

§ 90-210.126. Preneed cremation arrangements.

(a) Any person, on a preneed basis, may authorize the person's own cremation and the final disposition of the person's cremated remains by executing, as the authorizing agent, a cremation authorization form on a preneed basis and having the form signed by two witnesses. The person shall retain a copy of this form, and a copy shall be sent to the funeral establishment and/or the crematory licensee. Any person shall have the right to transfer or cancel this authorization at any time prior to the person's death by destroying the executed cremation authorization form and providing written notice to the party or parties that received the cremation authorization form.

(b) Any cremation authorization form executed by an individual as the individual's own authorizing agent on a preneed basis shall contain the following disclosure, which shall be completed by the authorizing agent:

/ / I do not wish to allow any of my survivors the option of canceling my cremation and selecting alternative arrangements, regardless of whether my survivors deem such a change to be appropriate.

/ / I wish to allow only the survivors whom I have designated below the option of canceling my cremation and selecting alternative arrangements or continuing to honor my wishes for cremation and purchasing services and merchandise if they deem such a change to be appropriate.

(c) Except as provided in subsection (b) of this section, at the time of the death of a person who has executed, as the authorizing agent, a cremation authorization form on a preneed basis, any person in possession of the executed form, and any person charged with making arrangements for the disposition of the decedent's human remains who has knowledge of the existence of the executed form, shall use the person's best efforts to ensure that the decedent's human remains are cremated and that the final disposition of the cremated remains is in accordance with the instructions contained on the cremation authorization form.

(d) If a crematory licensee is in possession of a completed cremation authorization form, executed on a preneed basis, and the crematory licensee is in possession of the designated human remains, then the crematory licensee shall be required to cremate the human remains and dispose of the human remains according to the instructions contained on the cremation authorization form. A crematory licensee that complies with the preneed cremation authorization form under these circumstances may do so without any liability. A funeral establishment or licensee thereof that causes a crematory licensee to act in accordance with the preneed cremation authorization form under these circumstances may do so without any liability.

(e) Any preneed contract sold by, or preneed arrangements made with, a funeral establishment that includes a cremation shall specify the final disposition of the cremated remains, pursuant to G.S. 90-210.130. In the event that no different or inconsistent instructions are provided to the crematory licensee by the authorizing agent at the time of death, the crematory licensee shall be authorized to release or dispose of the cremated remains as indicated in the preneed agreement. Upon compliance with the terms of the preneed agreement, the crematory licensee, and any funeral establishment or licensee thereof who caused the crematory licensee to act in compliance with the terms of the preneed agreement, shall be discharged from any legal obligation concerning such cremated remains.

(f) The provisions of this section shall not apply to any cremation authorization form or preneed contract executed prior to the effective date of this act. Any funeral establishment, however, with the written approval of the authorizing agent or person who executed the preneed contract, may designate that such cremation authorization form or preneed contract shall be subject to this act. (2003-420, s. 2.)