

701—285.21(422,423) Morticians or funeral directors. A mortician or funeral director is engaged in the business of selling both tangible personal property and funeral services. Examples of the former are caskets, other burial containers, flowers, and grave clothing. Examples of the latter are cremation, transportation by hearse and embalming. Tax is due only upon gross receipts from the sale of tangible personal property and taxable services, and not upon gross receipts from the sale of nontaxable services.

If a mortician or funeral director separately itemizes charges for tangible personal property, taxable services and nontaxable services, as required by the rules of the Federal Trade Commission, or Iowa Code section 523A.8(1) “b,” whichever is applicable, tax is due only upon the gross receipts from the sales of tangible personal property and taxable services. If contrary to the rules or the statute, or if the applicable rules are rescinded or the statute repealed, and the mortician or funeral director charges a lump sum to a customer covering the entire cost of the funeral without dividing the charges for sales of tangible personal property and taxable and nontaxable services, the mortician or funeral director shall report the full amount of the funeral bill less any cash advanced by the mortician or funeral director, with tax due on 50 percent of the difference. *Kistner v. Iowa State Board of Assessment and Review*, 224 Iowa 404, 280 N.W. 587 (1938). Cash advance items may include, but are not limited to, the following: cemetery or crematory services, pallbearers, public transportation, clergy honoraria, flowers, musicians, singers, nurses, obituary notices, gratuities, and death certificates.

The mortician or funeral director is considered to be purchasing caskets, outer burial containers, and grave clothing for resale, and may purchase these items from suppliers without payment of tax. The mortician or director should present the supplier with a certificate of resale as set out in rule 701—15.3(423). A mortician or director is considered to be the user or consumer of office furniture and equipment, funeral home furnishings, advertising calendars, booklets, motor vehicles and accessories, embalming equipment, instruments, fluid and other chemicals used in embalming, cosmetics, and grave equipment, stretchers, baskets, and other items if title or possession does not pass to the customer. *Kistner*, supra.

For purposes of this rule, the terms of morticians or funeral directors shall also include cemeteries, cemetery associations and anyone engaged in activities similar to those discussed in the rule.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code sections 422.42(3), 422.43, 423.1 and 423.2.
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