

At the FCA, our volunteers frequently hear from people who are trying to make arrangements with little or no money. Unfortunately, the FCA has no resources to assist with funeral arrangements (our annual budget wouldn't buy a casket), but we have some general recommendations that allow disposition for a very modest amount. The least expensive options is a direct cremation. This option allows the disposition to be handled immediately and a memorial service to be organized at a later date. Direct burial is substantially more expensive, but will still likely be far less than any kind of traditional funeral arrangements. When even direct cremation is beyond your means, your best bet is to contact your county medical examiners office. Generally, they should be able to direct you to disposition arrangements that are provided at public expense. These arrangements may not be palatable, for example Dallas County offers a choice of:

- Through the Forensics Office, the body can be donated to the local medical school at no charge if it qualifies. The body will be used for whatever the medical school sees fit, and after approximately one year, the remains will be cremated and returned to any listed family member. If unclaimed, the cremains will be scattered in a garden on the medical school grounds.
- The family can come to the Forensics office and sign a waiver stating that they do not have the resources, or that they will not accept financial responsibility for the body's disposition. The body will then be removed and cremated at no charge to the family. The cremains will not be returned to the family.

What is available will vary by county.