

**IN THE COMMISSIONERS COURT  
OF  
WISE COUNTY  
ORDER SETTING THE POLICY FOR PAUPER BURIALS**

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED, ADJUDGED AND DECREED that the Commissioners Court of Wise County, Texas, hereby establishes and creates a policy for Pauper burials within Wise County through this order.

THEREFORE, the purpose of this order is to outline procedures to provide indigent burials to Wise County residents according to the Texas Health and Safety Code Section 694.002-- DUTY OF COMMISSIONERS COURT CONCERNING DISPOSITION OF BODY OF DECEASED PAUPERS---  
The Commissioners Court of each county shall provide for the disposition of the body of a deceased pauper.

FURTHER, the Texas Health and Safety Code in Sec. 711.002 provides for the priority of individuals that have the duty to inter and are liable for the reasonable cost of interment:

- (1) the person designated in a written instrument signed by the decedent;
- (2) the decedent's surviving spouse;
- (3) any one of the decedent's surviving adult children;
- (4) either one of the decedent's surviving parents;
- (5) any one of the decedent's surviving adult siblings; or
- (6) any adult person in the next degree of kinship in the order named by law to inherit the estate of the decedent.

**Wise County only has a duty to inter if no one meets the priorities in the list above.**

However, a person that is liable to inter may apply for assistance for a Pauper Burial from Wise County. A person whose death occurs in Wise County maybe certified as a pauper if after a reasonable investigation by Wise County Indigent Health it is determined that (1) the estate does not have any resources or (2) the decedents' family does not have adequate resources or (3) their identities are unknown.

**PROCEDURE**

1. **Referral**-Pauper burials must first be referred by the funeral home to the County. This is accomplished by filling out a Request for Information Form, which will be sent to Wise County Indigent Health. **Refusal to fill out the form or any part thereof will be cause for an automatic denial. NO referral will be accepted from families or friends.**
2. If the referral meets prequalification screening, the Indigent Health director will contact and meet with the family/ representative of the deceased. The following criteria will be considered:
  - a. **Residents**--The deceased individuals must have been residents of Wise County for at least ninety (90) days prior to death to be considered for burial assistance.

- b. **Financial Screening**-To be completed by the Wise County Indigent Health Office by providing the Information Requested by Indigent Health. Indigent Health will use the information provided to determine if an individual applying for assistance has been 21% below the National Minimum Income Standard for the last ninety (90) days or if other means are available for assistance. (i.e. Veteran Services, Red cross, Social Security Administration etc.)  
**-It is the Policy of Wise County to contact the Wise County Veteran's Services Office and the Wise County Veteran's Group if the deceased is found to be a Veteran.**  
 -Any assets/ benefits/ income /funds due the deceased person must be applied to the funeral expense. If assets/benefits/ income/ funds are available and are more than Wise County allows for a burial, the county will deny the application.
- c. **Qualification**--If an individual, family member or designee meets the criteria of being a Pauper by using the above mentioned criteria, Wise County will approve the burial or cremation. Wise County will contact the funeral home and confirm the approval.
- d. **Forms and Billing**—the County Judge may implement and/or modify forms as necessary to allow the furtherance of this policy. Invoices should be sent to the Wise County Auditor's Office.

In the event that any personal funds of the deceased become available after Wise County has paid the expense herein: The Funeral Home shall promptly reimburse Wise County upon receipt of said personal funds in the amount of monies received.

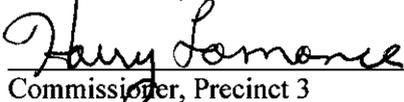
**THE COUNTY MAY REQUEST REIMBURSEMENT OR FILE SUIT SEEKING RECOVERY FOR INTERMENT IF RECOURCES OR FAMILY MEMBERS ARE NOT REPORTED AT THE TIME OF THE APPLICATION.**

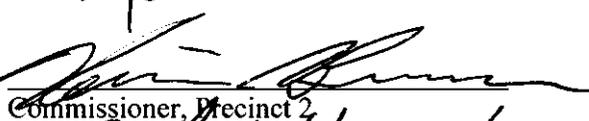
Read and adopted this 26 day of May, 2015

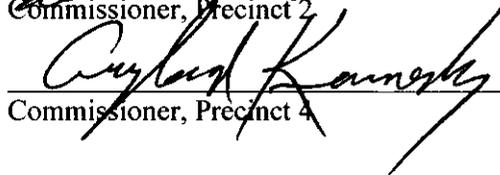
  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 County Judge

Absent

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Commissioner, Precinct 1

  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Commissioner, Precinct 3

  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Commissioner, Precinct 2

  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Commissioner, Precinct 4

ATTEST  
  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 County Clerk