
PRELIMINARY DRAFT
No. 3105

PREPARED BY
LEGISLATIVE SERVICES AGENCY
2008 GENERAL ASSEMBLY

DIGEST

Citations Affected: IC 23-14; IC 29-2-19; IC 30-5-5-16;
IC 34-30-2-125.4.

Synopsis: Funeral planning. Establishes a statutory form for a funeral planning declaration that allows a person to provide instructions concerning the person's funeral arrangements. Provides that the declaration may be used to designate an individual who will make arrangements after the person's death. Provides that a person designated in a funeral planning declaration is first in the priority lists of individuals who can authorize the cremation of another person's remains and who can authorize the owner of a cemetery to inter, entomb, or inurn the body or cremated remains of a deceased human. Specifies that a person acting as the attorney in fact under a health care power of attorney has the power to execute a funeral planning declaration on behalf of the principal. Provides that a person who relies in good faith on a funeral planning declaration is immune from liability to the same extent as if the person had dealt directly with the declarant and the declarant had been a competent and living person.

Effective: July 1, 2008.



A BILL FOR AN ACT to amend the Indiana Code concerning probate.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Indiana:

1 SECTION 1. IC 23-14-31-26, AS AMENDED BY P.L.102-2007,
2 SECTION 1, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE
3 JULY 1, 2008]: Sec. 26. (a) Except as provided in subsection (c), the
4 following persons, in the priority listed, have the right to serve as an
5 authorizing agent:

6 **(1) An individual granted the authority to serve in a funeral**
7 **planning declaration executed by the decedent under**
8 **IC 29-2-19.**

9 ~~(2)~~ **(2)** An individual who possesses a health care power of
10 attorney of the decedent, unless the power of attorney prohibits
11 the individual from making plans for the disposition of the
12 decedent's body.

13 ~~(3)~~ **(3)** The individual who was the spouse of the decedent at the
14 time of the decedent's death.

15 ~~(4)~~ **(4)** The decedent's surviving adult children. If more than one
16 (1) adult child is surviving, any adult child who confirms in
17 writing that the other adult children have been notified, unless the
18 crematory authority receives a written objection to the cremation
19 from another adult child.

20 ~~(5)~~ **(5)** The decedent's surviving parent. If the decedent is
21 survived by both parents, either parent may serve as the
22 authorizing agent unless the crematory authority receives a
23 written objection to the cremation from the other parent.

24 ~~(6)~~ **(6)** The individual in the next degree of kinship under
25 IC 29-1-2-1 to inherit the estate of the decedent. If more than one
26 (1) individual of the same degree is surviving, any person of that
27 degree may serve as the authorizing agent unless the crematory
28 authority receives a written objection to the cremation from one
29 (1) or more persons of the same degree.

30 ~~(7)~~ **(7)** In the case of an indigent or other individual whose final
31 disposition is the responsibility of the state or township, the



- 1 following may serve as the authorizing agent:
- 2 (A) If none of the persons identified in subdivisions (1)
- 3 through ~~(5)~~ of this section (6) are available:
- 4 (i) a public administrator, including a responsible township
- 5 trustee or the trustee's designee; or
- 6 (ii) the coroner.
- 7 (B) A state appointed guardian.
- 8 However, an indigent decedent may not be cremated if a
- 9 surviving family member objects to the cremation or if cremation
- 10 would be contrary to the religious practices of the deceased
- 11 individual as expressed by the individual or the individual's
- 12 family.
- 13 ~~(7)~~ (8) In the absence of any person under subdivisions (1)
- 14 through ~~(6)~~, (7), any person willing to assume the responsibility
- 15 as the authorizing agent, as specified in this article.
- 16 (b) When a body part of a nondeceased individual is to be cremated,
- 17 a representative of the institution that has arranged with the crematory
- 18 authority to cremate the body part may serve as the authorizing agent.
- 19 (c) If:
- 20 (1) the death of the decedent appears to have been the result of:
- 21 (A) murder (IC 35-42-1-1);
- 22 (B) voluntary manslaughter (IC 35-42-1-3); or
- 23 (C) another criminal act, if the death does not result from the
- 24 operation of a vehicle; and
- 25 (2) the coroner, in consultation with the law enforcement agency
- 26 investigating the death of the decedent, determines that there is a
- 27 reasonable suspicion that a person described in subsection (a)
- 28 committed the offense;
- 29 the person referred to in subdivision (2) may not serve as the
- 30 authorizing agent.
- 31 (d) The coroner, in consultation with the law enforcement agency
- 32 investigating the death of the decedent, shall inform the crematory
- 33 authority of the determination referred to in subsection (c)(2).
- 34 SECTION 2. IC 23-14-55-2, AS AMENDED BY P.L.102-2007,
- 35 SECTION 2, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE
- 36 JULY 1, 2008]: Sec. 2. (a) Except as provided in subsection (d), the
- 37 owner of a cemetery is authorized to inter, entomb, or inurn the body
- 38 or cremated remains of a deceased human upon the receipt of a written
- 39 authorization of an individual who professes either of the following:
- 40 (1) To be (in the priority listed) one (1) of the following:
- 41 (A) **An individual granted the authority to serve in a**
- 42 **funeral planning declaration executed by the decedent**
- 43 **under IC 29-2-19.**
- 44 ~~(A)~~ (B) An individual who possesses a health care power of
- 45 attorney of the decedent, unless the power of attorney prohibits
- 46 the individual from making plans for the disposition of the



- 1 decedent's body.
- 2 ~~(B)~~ (C) The individual who was the spouse of the decedent at
- 3 the time of the decedent's death.
- 4 ~~(C)~~ (D) The decedent's surviving adult child. If more than one
- 5 (1) adult child is surviving, any adult child who confirms in
- 6 writing that the other adult children have been notified, unless
- 7 the owner of the cemetery receives a written objection to the
- 8 disposition from another adult child.
- 9 ~~(D)~~ (E) The decedent's surviving parent. If the decedent is
- 10 survived by both parents, either parent may serve as the
- 11 authorizing agent unless the cemetery owner receives a written
- 12 objection to the disposition from the other parent.
- 13 ~~(E)~~ (F) The individual in the next degree of kinship under
- 14 IC 29-1-2-1 to inherit the estate of the decedent. If more than
- 15 one (1) individual of the same degree of kinship is surviving,
- 16 any person of that degree may serve as the authorizing agent
- 17 unless the cemetery owner receives a written objection to the
- 18 disposition from one (1) or more persons of the same degree
- 19 of kinship.
- 20 (2) To have acquired **by court order** the right to control the
- 21 disposition of the deceased human body or cremated remains.
- 22 The owner of a cemetery may accept the authorization of an individual
- 23 only if all other individuals of the same priority or a higher priority
- 24 (according to the priority listing in this subsection) are deceased, are
- 25 barred from authorizing the disposition of the deceased human body or
- 26 cremated remains under subsection (d), or are physically or mentally
- 27 incapacitated from exercising the authorization, and the incapacity is
- 28 certified to by a qualified medical doctor.
- 29 (b) A cemetery owner is not liable in any action for making an
- 30 interment, entombment, or inurnment under a written authorization
- 31 described in subsection (a) unless the cemetery owner had actual notice
- 32 that the representation made under subsection (a) by the individual who
- 33 issued the written authorization was untrue.
- 34 (c) An action may not be brought against the owner of a cemetery
- 35 relating to the remains of a human that have been left in the possession
- 36 of the cemetery owner without permanent interment, entombment, or
- 37 inurnment for a period of three (3) years, unless the cemetery owner
- 38 has entered into a written contract for the care of the remains.
- 39 (d) If:
- 40 (1) the death of the decedent appears to have been the result of:
- 41 (A) murder (IC 35-42-1-1);
- 42 (B) voluntary manslaughter (IC 35-42-1-3); or
- 43 (C) another criminal act, if the death does not result from the
- 44 operation of a vehicle; and
- 45 (2) the coroner, in consultation with the law enforcement agency
- 46 investigating the death of the decedent, determines that there is a



1 reasonable suspicion that a person described in subsection (a)
 2 committed the offense;
 3 the person referred to in subdivision (2) may not authorize the
 4 disposition of the decedent's body or cremated remains.

5 (e) The coroner, in consultation with the law enforcement agency
 6 investigating the death of the decedent, shall inform the cemetery
 7 owner of the determination referred to in subsection (d)(2).

8 SECTION 3. IC 29-2-19 IS ADDED TO THE INDIANA CODE AS
 9 A NEW CHAPTER TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY
 10 1, 2008]:

11 **Chapter 19. Funeral Planning Declaration**

12 **Sec. 1. As used in this chapter, "declarant" means an individual**
 13 **who signs a funeral planning declaration executed under this**
 14 **chapter.**

15 **Sec. 2. As used in this chapter, "declaration" means a funeral**
 16 **planning declaration executed under this chapter.**

17 **Sec. 3. As used in this chapter, "funeral services" has the**
 18 **meaning set forth in IC 25-15-2-17.**

19 **Sec. 4. As used in this chapter, "grave memorial" has the**
 20 **meaning set forth in IC 14-21-2-2.**

21 **Sec. 5. (a) A person who is of sound mind and is at least eighteen**
 22 **(18) years of age may execute a funeral planning declaration in the**
 23 **form set forth in section 10 of this chapter.**

24 **(b) A declaration must meet the following conditions:**

25 **(1) Be voluntary.**

26 **(2) Be in writing.**

27 **(3) Be signed by the person making the declaration or by**
 28 **another person in the declarant's presence and at the**
 29 **declarant's express direction.**

30 **(4) Be dated.**

31 **(5) Be signed in the presence of at least two (2) competent**
 32 **witnesses who are at least eighteen (18) years of age.**

33 **(c) The following may not be a witness to a declaration under**
 34 **subsection (b)(5):**

35 **(1) The person who signed the declaration on behalf of and at**
 36 **the direction of the declarant.**

37 **(2) A parent, spouse, or child of the declarant.**

38 **(3) An individual who is entitled to any part of the declarant's**
 39 **estate whether the declarant dies testate or intestate,**
 40 **including an individual who could take from the declarant's**
 41 **estate if the declarant's will is declared invalid.**

42 **For the purposes of subdivision (3), a person is not considered to be**
 43 **entitled to any part of the declarant's estate solely by virtue of**
 44 **being nominated as a personal representative or as the attorney for**
 45 **the estate in the declarant's will.**

46 **Sec. 6. A declaration may specify the declarant's preferences**



- 1 concerning any of the following:
- 2 (1) The disposition of the declarant's remains after the
- 3 declarant's death.
- 4 (2) Who may direct the disposition of the declarant's remains.
- 5 (3) Who may provide funeral services after the declarant's
- 6 death.
- 7 (4) The ceremonial arrangements to be performed after the
- 8 declarant's death.
- 9 (5) Who may direct the ceremonial arrangements to be
- 10 performed after the declarant's death.
- 11 (6) A grave memorial.

12 **Sec. 7. (a) Except as provided in subsection (b), the provisions**

13 **of a declarant's most recent declaration prevail over any other**

14 **document executed by the declarant concerning any preferences**

15 **described in section 6 of this chapter.**

16 (b) A funeral trust established under IC 30-2-9-1.5 or a contract

17 entered into under IC 30-2-13 prevails over a declaration that

18 conflicts with the trust or contract.

19 **Sec. 8. (a) A person who acts in good faith reliance on a**

20 **declaration is immune from liability to the same extent as if the**

21 **person had dealt directly with the declarant and the declarant had**

22 **been a competent and living person.**

23 (b) A person who deals with a declaration may presume, in the

24 absence of actual knowledge to the contrary, that:

- 25 (1) the declaration was validly executed; and
- 26 (2) the declarant was competent at the time the declaration
- 27 was executed.

28 (c) The directions of a declarant expressed in a declaration are

29 binding as if the declarant were alive and competent.

30 **Sec. 9. A declaration must be substantially in the form set forth**

31 **in section 10 of this chapter, but the declaration may include**

32 **additional, specific directions. The invalidity of any additional,**

33 **specific direction does not affect the validity of the declaration.**

34 **Sec. 10. The following is the funeral planning declaration form:**

35 **FUNERAL PLANNING DECLARATION**

36 Declaration made this ____ day of _____ (month, year). I,

37 _____, being at least eighteen (18) years of age and of sound

38 mind, willfully and voluntarily make known my instructions

39 concerning funeral services, ceremonies, and the disposition of my

40 remains after my death.

41 I hereby declare and direct that after my death the following

42 actions be taken (indicate your choice by initialing or making your

43 mark before signing this declaration):

- 44 (1) My body shall be:
- 45 (A) _____ Buried. I direct that my body be
- 46 buried at _____.



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(B) _____ Cremated. I direct that my cremated remains be disposed of as follows:

(C) _____ Entombed. I direct that my body be entombed at _____.

(D) _____ I intentionally make no decision concerning the disposition of my body, leaving the decision to _____ (name of designee). If _____ (name of designee) is unwilling or unable to act, I nominate _____ as an alternate designee.

(2) My arrangements shall be made as follows:

(A) I request that funeral services be obtained from:

(B) I request the following ceremonial arrangements:

(C) I request a grave memorial that:

(D) I direct that _____ (name of designee) make all arrangements concerning ceremonies and other funeral services. If _____ (name of designee) is unwilling or unable to act, I nominate _____ as an alternate designee.

(3) In addition to the instructions listed above, I request the following:

(4) If it is impossible to make an arrangement specified in subdivisions (1) through (3) because a funeral home or other service provider is out of business, impossible to locate, or otherwise unable to provide the designated service, I direct my designee to make alternate arrangements to the best of the designee's ability.

It is my intention that this declaration be honored by my family and others as the final expression of my intentions concerning my funeral and the disposition of my body after my death. I understand the full import of this declaration.

Signed _____

City, County, and State of Residence

The declarant is personally known to me, and I believe the declarant to be of sound mind. I did not sign the declarant's



signature above for or at the direction of the declarant. I am not a parent, spouse, or child of the declarant. I am not entitled to any part of the declarant's estate. I am competent and at least eighteen (18) years of age.

Witness _____ Date _____

Witness _____ Date _____

Sec. 11. A declaration may be revoked by the declarant in writing or by burning, tearing, canceling, obliterating, or destroying the declaration with the intent to revoke the declaration.

Sec. 12. Except as otherwise expressly provided in a declaration, a subsequent:

- (1) dissolution of marriage;
- (2) annulment of marriage; or
- (3) legal separation of the declarant and the declarant's spouse;

automatically revokes a delegation of authority in a declaration to the declarant's spouse to direct the disposition of the declarant's body or to make all arrangements concerning funeral services and other ceremonies after the declarant's death.

Sec. 13. Except as otherwise expressly provided in a declaration, section 14 of this chapter controls if a person to whom a declaration delegates the authority to make arrangements after a declarant's death is unable or unwilling to serve.

Sec. 14. The right to control the disposition of a decedent's body, to make arrangements for funeral services, and to make other ceremonial arrangements after an individual's death devolves on the following, in the priority listed:

- (1) An individual granted the authority in a funeral planning declaration executed by the decedent under this chapter.
- (2) An individual granted the authority in a health care power of attorney executed by the decedent under IC 30-5-5-16.
- (3) The decedent's surviving spouse.
- (4) A surviving adult child of the decedent.
- (5) A surviving parent of the decedent.
- (6) An individual in the next degree of kinship under IC 29-1-2-1 to inherit the estate of the decedent.

Sec. 15. A person in Indiana may rely on a declaration or similar instrument that was executed in another state and that complies with the requirements of this chapter to the extent that an action requested by the declarant in the declaration or similar instrument does not violate any federal or Indiana law or any ordinance or regulation of a political subdivision.

SECTION 4. IC 30-5-5-16 IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2008]: Sec. 16. (a) This section does not prohibit an individual capable of consenting to the individual's



1 own health care or to the health care of another from consenting to
2 health care administered in good faith under the religious tenets and
3 practices of the individual requiring health care.

4 (b) Language conferring general authority with respect to health
5 care powers means the principal authorizes the attorney in fact to do
6 the following:

7 (1) Employ or contract with servants, companions, or health care
8 providers to care for the principal.

9 (2) If the attorney in fact is an individual, consent to or refuse
10 health care for the principal who is an individual in accordance
11 with IC 16-36-4 and IC 16-36-1 by properly executing and
12 attaching to the power of attorney a declaration or appointment,
13 or both.

14 (3) Admit or release the principal from a hospital or health care
15 facility.

16 (4) Have access to records, including medical records, concerning
17 the principal's condition.

18 (5) Make anatomical gifts on the principal's behalf.

19 (6) Request an autopsy.

20 (7) Make plans for the disposition of the principal's body,
21 **including executing a funeral planning declaration on behalf**
22 **of the principal in accordance with IC 29-2-19.**

23 SECTION 5. IC 34-30-2-125.4 IS ADDED TO THE INDIANA
24 CODE AS A **NEW** SECTION TO READ AS FOLLOWS
25 [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2008]: **Sec. 125.4. IC 29-2-19-8 (Concerning**
26 **a person who relies on a funeral planning declaration).**

