

1 TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

2 The Committee on General, Housing, and Military Affairs to which was  
3 referred House Bill No. 244 entitled “An act relating to authorizing the natural  
4 organic reduction of human remains” respectfully reports that it has considered  
5 the same and recommends that the bill be amended by striking out all after the  
6 enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

7 \* \* \* Deaths, Burials, and Autopsies \* \* \*

8 Sec. 1. 18 V.S.A. § 5200 is added to read:

9 § 5200. DEFINITIONS

10 As used in this chapter:

11 (1) “Cemetery” has the same meaning as in section 5302 of this title.

12 (2) “Cremation” has the same meaning as in section 5302 of this title.

13 (3) “Disposition facility” has the same meaning as in section 5302 of  
14 this title.

15 (4) “Natural organic reduction” has the same meaning as in section 5302  
16 of this title.

17 Sec. 2. 18 V.S.A. § 5201 is amended to read:

18 § 5201. PERMITS; REMOVAL OF BODIES; ~~CREMATION;~~

19 WAITING PERIOD; INVESTIGATION INTO CIRCUMSTANCES

20 OF DEATH

1 (a) ~~Burial transfer permit.~~ A dead body shall not be buried, entombed, or  
2 removed, or otherwise disposed of without a burial-transit permit issued and  
3 signed by a municipal clerk, a county clerk, or a deputy clerk for the  
4 municipality or unorganized town or gore in which the dead body is located; a  
5 funeral director licensed in Vermont; an owner or designated manager of a  
6 ~~crematorium~~ licensed disposition facility in Vermont who is registered to  
7 perform removals; or a law enforcement officer.

8 \* \* \*

9 (3) A funeral director licensed in Vermont or an owner or designated  
10 manager of a ~~crematory~~ licensed disposition facility in Vermont who is  
11 registered to perform removals may issue a burial-transit permit for any  
12 municipality or unorganized town or gore at any time, including during the  
13 normal business hours of a municipal clerk.

14 \* \* \*

15 (b) ~~No~~ An operator of a ~~crematory~~ disposition facility shall not cremate or  
16 process by means of natural organic reduction or allow the cremation or  
17 processing by means of natural organic reduction of a dead human body until  
18 the passage of at least 24 hours following the death of the decedent, as  
19 indicated on the death certificate, unless, if the decedent died from a virulent,  
20 communicable disease, a Department of Health rule or order requires the  
21 cremation to occur prior to the end of that period. If the Attorney General or a

1 State's Attorney requests the delay of a cremation or natural organic reduction  
2 based upon a reasonable belief that the cause of death might have been due to  
3 other than accidental or natural causes, the cremation or natural organic  
4 reduction of a dead human body shall be delayed, based upon such request, a  
5 sufficient time to permit a civil or criminal investigation into the circumstances  
6 that caused or contributed to the death.

7 (c) The person in charge of the body shall not release for cremation or  
8 natural organic reduction the body of a person who died in Vermont until the  
9 person in charge has received a certificate from the chief, regional, or assistant  
10 medical examiner that the medical examiner has made personal inquiry into the  
11 cause and manner of death and is satisfied that no further examination or  
12 judicial inquiry concerning it is necessary. Upon request of a funeral director,  
13 the person in charge of the body, or the ~~crematory~~ operator of a disposition  
14 facility, the Chief Medical Examiner shall issue a ~~cremation~~ disposition  
15 certificate after the medical examiner has completed an autopsy. The  
16 certificate shall be retained by the ~~crematory~~ disposition facility for a period of  
17 three years. The person requesting cremation or natural organic reduction shall  
18 pay the ~~department~~ Department a fee of \$25.00.

19 (d)(1) For all cremations or natural organic reductions requested for the  
20 body of a person who died outside Vermont, the ~~crematory~~ operator of a

1 disposition facility shall do the following before conducting the cremation or  
2 natural organic reduction:

3 (A) obtain a permit for transit ~~or~~ cremation, or natural organic  
4 reduction; and

5 (B) comply with the laws of the state in which the person died,  
6 including obtaining a copy of a medical examiner's permit if one is required.

7 (2) No additional approval from the Vermont medical examiner's office  
8 is required if compliance with the laws of the state in which the person died is  
9 achieved.

10 Sec. 3. 18 V.S.A. § 5207 is amended to read:

11 § 5207. CERTIFICATE FURNISHED FAMILY; BURIAL-TRANSIT

12 PERMIT

13 Within 24 hours after death, the death certificate shall be made available  
14 upon request to the family of the deceased, if any, or the undertaker or person  
15 who has charge of the body. The certificate shall be filed with the person  
16 issuing the burial-transit permit obtained by the person who has charge of the  
17 body before ~~such dead body shall be buried, entombed, or removed~~ permanent  
18 disposition or removal from the town. When the death certificate is so filed,  
19 the officer or person shall immediately issue a burial-transit permit under legal  
20 restrictions and safeguards.

1 Sec. 4. 18 V.S.A. § 5210 is amended to read:

2 § 5210. FORM OF BURIAL OR REMOVAL PERMIT

3 If it is desired to bury, entomb, or otherwise dispose of a dead body within  
4 the limits of a town where the death occurred, the certificate of permission  
5 shall state plainly the time, place, and manner of such burial, entombment, or  
6 disposition. If it is desired to remove a dead body from the town where the  
7 death occurred, the certificate of permission shall contain the essential facts  
8 contained in the certificate of death on which it is issued, shall accompany the  
9 body to its destination, and may be accepted as a permit for ~~burial or~~  
10 ~~entombment~~ permanent disposition by a sexton or other person having the care  
11 of a cemetery, burial ground, tomb, or receiving vault.

12 Sec. 5. 18 V.S.A. § 5213 is amended to read:

13 § 5213. REMOVAL; FORM AND DISPOSITION OF PERMIT

14 Such permit shall state specifically ~~where such body is to be buried,~~  
15 ~~cremated, or entombed~~ the location of the body's permanent disposition and  
16 the time and manner of its removal. A town clerk issuing such a permit shall  
17 make it in duplicate if the body is to be removed from the town, one copy of  
18 which shall be delivered to the person having charge of the cemetery or tomb  
19 from which the body is to be taken and the other shall be delivered to the  
20 person having charge of the cemetery or tomb wherein it is desired to place the  
21 body.

1 Sec. 6. 18 V.S.A. § 5224 is amended to read:

2 § 5224. DISPOSITION OF REMAINS; PERMITS

3 (a) Fetal remains shall be disposed of by burial, ~~or cremation,~~ or natural  
4 organic reduction unless released to an educational institution for scientific  
5 purposes or disposed of by the hospital or as directed by the attending  
6 physician in a manner ~~which~~ that will not create a public health hazard.  
7 Permission shall be obtained from one of the parents, if competent, for  
8 disposition in all cases where a funeral director is not involved. One copy of  
9 the fetal death report shall be printed in such manner that completion and  
10 signing by the physician or medical examiner shall constitute permission to  
11 make ~~final~~ permanent disposition of the fetal remains.

12 (b) When a funeral director is involved or when the fetal remains are to be  
13 privately buried or disposed of by a ~~commercial-crematory~~ disposition facility,  
14 the funeral director or other person taking charge of the remains shall obtain  
15 from the hospital or physician the disposition permit portion of the report and  
16 shall deliver it to the sexton or other person having care of the cemetery, tomb,  
17 vault, or ~~crematory~~ disposition facility before burial or other disposition takes  
18 place. These permits shall be delivered each month to the clerk of the town in  
19 which burial or disposition took place, in the same manner as permits for burial  
20 of dead bodies; so also shall all other provisions of sections 5209-5216 of this  
21 title be applicable to fetal remains as are applicable to dead bodies.

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\* \* \*

Sec. 7. 18 V.S.A. chapter 107, subchapter 3 is amended to read:

Subchapter 3. Rights of Family Members, ~~and~~ Other Interested Persons,  
Funeral Directors, and ~~Crematory~~ Disposition Facility Operators of Disposition Facilities

\* \* \*

§ 5227. RIGHT TO DISPOSITION

(a) If there is no written directive of the decedent, in the following order of  
priority, one or more competent adults shall have the right to determine the  
disposition of the remains of a decedent, including the location, manner, and  
conditions of disposition and arrangements for funeral goods and services:

\* \* \*

(9) the funeral director or ~~crematory~~ disposition facility operator with  
custody of the body, after attesting in writing that a good faith effort has been  
made to contact the individuals described in subdivisions (1) through (8) of  
this subsection; or

\* \* \*

(c)(1) If the disposition of the remains of a decedent is determined under  
subdivision (a)(9) of this section and the funeral director or ~~crematory~~  
disposition facility operator has cremated or processed the remains, as  
applicable, the funeral director or ~~crematory~~ disposition facility operator shall  
retain the remains for three years and, if no interested party as provided in

1 subdivisions (a)(1) through (8) of this section claims the decedent's remains  
2 after three years, the funeral director or ~~crematory~~ disposition facility operator  
3 shall arrange for the ~~final~~ permanent disposition of the ~~cremated~~ remains  
4 consistent with any applicable law and standard funeral practices.

5 (2) Notwithstanding any provision of subdivision (1) of this subsection  
6 to the contrary, a funeral director or ~~crematory~~ disposition facility operator  
7 may determine that the unclaimed ~~cremated~~ remains of a deceased veteran  
8 shall be interred at the Vermont Veterans Memorial Cemetery pursuant to  
9 20 V.S.A. § 1586 if:

10 (A) at least 180 days have passed since the funeral director or  
11 ~~crematory~~ disposition facility operator cremated or processed the remains;

12 (B) the funeral director or ~~crematory~~ disposition facility operator  
13 either:

14 (i) has actual knowledge that there is no interested party as  
15 provided in subdivisions (a)(1) through (8) of this section to claim the  
16 decedent's remains; or

17 (ii) after making reasonable efforts, has been unable to locate and  
18 contact any known interested party as provided in subdivisions (a)(1) through  
19 (8) of this section; and



1 (C) the funeral director or ~~crematory~~ disposition facility operator has  
2 confirmed with the Office of Veterans Affairs that the deceased veteran is  
3 eligible to be interred at the Vermont Veterans Memorial Cemetery.

4 (d)(1) If the disposition of the remains of a decedent is determined under  
5 subdivision (a)(10) of this section, the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner  
6 may contract with a funeral director or ~~crematory~~ disposition facility operator  
7 to cremate the remains of the decedent.

8 (2)(A) If the cremation of the decedent is arranged and paid for under 33  
9 V.S.A. § 2301, the Department for Children and Families shall pay the  
10 cremation expenses to the funeral home, up to the maximum payment  
11 permitted by rule by the Department for Children and Families.

12 (B) If the cremation of the decedent is not arranged and paid for  
13 under 33 V.S.A. § 2301, the Department of Health shall pay the cremation  
14 expenses to the funeral home, up to the maximum payment permitted by rule  
15 by the Department for Children and Families.

16 (3) The cremated remains shall be returned to the Office of the Chief  
17 Medical Examiner. The Office shall retain the remains for three years, and if  
18 no interested party, as described in subdivisions (a)(1) through (8) of this  
19 section, claims the decedent's remains after three years, the Office shall  
20 arrange for the ~~final~~ permanent disposition of the cremated remains consistent  
21 with any applicable law and standard funeral practices.

1           (4) Notwithstanding any provision of subdivision (3) of this subsection  
2 to the contrary, the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner may determine that  
3 the unclaimed cremated remains of a deceased veteran shall be interred at the  
4 Vermont Veterans Memorial Cemetery pursuant to 20 V.S.A. § 1586 if:

5           (A) at least 180 days have passed since the remains were cremated;

6           (B) the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner either:

7           (i) has actual knowledge that there is no interested party as  
8 provided in subdivisions (a)(1) through (8) of this section to claim the  
9 decedent's remains; or

10           (ii) after making reasonable efforts, has been unable to locate and  
11 contact any known interested party as provided in subdivisions (a)(1) through  
12 (8) of this section; and

13           (C) the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner has confirmed with the  
14 Office of Veterans Affairs that the deceased veteran is eligible to be interred at  
15 the Vermont Veterans Memorial Cemetery.

16 § 5228. FORFEITURE

17           An individual recognized under section 5227 of this title to have a right of  
18 disposition shall forfeit that right in the following circumstances:

19           (1) the individual is identified by a law enforcement agency as a person  
20 of interest and likely to be prosecuted or is under prosecution for first or  
21 second degree murder or voluntary manslaughter in connection with the

1 decedent's death, if the status of the investigation or the prosecution is known  
2 to the funeral director or ~~crematory~~ disposition facility operator, except that if  
3 the prosecution is not pursued or the individual is acquitted of the alleged  
4 crime before the remains are disposed of, the individual shall regain the right;

5 \* \* \*

6 § 5229. COST OF DISPOSITION

7 The cost for the disposition of remains and funeral goods or services shall  
8 be borne by the decedent's estate, subject to the limits for insolvent estates  
9 imposed by 14 V.S.A. § 1205, or by any individual who agrees to pay the  
10 costs. Nothing in this subchapter shall be construed to require a funeral  
11 director or ~~crematory~~ disposition facility operator to provide goods or services  
12 for which there is no payment.

13 § 5230. RIGHTS OF FUNERAL DIRECTOR OR ~~CREMATORY~~  
14 OPERATOR OF A DISPOSITION FACILITY

15 A funeral director or ~~crematory~~ disposition facility operator may determine  
16 the ~~final~~ permanent disposition of remains and may file a civil action in  
17 Probate Division of the Superior Court against a person, estate, banking  
18 institution, governmental agency, or other entity ~~which~~ that may have liability  
19 for the ~~final~~ permanent disposition, either:

1 (1) to seek a declaratory judgment that the director’s or operator’s  
2 proposed action would be in compliance with the applicable provisions of law;  
3 or

4 (2) to seek a judgment that the director or operator’s action is in  
5 compliance with the applicable provisions of law and to recover reasonable  
6 costs and fees for the ~~final~~ permanent disposition when:

7 (A) the funeral director or ~~crematory~~ disposition facility operator has  
8 actual knowledge that there is no surviving family member, guardian, or  
9 individual appointed to arrange for the disposition of decedent’s remains  
10 pursuant to chapter 231 of this title;

11 (B) the funeral director or ~~crematory~~ disposition facility operator has  
12 made reasonable efforts to locate and contact any known family member,  
13 guardian, or agent; and

14 (C) the appropriate local or State authority, if any, fails to assume  
15 responsibility for disposition of the remains within 36 hours of written notice,  
16 which may be delivered by hand, U.S. mail, facsimile transmission, electronic  
17 means, or telegraph.

18 § 5231. CIVIL ACTION

19 \* \* \*

20 (c) Except as provided for under subdivision (b)(4) of this section, an  
21 individual who has paid or agreed to pay for all or part of the funeral

1 arrangements or ~~final~~ permanent disposition does not have greater priority to  
2 the right to disposition than as set forth in section 5227 of this title.

3 (d)(1) A funeral director or ~~crematory~~ disposition facility operator may  
4 refuse to accept bodily remains, to inter or otherwise dispose of bodily  
5 remains, or to complete the arrangements for the ~~final~~ permanent disposition  
6 until such time as the court issues an order or the parties to the action submit a  
7 final stipulation approved by the court regarding the disposition of remains.

8 (2) If the funeral director or ~~crematory~~ disposition facility operator  
9 retains the remains for ~~final~~ permanent disposition while an action is pending,  
10 the funeral director or ~~crematory~~ disposition facility operator may refrigerate  
11 or shelter the remains while awaiting a preliminary or final order of the court.  
12 The cost of refrigeration or sheltering shall be the responsibility of the party or  
13 parties who contracted with the funeral director or ~~crematory~~ disposition  
14 facility operator, the person or entity who is otherwise liable for the costs of  
15 ~~final~~ permanent disposition, or the estate as ordered by the court, or any  
16 combination of these, and the court may include in the order a decision  
17 concerning which of these shall be responsible for paying these costs.

18 (e) If a funeral director or ~~crematory~~ disposition facility operator  
19 commences an action under this section, the funeral director or ~~crematory~~  
20 disposition facility operator may ask the court to include an order against the  
21 estate or the parties for reasonable legal fees and costs. If the estate is

1 insolvent and no other person should be responsible for the filing fee, the court  
2 may waive the filing fee. The court, in its discretion, may order a party or  
3 parties to pay the reasonable costs of ~~final~~ permanent disposition as a condition  
4 of the appointment to make disposition decisions. The court may order that a  
5 party, or parties, including the petitioner, pay reasonable legal fees and costs  
6 associated with the action.

7 (f) Any appeal from the ~~probate court~~ Probate Division shall be on the  
8 record to the Civil Division of the Superior Court. There shall be no appeal as  
9 a matter of right to the Supreme Court.

10 \* \* \*

11 § 5233. LIMITED LIABILITY

12 A funeral director or ~~crematory~~ disposition facility operator shall not be  
13 subject to civil liability or subject to disciplinary action for carrying out the  
14 disposition of the remains if he or she relied in good faith on a funeral service  
15 contract or authorization or for following the instructions of an individual  
16 ~~whom~~ who the funeral director or ~~crematory~~ disposition facility operator  
17 reasonably believes or believed holds the right of disposition.

18 \* \* \*

19 \* \* \* Cemeteries \* \* \*

20 Sec. 8. 18 V.S.A. § 5302 is amended to read:

21 § 5302. DEFINITIONS

1 As used in this chapter and unless otherwise required by the context:

2 (1) “Agencies” means town cemeteries, religious or ecclesiastical  
3 society cemeteries, cemetery associations, and any person, firm, corporation,  
4 or unincorporated association engaged in the business of a cemetery.

5 (2) “Cemetery” means any plot of ground used or intended to be used  
6 for the burial or permanent disposition ~~permanently~~ of the remains of the  
7 human dead in a grave, a mausoleum, a columbarium, a vault, or other  
8 receptacle.

9 (3) “Cemetery association” means any corporation now or hereafter  
10 organized ~~which~~ that is or shall be authorized by its articles to conduct the  
11 business of a cemetery.

12 (4) “Columbarium” means a structure or room or other space in a  
13 building or structure of durable and lasting fireproof construction, containing  
14 niches, used or intended to be used, to contain ~~eremated~~ the permanent  
15 disposition of human remains.

16 (5) “Community mausoleum” means a structure or building of durable  
17 and lasting construction used or intended to be used for the permanent  
18 disposition of the remains of deceased persons in crypts or spaces, provided  
19 such crypts or spaces are available to or may be obtained by individuals or the  
20 public for a price in money or its equivalent.

1           (6) “Cremated remains” means remains of a deceased person after  
2 incineration in a ~~crematory~~ disposition facility.

3           (7) “Cremation” means the reducing of the remains of deceased persons,  
4 by the use of retorts, to cremated remains and the disposal thereof in a  
5 columbarium, niche, mausoleum, grave, or in any other manner not contrary to  
6 law.

7           ~~(8) “Crematory” means a building or structure containing one or more~~  
8 ~~retorts, used or intended to be used, for the reducing of the bodies of deceased~~  
9 ~~persons to cremated remains.~~

10           ~~(9)~~(8) “Crypt” means the chamber in a mausoleum of sufficient size to  
11 contain the remains of deceased persons.

12           (9) “Disposition facility” means a building or structure for the reducing  
13 of human remains by means of cremation, alkaline hydrolysis, or natural  
14 organic reduction.

15           (10) “Ecological land management practices” means utilization of land  
16 stewardship decision-making processes that account for the best available  
17 understanding of ecosystem functions and biological diversity.

18           (11) “Natural burial ground” means a cemetery maintained using  
19 ecological land management practices and without the use of vaults for the  
20 burial of unembalmed human remains or human remains embalmed using



1 nontoxic embalming fluids and that rest in either no burial container or in a  
2 nontoxic, nonhazardous, plant-derived burial container or shroud.

3 (12) “Natural organic reduction” means the contained, accelerated  
4 conversion of human remains to soil.

5 ~~(12)~~(13) “Niche” means a recess in a columbarium used, or intended to  
6 be used, for the permanent disposition of ~~the cremated~~ human remains of one  
7 or more deceased persons.

8 ~~(13)~~(14) “Temporary receiving vault” means a vault or crypt in a  
9 structure of durable and lasting construction; used, or intended to be used, for  
10 the temporary deposit of the remains of a deceased person for a period of time  
11 not exceeding one year.

12 Sec. 9. 18 V.S.A. § 5313 is amended to read:

13 § 5313. RECORDS; BURIAL RECORDS OPEN TO PUBLIC

14 An agency engaged in the business of a cemetery, community mausoleum,  
15 or columbarium shall provide and maintain a suitable place of deposit for the  
16 records and files of such cemetery, community mausoleum, or columbarium,  
17 of such character as will safely keep and preserve such records and files from  
18 loss and destruction, and it shall make and file proper records in such place.

19 The record of ~~burials, interments, and cremations~~ the permanent disposition of  
20 human remains shall at all reasonable times be open to the public.

21 Sec. 10. 18 V.S.A. § 5315 is amended to read:

1 § 5315. SALE OF PROPERTY FOR OTHER THAN BURIAL PURPOSES;  
2 DISPOSITION OF PROCEEDS

3 Either before or after the recording of the plat, as hereinbefore provided,  
4 whenever it is determined that such lands acquired for cemetery purposes,  
5 except those acquired by condemnation proceedings, are unsuitable for ~~burial~~  
6 ~~purposes~~ the permanent disposition of human remains, such lands may be sold  
7 for purposes other than ~~interment~~ permanent disposition and conveyed in fee  
8 simple in such manner and upon such terms as may be provided by the  
9 agencies owning the same. The proceeds thereof shall be applied to the  
10 purchase of other lands or to general cemetery purposes. When such sales are  
11 made, the land so sold shall be returned by the agencies to the tax lists for  
12 taxation. In the case of land acquired by condemnation proceedings, it shall be  
13 disposed of under the law governing the disposal of land acquired by  
14 condemnation proceedings.

15 Sec. 11. 18 V.S.A. § 5319 is amended to read:

16 § 5319. DISPOSITION OF REMAINS OF DEAD

17 (a)(1) The permanent disposition of human remains shall be by:  
18 (A) interment in the earth ~~or~~;  
19 (B) deposit in a chamber, vault, or tomb formed wholly or partly  
20 above the surface of the ground of a cemetery conducted and maintained  
21 pursuant to the laws of the State, ~~or by~~;

1           (C) deposit in a crypt of a mausoleum, ~~or by;~~

2           (D) cremation; or

3           (E) natural organic reduction.

4           (2) However, this shall not be construed to prevent a private individual  
5 from setting aside a portion of his or her premises owned in fee by him or her  
6 and using the premises as a burial space for the members of his or her  
7 immediate family, ~~so long as~~ provided his or her use for such purpose is not in  
8 violation of the health laws and regulations of the State and the town in which  
9 the land is situated.

10   \* \* \*

11       (c) ~~No deposit of the remains of the human dead~~ With the exception of  
12 human remains processed by natural organic reduction, the permanent  
13 disposition of human remains shall not be made in a single chamber, vault, or  
14 tomb wholly or partly above the surface of the ground unless the part thereof  
15 below the natural surface of the ground be of a permanent character,  
16 constructed of materials capable of withstanding extreme climatic conditions,  
17 be waterproof and air tight, and can be sealed permanently so as to prevent all  
18 escape of effluvia. That portion of the same above the natural surface of the  
19 ground shall be constructed of natural stone of a standard not less than that  
20 required by the U.S. government for monuments erected in national

1 cemeteries, of durability sufficient to withstand all conditions of weather, and  
2 of a character to ensure its permanence.

3 (d) The remains of a human body after cremation or natural organic  
4 reduction may be deposited in a niche of a columbarium, ~~in a~~ or a crypt of a  
5 mausoleum; ~~be buried;~~ or disposed of in any manner not contrary to law.

6 Sec. 12. 18 V.S.A. § 5361 is amended to read:

7 § 5361. APPROPRIATIONS AND REGULATIONS BY TOWNS

8 A town may vote sums of money necessary for purchasing, holding, and  
9 keeping in repair suitable grounds and other conveniences for ~~burying~~  
10 permanent disposition of the dead. The selectboard may make necessary  
11 regulations concerning public burial grounds and for fencing and keeping the  
12 same in proper order.

13 Sec. 13. 18 V.S.A. § 5376 is amended to read:

14 § 5376. SALE OF LOTS; TAX EXEMPTION

15 The board of cemetery commissioners, by one of the commissioners  
16 appointed by it for that purpose, in the name of the town, by deed, may grant  
17 and convey lots in such burial grounds to be used for the ~~burial~~ permanent  
18 disposition of the dead and on which tombs, cenotaphs, and other monuments  
19 are to be erected. Such lots shall be exempt from taxation. The deeds thereof  
20 shall be recorded in the office of the town clerk of the town wherein such lots  
21 lie.

1 Sec. 14. 18 V.S.A. § 5378 is amended to read:

2 § 5378. BYLAWS AND REGULATIONS

3 The board of cemetery commissioners may make necessary bylaws and  
4 regulations in respect to such burial grounds, and ~~interment~~ permanent  
5 disposition of the dead not inconsistent with law, and may alter the same.

6 Such bylaws and regulations shall be recorded in the office of the town clerk.

7 A bylaw or regulation shall not be adopted to restrain a person in the free  
8 exercise of his or her religious sentiments as to the ~~burial~~ permanent  
9 disposition of the dead.

10 Sec. 15. 18 V.S.A. § 5434 is amended to read:

11 § 5434. PENALTY FOR DOING BUSINESS AS A CEMETERY

12 ASSOCIATION WITHOUT AUTHORITY

13 A person, firm, corporation, or association, or a trust, trustee, or trustees of  
14 any person, firm, corporation, or association, who, without authority of this  
15 chapter so to do, shall exercise or attempt to exercise any powers, privileges, or  
16 franchises ~~which~~ that are specified or may be granted under this chapter to  
17 incorporated cemetery associations, or who shall by any device attempt to  
18 evade the provisions of this chapter applicable to cemetery associations in  
19 respect to the sale of ~~burial~~ lots or ~~burial~~ spaces for the permanent disposition  
20 of human remains and the disposition of the proceeds thereof, shall be fined  
21 not less than \$1,000.00 nor more than \$10,000.00, and may be enjoined from

1 further doing of such acts at the suit of any taxpayer of the State. However, the  
2 provisions of this section shall not affect or impair the rights of a person, firm,  
3 corporation, or association or a trust, trustee, or trustees of such person, firm,  
4 corporation, or association under any existing contract or contracts between  
5 such parties and incorporated cemetery associations, nor shall the performance  
6 of the provisions of such contract or contracts subject parties thereto to the  
7 penalties imposed by this section.

8 Sec. 16. 18 V.S.A. § 5435 is amended to read:

9 § 5435. SALES OF LOTS, CRYPTS, AND NICHES; HOW INCOME

10 APPLIED; RULES

11 (a) The income of a cemetery association, whether derived from the sale of  
12 lots, ~~burial~~ spaces, crypts, or niches for the permanent disposition of human  
13 remains, from donations, or otherwise, shall be exclusively applied to paying  
14 for the land or other cemetery property; laying out, preserving, protecting, and  
15 embellishing the cemetery and avenues leading thereto; the erection of  
16 buildings necessary for cemetery purposes; the establishing of a fund to care  
17 permanently for the cemetery; the repair and upkeep of mausoleums, vaults,  
18 columbariums, crypts, and niches therein; and to paying the necessary  
19 expenses of the cemetery association. A debt shall not be contracted in  
20 anticipation of future receipts, except for the original purchase of the land,  
21 community mausoleum, or columbarium, laying out, enclosing, and

1 embellishing the grounds and avenues therein and to a sum not exceeding  
2 \$50,000.00 in the whole, to be paid out of future income. ~~No part of the~~ The  
3 proceeds from the sale of lots, ~~burial~~ spaces, crypts, or niches for the  
4 permanent disposition of human remains, or other income of such association,  
5 shall ~~ever~~ not be divided among its members. All its income shall be used  
6 exclusively for the purposes of the association, as provided in this chapter, or  
7 invested in a fund the income of which shall be so used. Such association may  
8 adopt such reasonable rules and regulations as it deems expedient for disposing  
9 of and conveying ~~burial~~ lots, spaces, crypts, and niches for the permanent  
10 disposition of human remains.

11 \* \* \*

12 Sec. 17. 18 V.S.A. § 5436 is amended to read:

13 § 5436. PERPETUAL CARE FUND

14 A cemetery association established prior to June 1, 1933 may create a  
15 perpetual care fund out of surplus money on hand or ~~which~~ that has been given  
16 to it by will, deed, or otherwise. A cemetery association established after such  
17 date shall create such a perpetual care fund by applying thereto from the initial  
18 proceeds received from the sale of lots or ~~burial~~ spaces for the permanent  
19 disposition of human remains a sum ~~which~~ that shall be equivalent to and not  
20 less than 20 percent of the sale price of each lot or ~~burial~~ space so sold, and

1 such association may at any time increase the same by the addition of surplus  
2 money or property received by it by will, deed, or otherwise.

3 Sec. 18. 18 V.S.A. § 5488 is amended to read:

4 § 5488. ENLARGEMENT OF CEMETERIES BY ASSOCIATIONS-  
5 PETITION TO SUPERIOR COURT TO ACQUIRE LAND

6 When an incorporated cemetery association wishes to enlarge the limits of  
7 its burial ground, and votes to purchase additional land for ~~burial~~ permanent  
8 disposition purposes and the owner of such land refuses to convey the same to  
9 ~~such~~ the cemetery association for a reasonable compensation, the trustees or  
10 president of such association, by a petition in writing, may apply to the  
11 Superior Court in the county in which such burial ground is located for the  
12 appointment of commissioners.

13 \* \* \* Funeral Services \* \* \*

14 Sec. 19. 26 V.S.A. § 1211 is amended to read:

15 § 1211. DEFINITIONS

16 (a) As used in this chapter, unless a contrary meaning is required by the  
17 context:

18 (1) ~~“Crematory establishment” means a business registered with the~~  
19 ~~Office conducted at a specific street address or location devoted to the~~  
20 ~~disposition of dead human bodies by means of cremation, alkaline hydrolysis,~~



1 ~~or any other type of human reduction acceptable to the Director as established~~  
2 ~~by the Director by rule. [Repealed.]~~

3 (2) “Director” means the Director of the Office of Professional  
4 Regulation.

5 (3) “Funeral director” means a licensed person who is the owner, co-  
6 owner, employee, or manager of a licensed funeral establishment and who, for  
7 compensation, engages in the practice of funeral service.

8 (4) “Funeral establishment” means a business registered with the Office  
9 conducted at a specific street address or location devoted to the practice of  
10 funeral service, and includes a limited services establishment.

11 (5) “Office” means the Office of Professional Regulation.

12 (6) “Practice of funeral service” means arranging, directing, or  
13 providing for the care, preparation, or disposition of dead human bodies for a  
14 fee or other compensation. This includes:

15 (A) meeting with the public to select a method of disposition or  
16 funeral observance and merchandise;

17 (B) entering into contracts, either at-need or pre-need, for the  
18 provision of dispositions, funeral observances, and merchandise;

19 (C) arranging, directing, or performing the removal or transportation  
20 of a dead human body;

1 (D) securing or filing certificates, permits, forms, or other  
2 documents;

3 (E) supervising or arranging a funeral, memorial, viewing, or  
4 graveside observance; and

5 (F) holding oneself out to be a licensed funeral director by using the  
6 words or terms “funeral director,” “mortician,” “undertaker,” or any other  
7 words, terms, title, or picture that, when considered in context, would imply  
8 that such person is engaged in the practice of funeral service or is a licensed  
9 funeral director.

10 (7) “Removal” means the removal of dead human bodies from places of  
11 death, hospitals, institutions, or other locations, for a fee or other  
12 compensation.

13 (8) “Disposition facility” means a business registered with the Office  
14 conducted at a specific street address or location devoted to the disposition of  
15 human remains by means of cremation, alkaline hydrolysis, or natural organic  
16 reduction.

17 (9) “Natural organic reduction” has the same meaning as in 18 V.S.A.  
18 § 5302.

19 \* \* \*

20 (c) Notwithstanding this section, ~~crematory~~ owners of a disposition facility,  
21 and their personnel may engage in the listed activities in ~~subsection~~

1 subdivision (a)(6) of this section only to the extent such functions are  
2 necessary to the performance of their duties. Specifically, ~~crematory~~ personnel  
3 at a disposition facility may:

4 (1) provide for the disposition of dead human bodies by cremation,  
5 alkaline hydrolysis, or natural organic reduction and meet with the public to  
6 arrange and provide for the disposition;

7 (2) enter into contracts, without taking prepaid funds, for the provision  
8 of dispositions by cremation, alkaline hydrolysis, or natural organic reduction;

9 (3) arrange, direct, or perform the removal or transportation of a dead  
10 human body, ~~so long as~~ provided that removals are performed by licensed  
11 removal personnel; and

12 (4) secure and file certificates, permits, forms, or other documents.

13 Sec. 20. 26 V.S.A. § 1212 is amended to read:

14 § 1212. ADVISOR APPOINTEES; DIRECTOR DUTIES; RULES

15 (a)(1) The Secretary of State shall appoint four persons for five-year  
16 staggered terms to serve at the Secretary's pleasure as advisors in matters  
17 relating to funeral service. Three of the initial appointments shall be for four-,  
18 three-, and two-year terms. Appointees shall include three licensed funeral  
19 directors, one of whom is a licensed embalmer and one of whom has training  
20 or experience in the operation of ~~crematoria~~ a disposition facility. One  
21 appointee shall be a public member.



1 Sec. 22. 26 V.S.A. § 1251 is amended to read:

2 § 1251. LICENSE REQUIREMENTS

3 (a) A person, partnership, corporation, association, or other organization  
4 shall not open or maintain a funeral establishment unless the establishment is  
5 licensed by the Office to conduct the business and unless the owner, a co-  
6 owner, or manager is a licensed funeral director.

7 (b) A person, partnership, corporation, association, or other organization  
8 shall not open or maintain a ~~crematory establishment~~ disposition facility unless  
9 the establishment is licensed by the Office.

10 (c) A person shall not hold himself or herself out as performing the duties  
11 of a funeral director unless licensed by the Office.

12 (d) Except as otherwise permitted by law, a person employed by a funeral  
13 ~~or crematory~~ establishment or disposition facility shall not perform a removal  
14 unless registered with the Office.

15 Sec. 23. 26 V.S.A. § 1252 is amended to read:

16 § 1252. APPLICATION; QUALIFICATIONS

17 \* \* \*

18 (d) ~~Crematory establishment~~ Disposition facility.

19 (1) A person, partnership, corporation, association, or other organization  
20 desiring to operate a ~~crematory establishment~~ disposition facility shall apply, in  
21 writing, to the Director for a license. The applicant, if a partnership,

1 corporation, association, or other organization, must have a designated  
2 manager or co-owner who is responsible for the operation of the ~~establishment~~  
3 disposition facility and who is registered with the Office under subsection (e)  
4 of this section.

5 (2) The application for a license shall be sworn to by the individual, or a  
6 partner or a duly authorized officer of a corporation, shall be on the form  
7 prescribed and furnished by the Director, and the applicant shall furnish  
8 information, as required by rule. The application shall be accompanied by a  
9 licensing fee. However, the applicant shall not be required to pay the fee under  
10 this subsection if the applicant pays the fee under subsection (b) of this section.

11 (e) ~~Crematory~~ Disposition facility personnel.

12 (1) Any person who desires to engage in direct handling, processing,  
13 identification, ~~or cremation, alkaline hydrolysis, or natural organic reduction~~ of  
14 dead human remains within a licensed ~~crematory establishment~~ disposition  
15 facility shall register with the Office and pay the fee established in subsection  
16 1256(d) of this chapter. The applicant shall have attained the age of majority  
17 and be directly employed by a licensed ~~crematory establishment~~ disposition  
18 facility.

19 (2) The Director may prescribe, by rule, the forms for applicants, which  
20 may include proof of completion of up to three hours of education and training  
21 in programs approved by the Director.

1 (f) Removal personnel.

2 (1) Any person who desires to engage in removals shall register with the  
3 Office and pay the fee established in subsection 1256(d) of this chapter. The  
4 applicant shall have attained the age of majority and be directly employed by a  
5 licensed funeral ~~or crematory~~ establishment or disposition facility, or the  
6 University of Vermont for removals related to the University's anatomical gift  
7 program.

8 (2) The Director may prescribe, by rule, the forms for applicants, which  
9 may include proof of completion of up to three hours of education and training  
10 in infectious diseases in programs approved by the Director.

11 (3) Registrants under this subsection are authorized to perform removals  
12 only, as defined by this chapter. Unregistered personnel may accompany  
13 registered personnel to assist in removals ~~so long as~~ provided they have been  
14 instructed in handling and precautionary procedures prior to the call.

15 (g) Limited services establishment.

16 (1) The Director may adopt rules for the issuance of limited service  
17 establishment licenses in accordance with this chapter. Limited service  
18 establishment licensees are authorized to perform only disposition services  
19 without arranging, directing, or performing embalming, public viewings,  
20 gatherings, memorials, funerals, or related ceremonies. Disposition services

1 under this subsection include direct cremation, direct alkaline hydrolysis, direct  
2 natural organic reduction, immediate burial, or direct ~~green~~ natural burial.

3 (2) Limited services shall be overseen by a funeral director licensed  
4 under this chapter who is employed by the limited service establishment.

5 (3) Each limited service arrangement shall include a mandatory written  
6 disclosure providing notice to the purchaser that limited services do not include  
7 embalming, public viewings, gatherings, memorials, funerals, or related  
8 ceremonies.

9 (4) A funeral director associated with a funeral establishment licensed  
10 under subsection (c) of this section may provide limited services ~~so long as,~~  
11 provided the mandatory disclosure described under subdivision (3) of this  
12 subsection is provided to the purchaser.

13 Sec. 24. 26 V.S.A. § 1254 is amended to read:

14 § 1254. ISSUANCE OR DENIAL OF LICENSE

15 If, upon review, it is found that the applicant possesses sufficient skill and  
16 knowledge of the business and has met the application and qualification  
17 requirements set forth in this chapter, the Director shall issue to him or her a  
18 license to engage in the business of funeral director, embalmer, funeral  
19 establishment, ~~crematory establishment~~ disposition facility, or removal  
20 personnel.





1           (9) Establishment of a funeral services trust account.

2           (A) For purposes of funding the Funeral Services Trust Account, the  
3           Office shall assess each funeral ~~or crematory~~ establishment or disposition  
4           facility a per funeral, burial, or disposition fee of \$6.00.

5           (B) The Account shall be administered by the Secretary of State and  
6           shall be used for the sole purpose of protecting prepaid funeral contract holders  
7           in the event a funeral establishment or disposition facility defaults on its  
8           obligations under the contract.

9           (C) The Account shall consist of all fees collected under this  
10          subdivision (9) and any assessments authorized by the General Assembly. The  
11          principal and interest remaining in the Account at the close of any fiscal year  
12          shall not revert but shall remain in the Account for use in succeeding fiscal  
13          years.

14          (D) Notwithstanding the provisions of this subdivision (9) to the  
15          contrary, if the fund balance at the beginning of a fiscal year is at least  
16          \$200,000.00, no fees shall be imposed during that fiscal year.

17          (E) Payments on consumer claims from the fund shall be made on  
18          warrants by the Commissioner of Finance and Management, at the direction of  
19          the Director.

20          (F) When an investigation reveals financial discrepancies within a  
21          licensed establishment or facility, the Director may order an audit to determine

1 the existence of possible claims on the Funeral Services Trust Account. In  
2 cases where both a funeral ~~and crematory~~ establishment or disposition facility  
3 are involved in a disposition, the party receiving the burial permit shall be  
4 responsible for the disposition fee.

5 \* \* \* Fee Structure as of June 1, 2023 \* \* \*

6 Sec. 27. 3 V.S.A. § 125 is amended to read:

7 § 125. FEES

8 \* \* \*

9 (b) Unless otherwise provided by law, the following fees shall apply to all  
10 professions regulated by the Director in consultation with advisor appointees  
11 under Title 26:

12 (1) Application for registration, \$75.00, except application for:

13 (A) Private investigator and security services employees, unarmed  
14 registrants, \$60.00.

15 (B) Private investigator and security service employees, transitory  
16 permits, \$60.00.

17 (C) Private investigator and security service employees, armed  
18 registrants, \$120.00.

19 (2) Application for licensure or certification, \$100.00, except  
20 application for:

21 (A) Barbering or cosmetology schools and shops, \$300.00.

- 1           (B) Funeral directors, embalmers, ~~crematory~~ crematory disposition facility  
2           personnel, removal personnel, funeral establishments, ~~crematory~~  
3           ~~establishments~~ disposition facilities, and limited services establishments,  
4           \$70.00.
- 5           (C) Application for real estate appraisers, \$275.00.
- 6           (D) Temporary real estate appraiser license, \$150.00.
- 7           (E) Appraisal management company registration, \$600.00.
- 8           (F) Private investigator or security services agency, \$340.00.
- 9           (G) Private investigator and security services agency, \$400.00.
- 10          (H) Private investigator or security services sole proprietor, \$250.00.
- 11          (I) Private investigator or security services unarmed licensee,  
12          \$150.00.
- 13          (J) Private investigator or security services armed licensee, \$200.00.
- 14          (K) Private investigator and security services instructor, \$120.00.
- 15          (3) Optician trainee registration, \$50.00.
- 16          (4) Biennial renewal, \$240.00, except biennial renewal for:
- 17           (A) Independent clinical social workers and master’s social workers,  
18           \$150.00.
- 19           (B) Occupational therapists and assistants, \$150.00.
- 20           (C) Physical therapists and assistants, \$150.00.
- 21           (D) Optician trainees, \$100.00.

- 1 (E) Barbers, cosmetologists, nail technicians, and estheticians,  
2 \$130.00.
- 3 (F) Schools of barbering or cosmetology, \$300.00.
- 4 (G) Funeral directors and embalmers, \$280.00.
- 5 (H) ~~Crematory~~ Disposition facility personnel and removal personnel,  
6 \$100.00.
- 7 (I) Funeral establishments, ~~crematory establishments~~ disposition  
8 facilities, and limited services establishments, \$640.00.
- 9 (J) [Repealed.]
- 10 (K) Radiologic therapist, radiologic technologist, nuclear medicine  
11 technologist, \$150.00.
- 12 (L) Certified alcohol and drug abuse counselor, certified apprentice  
13 addiction professional, and licensed alcohol and drug abuse counselor,  
14 \$225.00.
- 15 (M) Private investigator or security services agency, or both,  
16 \$300.00.
- 17 (N) Private investigator or security services unarmed licensee,  
18 \$120.00.
- 19 (O) Private investigator or security services armed licensee, \$180.00.
- 20 (P) Private investigator or security services unarmed registrant,  
21 \$80.00.

1 (Q) Private investigator or security services armed registrant,  
2 \$130.00.

3 (R) Private investigator or security services sole proprietor, \$250.00.

4 (S) Private investigator or security services instructor, \$180.00.

5 (5) Limited temporary license or work permit, \$50.00.

6 \* \* \*

7 \* \* \* Effective Dates and Transitional Rulemaking Provision \* \* \*

8 Sec. 28. EFFECTIVE DATES

9 Sec. 27 (fees) shall take effect on June 1, 2023. All other sections shall take  
10 effect on January 1, 2023, except that the Director of the Office of Professional  
11 Regulation shall adopt any rules necessary prior to that date in order to perform  
12 the Director’s duties under this act.

13  
14  
15  
16  
17

18 (Committee vote: \_\_\_\_\_)

19 \_\_\_\_\_

20 Representative \_\_\_\_\_

21 FOR THE COMMITTEE