



Matt Kean
Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation

MEDIA RELEASE

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CONSUMER RIGHTS EXTEND TO THE GRAVE

Grieving families are increasingly being taken advantage of when planning a funeral, with the number of complaints to NSW Fair Trading jumping to record levels.

It prompted a warning from Minister for Better Regulation Matt Kean, who said consumers should know their rights when choosing a funeral package, to avoid dodgy operators who don't properly disclose fees and charges.

"Losing a loved one is a heartbreaking and stressful experience. It's possibly one of the hardest challenges a person can face," Mr Kean said.

"It's appalling that some funeral homes are taking advantage of consumers at their most vulnerable, and slapping them with excepted fees and hidden costs."

From January 2013 to July 2018, Fair Trading received 175 complaints about funeral services, and 2017 recorded the highest amount during that period, at 37 complaints.

The nature of complaints were around hidden fees and charges, the high cost of services, and consumers being taken advantage of in a vulnerable state.

All operators must comply with the Funeral Information Standard, which requires an itemised quote of the goods and services to be provided, before entering into any agreement.

Mr Kean encouraged families to follow some simple Fair Trading tips for organising a funeral, including:

- Ask about a basic funeral package;
- Consider a financial arrangement such as a funeral bond or funeral insurance;
- Pre-purchase the grave site if you intend to be buried;
- Talk to your family and friends during the organising process;
- Seek comparative quotes from other providers with a full breakdown of services.

"The majority of businesses within the funeral industry are honest and hardworking but it doesn't mean a few rogue operators won't attempt to take advantage of people in mourning," Mr Kean said.

For more information on the funeral industry, visit www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au

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