization requests for our office:

- 2018 - 6,139 cremations
- 2019 - 6,326 cremations (3% increase from 2018)
- 2020 - 7,184 cremations (13.5% increase from 2019)
 - 1/1/20 thru 8/31/20 - 4,828 cremations
 - 1/1/21 thru 8/31/21 - 5,206 cremations (7.8% increase from the same period of 2020)

Our office recently contacted various medical examiner offices to determine their current cremation fee. The fees varied by district. Several of the districts currently are charging \$50.00 and are in the process of re-assessing the fee. Another district is currently \$65.00 per cremation. Their cremation process has an automatic escalation clause.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and please advise if you require any additional information regarding this request.