

Dear ,

I am writing to seek your support for waiving of the fee of a burial plot by county council's when a baby who has died and is being buried.

The death of a baby is something that parents are often completely emotionally and financially unprepared for. Many bereaved parents must rely on the generosity of friends and family or must take out a bank loan to pay for their baby's burial or cremation and funeral. In the darkest moment of a bereaved parent's life, they should not have to endure the financial burden of meeting funeral costs.

If parents choose to bury their baby, these costs can involve buying a new grave / burial in a family plot / burial in angel's plot. If parents choose to cremate their baby's body, some crematoria do not charge a fee, but some do which range between 160 euro and 330 euro. The above fees may not include the cost of an urn, courier to return to baby's ashes in an urn, chapel service or burial of the urn. Other additional costs can include a funeral director if the parents choose to get a funeral director to arrange their baby's funeral, the grave digger, flowers and venues and refreshments at gatherings after the funeral.

Kildare County Council has a recently introduced a policy to waiver the fee for a single burial plot where a baby under 18 months old will be buried. If parents choose to purchase a family plot for their baby, the plot fee will be equally reduced. Alternatively, if parents choose to bury their baby in an "angels" plot, the council will also waive the fee.

1. All local authorities to introduce the same policy as Kildare County Council as a best practice standard.
2. All local authorities to waive the fees for planning permission for headstones, where a baby will be buried.
3. A Children's Burial Fund should be established by the Department of Social Protection so that local authorities can claim back the cost of the waivers outlined above.

Please lend your support to this proposal to ensure that bereaved parents whose baby has died are not placed under a financial burden to pay for their baby's burial or cremation.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards,