

Does your pre-planned funeral home have your RODOR?

If your first thought is "What in the heck is a RODOR?" then you are not alone. RODOR stands for *Right of Disposition of Remains*, and the RODOR form is an important part of any estate plan. To ensure that your wishes are carried out after your death, you should not only complete a RODOR form, but also provide a copy to the funeral home if you have pre-planned your funeral.

Ohio law authorizes a competent person who is 18 years or older (known as the declarant) to appoint a representative to make decisions concerning the disposition of one's body after death. The law allows the representative to make determinations about the location, manner and condition of the disposition of the declarant's bodily remains. Additionally, the law allows the representative to make funeral arrangements and purchase burial or cremation goods and services on behalf of the declarant.

The RODOR form also allows the declarant to express his or her wishes regarding the manner in which the right of disposition should be exercised, including any religious observations to be considered. Our RODOR forms also include a Funeral and Burial Instructions form, which can be used to describe additional details about your wishes.

Although completing a RODOR form is a good first step, it is important to provide a copy of the form to the funeral home if you have pre-planned your funeral. A client of our office had pre-planned her funeral and indicated on her RODOR form that she did not want one of her sons to be notified of the funeral when she died. Our client wanted to be cremated, but the funeral home had a policy that all of the next of kin had to be notified and consent to cremation. Our client's representative tried to explain to the funeral home that the representative had the authority under the RODOR form to decide that the body be cremated, but because the funeral home did not have a copy of the form on file, a legal hassle followed. After a few days, someone higher up at the funeral home became involved and understood that the RODOR form granted authority to the representative to ask for cremation without notifying the declarant's son. Had the form been on file to begin with, the entire predicament could have been avoided.

While no one enjoys sitting around and planning one's funeral or deciding how to dispose of one's body after one dies, making these decisions is a necessary evil. Put it in a positive light by considering how much headache and stress you can save your family during a difficult time by diligently completing your entire estate plan now. They'll certainly be glad you did.