



## Funeral Service Association of Nova Scotia

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March 25, 2020

RE: Funeral Associations Unite for Recognition as Essential and Critical Services

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In the face of this unprecedented health crisis, the national and provincial funeral associations of Canada are combining their efforts to ensure that their communities continue to be served in their time of need and that they can continue to play their role in public health.

"Funeral directors provide guidance to people who are in difficult, stressful time on a daily basis, and we walk them through the next steps. We continue to serve our communities in this capacity during these uncertain times, and it is important that people know they can still look to us to assist them," stated Patrick Curry, Acting President of the Funeral Service Association of Nova Scotia (FSANS).

Recommendations by the federal government and provincial governments to work from home and self-isolate impact funeral providers, but the profession continues to do their best to serve their communities.

The need for funeral home staff to be recognized as an essential service in the battle to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 is front-of-mind for funeral homes across the country. "Funeral professionals are on the front-line of dealing with the deceased of this virus, and while we stand ready to serve, the health and safety of our professionals must be considered," says Funeral Service Association of Canada President, Brett Watson.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is required for funeral professionals to safely handle the deceased in a safe and sanitary way, and there is concern in the profession that suppliers will not be able to deliver PPE at a time when this basic and enhanced protection is needed. Gloves, masks, gowns are all part of the required protocols for routine practices and additional



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precautions for mortuary care. Community and Public Health depends on the safe and sanitary handling of deceased persons. Difficulty obtaining Personal Protective Equipment impacts funeral workers too and potentially impedes their ability to serve the needs of their communities.

“We are calling on all governments to take the necessary actions to make funeral professionals an essential service and provide them with the necessary Personal Protective Equipment in order to allow them to continue to perform their duties. Our members are ready to continue serving their communities with the right government framework in place,” declared Watson.

"Funeral service providers are a vital component in ensuring that Canadians are able to weather this storm as best we are able. It is imperative that our professionals are considered and consulted as communities continue to adapt to the new realities that COVID-19 is creating," concluded Curry.

The Funeral Service Association of Canada (FSAC) is the national association representing funeral homes and professionals from across Canada. For FSAC media inquiries, contact Kyle Larkin, FSAC Liaison, (tel) 905-449-9077 (email) [kyle@impactcanada.com](mailto:kyle@impactcanada.com)

For FSANS media inquiries, please contact us by email at: [info.fsans@bellaliant.net](mailto:info.fsans@bellaliant.net). For a list of member funeral homes, please visit: [www.fsans.com](http://www.fsans.com)