

Your Complete Guide to Selling Cemetery Property



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Many individuals often pre-purchase burial plots, frequently within family-owned cemeteries. However, life events like divorce, relocation, or shifts in religious beliefs can lead to the desire to sell these plots. If you find yourself in this situation, you may wonder about your options. Explore how to sell cemetery property in this informative guide.

Please note, this guide serves as a starting point. Consumers should research state-specific regulations on selling cemetery property as they vary.



Why do people want to sell their cemetery property?

In the past, families commonly had shared burial plots. However, today, people are more mobile, often living far from their hometowns and relocating frequently as adults. As a result, they may prefer burial in a different location from their family plots.

You or a loved one might opt for a different burial method, prompting the decision to sell burial spaces. Reasons could include choosing cremation or opting for a green burial, which might require a move to another cemetery.

At times, significant life changes like divorce, remarriage, or shifts in religious beliefs prompt a desire for burial elsewhere.

This means that family burial plots reserved years ago or purchased during residence elsewhere may now be unnecessary.

Is it disrespectful to not use a family burial plot?

Some may wonder if it's disrespectful to choose a different cemetery from one's predecessors. However, it's crucial to recognize everyone's right to their own funeral and burial preferences. Discussing these matters before the space owner passes can prevent confusion and facilitate the sale of any unnecessary plots.



Memorializing Family Spaces with a Marker

One might prefer burial outside the family plot. However, there are still ways to memorialize them at the family cemetery, despite their different burial location.

If the deceased wishes to be buried beside a spouse elsewhere, surviving relatives can consider placing an additional marker on the family plot, subject to cemetery approval.

It's a way to honor ancestors' wishes while respecting the deceased's preferences. Please consult your cemetery service providers for guidance.

What are the easiest options to sell cemetery property?

The easiest solution is to pass your spaces on to another family member who may have a connection to the area and wishes to purchase them.

If no family member is interested in buying, you can inquire about selling your cemetery spaces back to the cemetery directly. Contact them and ask if they're open to repurchasing. It's a common request, so don't hesitate to inquire.

Keep in mind that the cemetery may not offer the current market value for the spaces, so you might receive less money than anticipated.



What are some other ways to sell cemetery burial spaces?

If family members aren't interested and you prefer not to sell back to the cemetery, you can resell the space yourself. While once considered taboo, it's now more accepted as people increasingly sell their burial spaces.

First, review your state's laws as regulations regarding selling burial spaces vary by municipality. Many jurisdictions mandate giving the cemetery the right of first refusal, making it crucial to start with them.

If you're legally allowed to sell cemetery property on the secondary market, an online search can provide insights into the local marketplace. However, be aware that some buyers might hesitate to purchase from a private seller. Optimal selling locations include popular retirement destinations like Florida, Arizona, and Texas.

Consider consulting the church or funeral home for guidance. They might connect you with potential buyers or assist in the selling process.

If you choose to sell your burial space, consider using free platforms like Craigslist or Ebay. List your space there to find potential buyers and save on fees. However, remember to conduct your due diligence, ensuring you have the correct paperwork and receive payment for the spaces.



Consider utilizing online cemetery property resellers, but be discerning. Not all platforms are the same. Some function as mere listing forums, taking a commission from the sale. Others act as brokerage agents, ensuring a smooth and legal process. Research thoroughly before deciding.

Important Tips to Keep in Mind:

- Ensure you possess all necessary legal documents for selling or transferring ownership.
- Consult the cemetery authorities before attempting to sell independently or through a broker.
- Don't feel obligated to use a company or broker; explore online platforms for listing burial spaces.
- If selling independently, consider involving a lawyer or cemetery representative for paperwork assistance.
- If using a reseller, conduct thorough research to ensure their credibility.
- Beware of companies with multiple fees; opt for those charging a flat registration fee to avoid accumulating costs.
- Understand that selling cemetery property may take time, but it's feasible with patience and persistence.



Can a Loved One Be Moved From the Cemetery?

While cemeteries are typically viewed as a final resting place, circumstances might arise prompting the desire to relocate a loved one to another cemetery. For instance, you may wish to move them closer to other family members.

While relocating a loved one to another cemetery is possible, it entails logistical challenges and time. Consulting with a local funeral director or cemetery service professional can streamline the process and ensure a smooth relocation.

First, consult the next of kin—surviving spouses and children—to ensure unanimous agreement. If everyone is in agreement, the next step is disinterring, which involves unearthing the original burial. Funeral home and cemetery staff can manage this process. For burials less than 10 years old, it's typically straightforward. Older burials may pose complications, but your funeral director or cemetery staff can advise accordingly.

Your loved one will be reinterred at the chosen burial site in the new cemetery, incurring additional costs and charges.

An important consideration is memorialization, particularly the headstone. While efforts are made to prevent damage during relocation, replacement may be necessary in rare cases where damage occurs despite precautions.

Relocating a loved one between cemeteries is feasible, particularly with support from a trusted funeral director and cemetery staff.