



# Board of Commissioners

## Resolution

B2024-207

15 West Kellogg Blvd.  
Saint Paul, MN 55102  
651-266-9200

**Sponsor:** Financial Assistance Services

**Meeting Date:** 10/15/2024

**Title:** County Burial Assistance Program Rate Increase

**File Number:** 2024-462

### Background and Rationale:

Minnesota Statutes 261.035 require counties to pay for the funeral and final disposition of a resident who dies without the means to cover costs. The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners established policies for the County Burial Assistance Program and the Financial Assistance Services (FASD) department developed procedures to communicate and implement the policy.

The current burial assistance rate provided by Ramsey County was last updated in 2016. From January 1, 2023 to December 31, 2023, 498 applications were approved. The average payment of an approved application was \$1,347. From January 2, 2024 to October 6, 2024, 380 applications were approved, and the average payment of approved application was \$1,313.

The cost of funeral services has risen significantly due to inflation, increased operational costs for funeral homes, and other economic factors. Ramsey County's burial assistance rate is much lower than those of neighboring metro counties. Even though some funeral directors have been accepting these lower rates, the overall increase in costs associated with burial services continue to outpace the assistance Ramsey County provides.

The following table shows current and proposed rates.

Services	Current rate	Proposed rate	Family Contribution
Funeral	\$1,560	\$2,000	No change with family contribution, (\$830)
Cremation	\$910.35	\$1,200	No change with family contribution, (\$830)
Burial/Cemetery	\$715	\$1,200	No change with family contribution (\$1,300)

A resident's counted assets and resources are applied to reduce Ramsey County payment amount. The maximum amount a family can be asked to contribute by the vendor (in addition to the county's payment) is \$830 for funeral or cremation expenses, and \$1,300 for burial/cemetery. The maximum cost is intended to ensure that services are provided at an affordable rate and that county funds are only used when a family would not otherwise be able to cover reasonable funeral and interment expenses.

### Recommendation:

The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners resolved to:

Approve an increase to Ramsey County's Burial Assistance Program rates.

A motion to approve was made by Commissioner Frethem, seconded by Commissioner McGuire. Motion passed.

Aye: - 6: Frethem, McGuire, Moran, Ortega, Reinhardt, and Xiong

