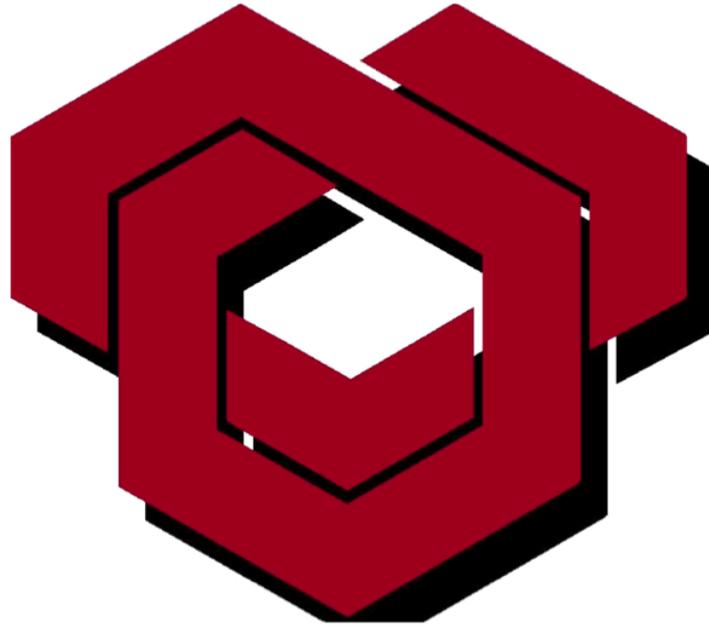


# Latest Information on COVID-19



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## ARKANSAS FUNERAL DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION

*Please see the [AFDA website](#) for more updates and resources for your funeral home during the COVID-19 pandemic.*

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### Funeral Homes to Allow Gatherings of 50 from May 18

Governor Asa Hutchinson announced today that funerals will be permitted to take place in indoor venues with **fewer than 50 people in attendance beginning on May 18th.** Funeral homes can begin to plan for these accommodations. You might consider asking families to help keep the size limited to 50 or less and you might consider overflow options

if you needed to accommodate an additional 50 people. Note the guidelines in the graphic below that are required for the May 18th easing of restrictions. This announcement comes in the midst of the Phase 1 Reopening along with a number of other indoor and outdoor gatherings, such as theaters, city fairs and community events.

**Until May 18th, the previous directive restricting indoor funeral and visitations to less than 10 people is still in effect.**

AFDA is incredibly grateful to all the funeral homes, directors and staff who have been working hard to maintain excellent service to your communities while under the strict 10-person limit. The increase to 50 people is certainly a positive step for us returning to normal service, but it is critical to ensure that this directive is adhered to as rigidly as before. The only way to return to business is to do so safely and considerately, and AFDA is confident that funeral industry will continue to do everything they can to see this happen.

More details on the Governor's directive are below.

## Large Indoor Venues Directive – Effective May 18

- **Examples: auditoriums, lecture halls, movie theatres, museums, arenas, sports venues, race tracks, funeral homes, bowling alleys**
- **12-foot distance between performers, audience**
- **50 or fewer performers/players/contestants**
- **Audience of 50 or fewer people**
- **6-foot distancing in seating, except for family groups**
- **Lines marked/monitored for distancing**
- **Every other row should be unoccupied**



## Large Indoor Venues Directive – Effective May 18

- Face coverings required for anyone over 10 years old
- If 12-foot distancing maintained from all others, no face covering required for performer/player/contestant
- Signs should advise no entry if any symptoms or contact with patient
- Hand sanitizer stations at all entrances/exits
- Refreshments allowed, but no self-service
- Facility including seating cleaned before/after each use



## Governor Announces Phase 1 Reopening & Ready for Business Grant

The Governor's office has approved an additional \$40 million for the *Arkansas Ready for Business* grant program for businesses preparing to reopen, bringing the fund total to \$55 million. The initial appropriation of funds ran out in two hours and applications were closed once the initial fund was depleted.



Applications will be open on Tuesday May 5th and Wednesday May 6th 8am-6pm. You can apply to receive up to \$1,000 per full time employee or \$500 per part time employee to purchase PPE, disinfectants, signage, sanitizer, and other permissible expenses to help get the state ready to open back up again for business. If spent on acceptable expenses the funds do not have to be paid back.

One of the recommendations made by the panel is that 75% of the funding should go towards businesses with fewer than 50 employees, making funeral homes prime candidates to take advantage of this program.

Gov. Hutchinson also announced on Friday that barbershops, hair salons and similar services may open with restrictions on May 6. This is in addition to the lifting of restrictions on campgrounds, restaurants and gyms. Read the Governor's full [press release](#) from Friday May 1st.

## ARKANSAS READY FOR BUSINESS Grant Program

- \$55 Million grant program open to all industry sectors at [www.ArkansasEDC.com/COVID19](http://www.ArkansasEDC.com/COVID19)
- \$1K per full time employee, \$100K cap per company
-  >15% for women- and minority-owned businesses and >75% for businesses with 50 or fewer employees
- Existing applications remain in consideration; website re-opens at 8 a.m. on Tuesday, May 5th
- Simple application process: driver's license, signed W-9, and certificate of good standing
- Application website will close at 6 p.m. on Wednesday, May 6<sup>th</sup> to review submissions



Apply for Grant

## \$310 billion of Funding Announced for Small Businesses - Available Now

The Small Business Administration is accepting Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan applications from approved lenders on behalf of any eligible borrower.

You can apply through any existing SBA 7(a) lender or through any federally insured depository institution, federally insured credit union, and Farm Credit System, or non-bank lending institution that is participating. You should consult with your local lender as to whether it is participating in the program.

To learn more about the Paycheck Protection Program or to download an application please click the button below.

- [Find a lender near you](#)
- [See a list of Arkansas Lenders](#)

PPP Information & Application

Contact AFDA at [AFDA@legacymail.org](mailto:AFDA@legacymail.org) if you need any assistance with applying for or

## Let's Talk About Grief

The article below was written by Mary Byers, who used to work for National Order of the Golden Rule (OGR) and is well versed in the funeral industry. Mary wrote a nice piece that serves as a reminder for all of us that grief comes in many forms.

AFDA wants to share this with you in order to help our communities grieve healthily and with the support of their loved ones at this time of great loss. Please share it with whomever you feel would benefit from receiving it.

*My first association job was working for an international organization of funeral homes. My job included producing materials that members could buy for the families they served. "After the Loss" was a booklet I wrote about grief. I found a copy recently when I was purging paperwork. It reminded me of the research I conducted prior to writing the booklet—and what I learned about grief in the process.*

**Grief comes in all shapes and sizes.** *There are big losses (such as the death of a loved one) and small losses (such as an event cancellation) and all sorts of losses in between. You—and only you—get to decide what category your loss fits in.*

**No grief is insignificant.** *Grief is grief. Large losses leave us wondering how we'll make it. But small losses add up, too. And continual small losses, such as what we're experiencing as a result of COVID-19, have a cumulative impact. Don't minimize any grief you feel.*

**Grief comes and goes.** *You can be fine one minute and catch yourself unexpectedly crying the next. Three steps forward, two steps back. Six steps forward, eight steps back. Grief shows up unexpectedly. Sometimes it hangs around and sometimes it quickly disappears.*

**Grief shows up in different ways.** *You may be sad. You may be angry. You may have difficulty concentrating and remembering. You may have less energy. You may have trouble sleeping. You might experience all these symptoms, sometimes simultaneously. The way we experience it is as individual as we are.*

**Grief changes us.** *Whether it's the death of someone we love, goodbye to a hoped-for opportunity or circumstances that suddenly change, sorrow hollows us. If we let it, sorrow will also deepen us and make us new people.*

*I'm not ashamed to admit that I've shed tears over the last month. I've cried for people I don't know who are dying alone. I've wept for the healthcare workers who care for them, often without the protective gear they need to keep themselves safe. I've shed tears over*

*both uncertainty...and the certainty that things will be different moving forward. I despise the words "new normal," even as I grasp how achingly accurate and descriptive they are.*

*Yes, we're in a new normal. But no, we don't have to pretend we're not sad about what's happening, what's changed, and what might not be.*

*There are others better trained than I am to address the topic of grief. But my work has always been about starting difficult conversations and I can't think of a more necessary one right one. I know we're being brave and showing up and soldiering on. But it's okay to grieve, too.*

*Today, I feel strong and optimistic. But I know this will likely change—several times—before we are through this season. When it happens, I'll let myself grieve for a minute, an hour, a day, a week—whatever it takes. And then, I'll remember this: we will prevail.*

If you have symptoms like fever, cough or shortness of breath **get tested for COVID-19.**

Testing is available.

Call your health care provider first, and follow their guidance.



The state health department is advising anyone who has the above symptoms to get themselves tested for COVID-19. Testing is available for everyone, either through health insurance or federal programs such as Medicaid.

## **Funeral Directors Exempt Under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act**

The **Arkansas Small Business and Technology Development Center (ASBTDC)** is a statewide resource for business owners. Through no-cost, confidential consulting and timely educational events, ASBTDC can assist you in sustaining your business through

COVID-19.

Services available:

- **Disaster recovery** - business continuity planning, disaster loan assistance
- **Financing** - debt consolidation strategies, financing proposals
- **Financial management** - cash flow analysis, ratio analysis, financial benchmarks
- **Marketing** - customer identification, market and industry research, marketing strategies, online presence

For upcoming webinars, see the [events calendar](#). Find recordings of earlier programs in the "Keep Calm and Small Business On" series on the [COVID-19 Webinars Playlist](#) on ASBTDC's YouTube page.

[Learn More Here](#)

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## Funeral Directors Exempt Under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act

Funeral directors, AFDA has learnt are exempt from the law requiring all employees to be given a certain number of days additional paid leave during the COVID-19 outbreak. Due to the critical nature of funeral homes, funeral homes are not required to conform as funeral home workers have been recognised as "essential workers". A full report can be read at the link below.

[Full Article](#)

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## Social Media in the COVID-19 Outbreak

While social distancing, funeral directors need to get more creative than ever to create personalized funeral experiences.

Tribute Center is an all-in-one personalization suite, with which you can create personalized mementos, funeral stationery products, and Tribute Videos to honor families' loved ones. This way, families have meaningful, personalized mementos for grieving and memorializing their loved ones while social distancing.

See more on Frazer Consultant's [blog](#) for this and more.

## PPE

*If you are concerned by your PPE levels or availability then please contact the state health department, as they are best placed to find federally available equipment and are in constant communication with suppliers.*



## Need Support?

For any questions regarding your membership with AFDA or for support in any way, please call us at (501) 246-8842 or email [afda@legacymail.org](mailto:afda@legacymail.org)

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