

WAC 246-500-030 Refrigeration or embalming of human remains.

(1) Funeral directors, embalmers, and others assisting in the preparation of human remains for final disposition shall refrigerate or embalm the remains upon receipt.

(2) Funeral directors, embalmers, and others assisting in the preparation of human remains for final disposition may delay refrigeration upon receipt or remove human remains from refrigeration for the following activities:

- (a) Embalming;
- (b) Transporting;
- (c) Cremating, reducing by alkaline hydrolysis, or burying;
- (d) Reducing by natural organic reduction;
- (e) Washing, anointing, clothing, praying over, reading to, singing to, sitting with, guarding, viewing, or otherwise accompanying the deceased for a period of time not to exceed twenty-four hours by persons acting according to the directions of the deceased or the person having the right to control the disposition of the remains under RCW 68.50.160, provided that anyone directly touching the remains uses barrier precautions according to requirements under WAC 246-500-020 (1)(b); or

(f) As otherwise approved by the local health officer after evaluating specific circumstances, the need to protect public health, and recognition of religious beliefs.

(3) A funeral director, embalmer, or other person assisting in the preparation of human remains for final disposition shall prohibit activities otherwise allowed under subsection (2)(d) of this section if the human remains are confirmed to have or suspected of having one or more of the following conditions:

- (a) Prion disease infection, mycobacterium tuberculosis infection, Ebola virus disease infection;
- (b) Contagious disease infection which may be a public health hazard as identified by the local health officer or medical examiner;
- (c) A radioactive seed implant within thirty days of death until such time that thirty days have elapsed or the organ containing the seed(s) has been removed;
- (d) Containing a nuclear pacemaker until such time that the nuclear pacemaker is removed; or
- (e) Perishing as a result of a radiologic incident or accident, unless a written release is provided by the department of health office of radiation protection or other state or federal agency in charge of the response to the radiological incident or accident.

(4) A funeral director, embalmer, or other person assisting in the preparation of human remains for final disposition shall prohibit activities otherwise allowed under subsection (2)(e) of this section if informed by a local health officer or medical examiner that such activities would pose a direct threat to human health.

(5) Nothing in this section restricts the authority of a coroner or medical examiner when human remains are under their jurisdiction in accordance with RCW 68.50.010.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 43.20.050 (2)(f). WSR 21-01-039, § 246-500-030, filed 12/7/20, effective 1/7/21. Statutory Authority: RCW 43.20.050 and 18.39.215. WSR 06-17-182, § 246-500-030, filed 8/23/06, effective 9/23/06.]