

From the Hotline

If you have any questions on this column or other policy and procedural material, please have your Hotline designee call the **Policy Hotline at 617-348-8478**.

- Q.** A funeral director has sent us a completed *Application for Payment of Funeral and Final Disposition*. The application indicates that there was a prepaid burial agreement in the decedent's name totaling \$1,000. Is this funeral director entitled to a benefit from DTA if the total cost of the funeral and burial is \$3,400?
- A.** Yes. The Department can pay up to \$1,100 for funeral and final disposition payments. As long as there are no other available resources to be deducted and all of the other requirements for this benefit are met, this funeral director is entitled to a \$100 payment. See Field Operations Memo 2010-54 for more information.
- Q.** We received an *Application for Payment of Funeral and Final Disposition* from the parent of a deceased nineteen-year-old. The application indicates that the parent has \$3,000 in a savings account. This savings account balance is the only reported available resource. The bill attached to the application shows that the funeral and cremation charge will total \$4,200. Since there are \$3,000 in savings reported and the Department can only pay up to \$1,100 after available resources are deducted, should I deny this application?
- A.** No. This single, nineteen-year-old, has no financially responsible relatives. Parents are not financially responsible for their adult children and this decedent was unmarried. If the decedent had no other available assets and the decedent's circumstances meet all of the other requirements at 106 CMR 705.700, then the full \$1,100 payment may be approved.
- Q.** Yesterday our TAO received an *Application for Payment of Funeral and Final Disposition* from one of our local funeral directors. In reading the application, I recognized the decedent's name because his surviving spouse lives in my condominium building. About a month ago, this surviving spouse mentioned to me that she was recently separated from her husband, and then further explained that she was still legally married. Since this means that my neighbor is a financially responsible relative, should I make contact with her to determine the amount of her available resources?
- A.** No. In this situation, contact the funeral director and explain to him that the person completing the *Application for Payment of Funeral and Final Disposition* must be a spouse or next of kin, unless none is available. (This information is printed on the application.) As long as the next of kin is known, he or she should complete the application. The funeral director, in this situation, may contact the spouse and request that she complete the application. If the spouse wants to make an application, any available resources owned by the decedent or recently separated spouse must be reported. The Department may pay the balance of the funeral and final disposition costs, up to \$1,100.