**How Arizona Registrars**

**Can Assist Arizona Families to Care for Their Own Dead**

Arizona families have the legal right to custody and control of their own dead. They may also choose to file the death certificate without the assistance of a funeral director. Registrars may be unfamiliar with paper filings and families handling this paperwork on their own. Knowing how to serve these families, who are exercising their rights under Arizona law, is a vital public service.

**Legal Authority of Families**

In Arizona, the legislative authority for families to act as unpaid funeral services practitioners is found in **Arizona Statute § 36-326** where the law declares that a body disposition permit may be issued to “a funeral director or other responsible person.” The responsible person is described additionally as the “Authoring agent” in ARS 36-831, starting with the spouse or designated agent.

**Ways You Are Empowered to Assist Families**

As a registrar, you may field inquiries or accept filings from families wishing to file the death certificate without reliance on a funeral director. These suggestions will help these families receive the same high level of service provided to those using a professional to file electronically:

1. Ensure that you and all of your colleagues are familiar with Arizona law regarding a family’s right to care for their own dead, including the filing of the death certificate and receipt of the disposition transit permit.
2. If additional clarification or training is needed to ensure paper filings will be accepted and processed in a timely fashion, please consult the State of Arizona Vital Records Department.
3. Familiarizing yourself with the additional information resources below will further equip you to serve families who choose to care for their dead.

**Additional Information**

Arizona Funeral Resources & Education www.AZfuneral.org

National End-of-Life Doula Alliance www.nedalliance.org

National Home Funeral Alliance www.homefuneralalliance.org

Funeral Consumers Alliance www.funerals.org