



AUSTRALIAN  
FUNERAL  
DIRECTORS  
ASSOCIATION

22 November 2021

The Hon. Martin Foley  
Minister for Health  
Level 22/50 Lonsdale Street  
MELBOURNE, VIC 3000

Via email: [minister.health@health.vic.gov.au](mailto:minister.health@health.vic.gov.au)

**Request for air purification grants for the funeral industry to protect staff and mourners from COVID-19 infection**

Dear Minister Foley,

On behalf of the Australian Funeral Directors Association (AFDA) and Victorian Funeral Director Member Firms, I am writing to request the Victorian Department of Health consider air purification grants for the funeral industry in order to better protect funeral home staff and mourners, especially those at high risk, from COVID-19 infection.

As funerals fall into a minority of industries that continue to serve unvaccinated persons or those with an unknown vaccination status, funeral staff and mourners are left at greater risk of contracting COVID-19 which increases the likelihood of COVID-19 spreading more rapidly throughout Victoria and interstate. Under Phase D of Victoria's Roadmap to deliver the National Plan, funerals where vaccination status is not being checked can operate at a capacity of 50 people per facility with a density quotient of one person per 4 sqm.

The funeral industry has remained vigilant throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, working harder than ever to ensure families were able to provide meaningful and dignified funeral services all whilst managing the daily challenges of complying with ever-changing government directions.

The industry has covered the cost of providing their own Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) without government support, despite handling deceased bodies infected with COVID-19. The industry was able to protect staff and mourners from the risk of contracting COVID-19 in such situations due to strict infection control procedures, however with funeral attendance for unvaccinated persons now allowed at a considerable capacity, additional equipment is required to ensure the safety and protection of staff, and vaccinated and unvaccinated mourners – especially those who are considered to be in a high-risk category, such as elderly persons.

*Promoting*

*professional*

*funeral standards*

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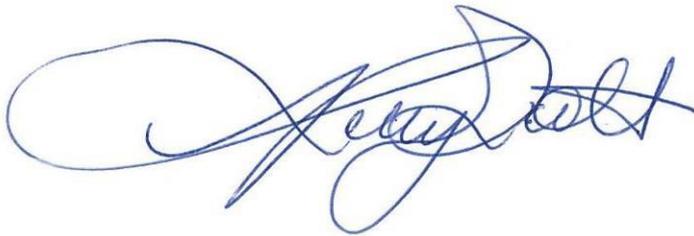
[sherida.good@afda.org.au](mailto:sherida.good@afda.org.au)  
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AFDA Victorian Member firms are currently seeking quotes for either portable air purification units, or preferably air purification systems that can be built into pre-existing air conditioning units that can operate at a lower volume more suited to funerals. The quotes received thus far are proving very difficult for funeral directors to afford, especially due to the economic losses suffered due to the pandemic where attendee limits and funeral services were severely restricted.

With funerals already operating with up to 50 mourners of unknown vaccination status, the AFDA Victorian Divisional Council welcomes a response in relation to our request for air purification grants for the funeral industry as soon as possible.

Please direct any correspondence in relation to this matter to Sherida Good via email at the AFDA National Office on [sherida.good@afda.org.au](mailto:sherida.good@afda.org.au).

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kelly Scott', with a large, decorative flourish on the left side.

Kelly Scott  
President, AFDA Victorian Divisional Council