

**Chapter 308-47 WAC**  
**RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR CREMATION**

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**WAC**

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**WAC 308-47-010 Definitions.** (1) "**Authorizing agent**" means the person(s) legally entitled to control the disposition of the human remains.

(2) "**Crematory authority or endorsement**" the legal entity and their authorized representatives, licensed to perform cremations.

(3) "**Cremation chamber**" means the enclosed space in a crematory in which the cremation process takes place.

(4) "**Pulverization**" is the reduction of identifiable bone fragments to unidentifiable dimensions by manual or mechanical means following cremation.

(5) "**Processing**" is the removal of foreign objects from cremated human remains and may include pulverization.

(6) "**Cremation container**" means the container in which the human remains must be enclosed before being placed in the cremation chamber for cremation. A cremation container must:

- Be composed of a combustible material. If the remains are delivered to a crematory in a noncombustible container, the authorizing agent must be informed of the disposition of the container, if the container is not actually used in the cremation process. Any transfer of human remains to combustible containers at the crematory must be in accordance with chapter 18.39 RCW, Title 308 WAC, and applicable public health laws.

- Be rigid enough for placement into the cremation chamber.

- Assure protection to the health and safety of the crematory operators and others.

- Provide a proper covering for the human remains.

- Be resistant to leakage or spillage of body fluids.

(7) "**Sealable container**" means any container in which cremated human remains can be placed and closed to prevent leakage or spillage of cremated human remains.

(8) "**Holding facility**" means an area designated for the care, storage and holding of human remains prior to disposition. A holding facility must:

- Comply with any applicable public health laws.

- Preserve the dignity of the human remains.

- Recognize the personal integrity, health and safety of employees and others.

- Be secure from access by anyone other than authorized personnel.

(9) "**Cadaver**" means human remains or any part thereof, which have been donated to science for medical research purposes.

(10) "**Body parts**" means limbs and other portions of human anatomy that have been removed from a person or human remains for medical purposes during treatment, surgery, biopsy, autopsy or medical research.

(11) "**Commingling**" means the mixing of cremated human remains of more than one deceased person.

(12) **"Residue"** means the cremation products that may unavoidably remain in the cremation chamber after manual sweeping techniques are performed.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 18.39.175 and chapter 34.05 RCW. WSR 07-03-027, § 308-47-010, filed 1/5/07, effective 2/5/07. Statutory Authority: RCW 18.39.175(4). WSR 02-19-019, § 308-47-010, filed 9/9/02, effective 10/10/02.]

**WAC 308-47-020 Identification of human remains.** A crematory must not take custody of unidentified human remains. Before accepting human remains, the crematory must verify that identification is attached to the cremation container. Upon accepting human remains for cremation, the crematory must make a permanent record of the following:

- Name of deceased.
- Date of death.
- Place of death.
- Name and relationship of authorizing agent.
- Name of firm engaging crematory services.
- Description of the cremation container to be consumed with the human remains.
- An identification number assigned each human remains and inscribed on a metal disc or metal tag. The metal identification disc or tag must identify the crematory and accompany the human remains through each phase of the cremation, processing and packaging. The disc or tag identification number must be recorded on all paperwork regarding a human remains.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 18.39.175 and chapter 34.05 RCW. WSR 07-03-027, § 308-47-020, filed 1/5/07, effective 2/5/07. Statutory Authority: RCW 18.39.175(4). WSR 02-19-019, § 308-47-020, filed 9/9/02, effective 10/10/02.]

**WAC 308-47-030 Holding human remains for cremation.** (1) A crematory must not accept and hold human remains for cremation unless the human remains are contained in a cremation container.

(2) A crematory must not accept human remains in a cremation container having evidence of body fluid leakage.

(3) Human remains that are not embalmed must be held only within a mechanically or commercially acceptable refrigerated facility of adequate capacity, with a maximum temperature of 48 degrees Fahrenheit, or as determined by chapter 246-500 WAC.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 18.39.175 and chapter 34.05 RCW. WSR 07-03-027, § 308-47-030, filed 1/5/07, effective 2/5/07. Statutory Authority: RCW 18.39.175(4). WSR 02-19-019, § 308-47-030, filed 9/9/02, effective 10/10/02.]

**WAC 308-47-040 Cremation of human remains.** (1) Cremation must not take place until the burial transit permit and authorization for cremation are obtained.

(2) Immediately prior to being placed within the cremation chamber, the identification of the human remains must be verified by the

crematory operator. Appropriate identification of the human remains will be placed near the cremation chamber in such a way as to identify the human remains being cremated. The metal identification disc or metal tag must be placed in the cremation chamber with the human remains.

(3) Simultaneous cremation of more than one human remains within the same cremation chamber is not permitted, unless written authorization is obtained from the authorizing agent of each human remains to be cremated simultaneously. Such written authorization will exempt the crematory from all liability for commingling the products of the cremation process.

(4) Simultaneous cremation of more than one human remains within the same cremation chamber may be performed without the authorizations required in subsection (3) of this section, if:

- Equipment, techniques, and other devices are employed that keep the human remains separate and distinct, before and during the cremation process.

- Recoverable cremated remains are kept separate and distinct after the cremation process.

(5) Crematories licensed by the state cemetery board or the board of funeral directors and embalmers, will only be used for the cremation of human remains, cadavers, or human body parts.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 18.39.175(4). WSR 02-19-019, § 308-47-040, filed 9/9/02, effective 10/10/02.]

**WAC 308-47-050 Processing of cremated human remains.** (1) Upon completion of the cremation, the products of the cremation process must be removed from the cremation chamber, with the exception of residue.

(2) The cremation products must be placed within an individual container or tray in such a way that will insure against commingling with other cremated human remains.

(3) Identification must be attached to the container or tray.

(4) All cremated human remains must undergo processing to comply with applicable legal requirements.

(5) Processing or pulverization of cremated human remains may not be required if cremated human remains are to be placed in a cemetery, mausoleum, columbarium, or building devoted exclusively to religious purposes, or where religious or cultural beliefs oppose the practice.

(6) All body prostheses, bridgework, or similar items removed from the cremated human remains during processing will be disposed of by the crematory, as directed by the authorizing agent.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 18.39.175(4). WSR 02-19-019, § 308-47-050, filed 9/9/02, effective 10/10/02.]

**WAC 308-47-060 Packaging and storage of cremated human remains.**

(1) The cremated human remains must be placed in a sealable container, or in such container as may have been ordered or supplied by the authorizing agent.

(2) The packaged cremated human remains will be identified. The metal identification disc or metal tag must stay with the cremated human remains.

(3) If the cremated human remains do not completely fill the container, the remaining space may be filled with suitable packing material. The container must then be securely closed.

(4) If the entire cremated human remains will not fit within the designated container, the remainder of the cremated human remains must be returned to the authorizing agent in a second container, clearly identified as being part of, and together with, the designated container. Upon written consent of the authorizing agent, excess cremated human remains may be disposed of in any legal manner.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 18.39.175(4). WSR 02-19-019, § 308-47-060, filed 9/9/02, effective 10/10/02.]

**WAC 308-47-070 Disposition of cremated human remains.** (1) A crematory must keep a permanent record of all cremations performed and the disposition or release of the cremated human remains. The record must include the following information:

- Date of death.
- Date burial transit permit was issued.
- Date of delivery of human remains to the crematory.
- Date of cremation.
- Name of crematory operator performing the cremation.
- Name of person performing packaging, and date of packaging.
- Date of release of the cremated human remains and the name of the individual(s) to whom the cremated human remains were released; or
- Date of disposition of the cremated human remains.

(2) When cremated human remains have been in the possession of a crematory, funeral establishment or cemetery for a period of ninety days or more, the entity holding the cremated human remains may arrange for disposition in any legal manner, provided the entity:

- Attempts to contact the authorizing agent for disposition instructions by registered mail.
- Informs the authorizing agent(s) of the procedures that will be followed if disposition instructions are not received.
- Informs the authorizing agent(s) that disposition will take place if disposition instructions are not received within sixty days of initiation of the contact process.
- Informs the authorizing agent(s) that recovery of the cremated human remains, after the disposition, may or may not be possible.
- Maintains a permanent record of the location of the disposition.

(3) No entity making disposition of cremated human remains under subsection (2) of this section will be liable for the disposition or nonrecoverability of cremated human remains.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 18.39.175 and chapter 34.05 RCW. WSR 07-03-027, § 308-47-070, filed 1/5/07, effective 2/5/07. Statutory Authority: RCW 18.39.175(4). WSR 02-19-019, § 308-47-070, filed 9/9/02, effective 10/10/02.]