

641—97.14 (144) Disinterment permits.

97.14(1) Disinterment of a dead human body or fetus shall be allowed for the purpose of autopsy or reburial only, and then only if the disinterment is accomplished by a funeral director.

97.14(2) Disinterment permits shall be required for any relocation aboveground or belowground of remains from the original site of interment. Disinterment permits shall be valid for 30 days after the date the permit is signed by the state registrar. Disinterment permits are issued on a form as prescribed by the state registrar with copies to be distributed as follows:

a. One copy filed with the sexton or person in charge of the cemetery in which disinterment is to be made;

b. One copy to be used during transportation of the remains;

c. One copy filed with the sexton or person in charge of the cemetery of reburial; and

d. One copy to be returned to the state registrar by the funeral director within ten days after the date of disinterment.

97.14(3) When removed from the vault for final burial, a dead human body or fetus, properly embalmed and placed in a receiving vault, shall not be considered a disinterment.

97.14(4) The following persons who are competent adults may acquire a disinterment permit without a court order pursuant to Iowa Code sections 144.34 and 144C.5 in the following descending order:

a. A designee, or alternate designee, acting pursuant to the decedent's declaration.

b. The surviving spouse of the decedent, if not legally separated from the decedent, whose whereabouts are reasonably ascertainable.

c. A surviving child of the decedent or, if there is more than one surviving child, a majority of the surviving children whose whereabouts are reasonably ascertainable.

d. The surviving parent or parents of the decedent whose whereabouts are reasonably ascertainable.

e. A surviving grandchild of the decedent or, if there is more than one surviving grandchild, a majority of the surviving grandchildren whose whereabouts are reasonably ascertainable.

f. A surviving sibling of the decedent or, if there is more than one surviving sibling, a majority of the surviving siblings whose whereabouts are reasonably ascertainable.

g. A surviving grandparent of the decedent or, if there is more than one surviving grandparent, a majority of the surviving grandparents whose whereabouts are reasonably ascertainable.

h. A person in the next degree of kinship to the decedent in the order named by law to inherit the estate of the decedent under the rules of inheritance for intestate succession or, if there is more than one such surviving person, a majority of such surviving persons whose whereabouts are reasonably ascertainable.

i. A person who represents that the person knows the identity of the decedent and who signs an affidavit warranting the identity of the decedent and assuming the right to control final disposition of the decedent's remains and the responsibility to pay any expense attendant to such final disposition. A person who warrants the identity of the decedent pursuant to this paragraph is liable for all damages that result, directly or indirectly, from that warrant.

j. The county medical examiner, if responsible for the decedent's remains.

97.14(5) A funeral director may await a court order before proceeding with disinterment of a decedent's remains if the funeral director is aware of a dispute among:

a. Persons who are members of the same class of persons described in subrule 97.14(4); or

b. Persons who are authorized under subrule 97.14(4) and the executor named in the decedent's will or personal representative appointed by the court.