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| Cemetery Sector Governance Support Unit newsletter |
| Edition 2, 2022 |
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In this issue

[Contact us 1](#_Toc112924129)

[Welcome 1](#_Toc112924130)

[Contractor’s insurance requirements 1](#_Toc112924131)

[Abstracts of accounts 2021–22 2](#_Toc112924132)

[Grants program 2](#_Toc112924133)

[Revisions to the Class A and Class B manuals 2](#_Toc112924134)

[Right of interment and interment service fees 2](#_Toc112924135)

[Update to fact sheet 3](#_Toc112924136)

[Updating historical right of interment records 3](#_Toc112924137)

[Managing poor trust member behaviour 3](#_Toc112924138)

[Secretary’s handbook 3](#_Toc112924139)

[Recruitment toolkit for Class B cemetery trusts 4](#_Toc112924140)

[Class B appointments in an election year 4](#_Toc112924141)

[Update of contact details forms 4](#_Toc112924142)

[Governance and operational training 4](#_Toc112924143)

# Contact us

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| Phone (freecall) 1800 034 280 Fax (03) 9096 9186  [Email the Cemetery Sector Governance Support Unit](mailto:cemeteries@health.vic.gov.au) <cemeteries@health.vic.gov.au>  [Visit the Cemeteries and Crematoria webpage](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/cemeteries-and-crematoria) <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/cemeteries-and-crematoria>  **Postal address**  Cemetery Sector Governance Support Unit Department of Health  PO Box 4057 Melbourne VIC 3001 |

# Welcome

**Welcome to the Cemetery Sector Governance Support Unit’s (the unit) newsletter.**

# Contractor’s insurance requirements

If a trust wishes to engage the services of a contractor, it should ensure the contractor carries public and product liability insurance and professional indemnity insurance. If the contractor advises it does not have one or either of these insurances, the trust, where practicable, should contact the Victorian Managed Insurance Authority (VMIA) for advice **before** engaging the contractor.

For further information please contact the VMIA Client Advisory Team:

[Email the VMIA](mailto:contact@vmia.vic.gov.au) <contact@vmia.vic.gov.au>

Phone: 9270 6900

Postal address: PO Box 18409

Collins Street East

MELBOURNE VIC 8003

# Abstracts of accounts 2021–22

The abstract of accounts is a financial report required from all Class B cemetery trusts under the *Cemeteries and Crematoria Act 2003* (the Act). Cemetery trusts that have no funds or manage closed or inactive cemeteries are still required to submit an abstract each year.

Blank abstract of accounts forms for 2021–22 were sent to the trust’s primary contact in June 2022 by email or via the postal service where an email address has not been supplied. A reminder about the abstract was also sent to trust chairpersons by email or via the postal service. Trusts can request a printed copy if necessary by [emailing the unit](mailto:cemeteries@health.vic.gov.au) <cemeteries@health.vic.gov.au> or by calling   
1800 034 280.

The Act requires trusts to submit the abstract by 1 September 2022. Completed abstracts can be [emailed](mailto:cemeteries@health.vic.gov.au) <cemeteries@health.vic.gov.au> or submitted by post. If your trust chooses to post its abstract, please make sure the trust keeps a copy for its own records.

# Grants program

The first round of the 2022–23 Cemetery Grants Program closes on 30 November 2022. Trusts that apply for a grant in this round will be notified of the outcome in January 2023. The following round closes on 31 March 2023.

Please note that there are limited funds available for grants, and priority will be given to applications for funds that address occupational health and safety issues and those trusts that need IT equipment to improve their service delivery.

Trusts are required to [email](mailto:cemeteries@health.vic.gov.au) <cemeteries@health.vic.gov.au> applications to the department.

The [*Cemetery grant program guidelines*](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/cemeteries-and-crematoria/cemetery-grants) and the [*Cemetery grants application form*](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/cemeteries-and-crematoria/cemetery-grants) <https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/cemeteries-and-crematoria/grants>.are available on the health.vic website.

# Revisions to the Class A and Class B manuals

## Review

A major review of the Class A and B trust manuals was completed in April this year. The [*Manual for Victorian Class A cemetery trusts*](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/cemeteries-and-crematoria/class-a-cemetery-trust-governance) <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/cemeteries-and-crematoria/class-a-cemetery-trust-governance> and the [*Manual for Victorian Class B cemetery trusts*](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/cemeteries-and-crematoria/class-b-cemetery-trust-governance) <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/cemeteries-and-crematoria/class-b-cemetery-trust-governance> are available on the department’s website.

## Availability

These manuals have not been distributed to trusts in hard copy. Electronic copies can be downloaded from the health.vic website, using the above links or web addresses.

## Changes

The *Summary of amendments and additions to the manual for Class A trusts* <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/cemeteries-and-crematoria/class-a-cemetery-trust-governance> and the *Summary of amendments and additions to the manual for Class B trusts <*https://www.health.vic.gov.au/cemeteries-and-crematoria/class-b-cemetery-trust-governance*>* are also available on the health.vic website.

# Right of interment and interment service fees

The department occasionally receives enquiries from trust members regarding the difference between fees marked *right of interment* and fees marked *interment service*. It is important that trust members understand the difference between these two terms.

A right of interment fee is for the sale of a place of interment such as a grave for bodily remains or a niche wall space for cremated remains.

In comparison, interment service fees relate to the burial or placement of remains into a place of interment such as a grave or niche wall.

If your trust is not sure which fees in its approved fee schedule relate to the right of interment and which to interment services, please contact the unit.

# Update to fact sheet

## Managing a right of interment following the death of a right holder

The fact sheet [*Managing a right of interment following the death of a right holder*](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/cemeteries-and-crematoria/right-of-interment) <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/cemeteries-and-crematoria/right-of-interment> has recently been updated to include more information and examples in the section ‘Identifying the new right holder(s)’. All trusts are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the updated fact sheet.

# Updating historical right of interment records

It is not uncommon for historical records of rights of interment to be lost, accidentally destroyed, incomplete or out of date. This can create challenges for members of the public and cemetery trusts seeking to determine current right of interment holders for graves and other places of interment that were issued many years ago.

The unit has developed a new fact sheet [*Updating historical right of interment records*](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/cemeteries-and-crematoria/right-of-interment) <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/cemeteries-and-crematoria/right-of-interment> to help trusts manage requests from members of the public who want to find out who currently holds a right of interment that was issued many years ago.

The fact sheet includes practical advice about the evidence trusts may require from interested parties in order to consider a request to update historical right of interment records.

# Managing poor trust member behaviour

The Victorian cemeteries sector is vibrant and engaged, and trust members make invaluable contributions to their communities. Unfortunately, on occasion, trust members behave poorly, and this can have a significant impact on other trust members and the ability of the trust to function effectively.

Class B cemetery trust chairpersons are responsible for managing poor trust member behaviour and are expected to set a positive example for all trust members by upholding the Victorian public sector values and acting in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

The unit has developed a new fact sheet [*Trust member conduct and managing poor behaviour*](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/cemeteries-and-crematoria/class-b-cemetery-trust-governance) <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/cemeteries-and-crematoria/class-b-cemetery-trust-governance> to provide Class B chairpersons with strategies for managing poor trust member behaviour, including steps to take if formal action is required.

# Secretary’s handbook

In response to feedback from the Hepburn Shire Class B cemetery trust network, the unit has developed a [*Secretary’s handbook*](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/cemeteries-and-crematoria/class-b-cemetery-trust-governance) <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/cemeteries-and-crematoria/class-b-cemetery-trust-governance> for secretaries of Class B cemetery trusts. The handbook provides information and advice about the essential parts of the secretary’s role. It is designed to help induct new secretaries and provide a useful resource for existing secretaries.

Topics covered in the handbook include rights of interment, interment services, forms, fees, financial management, trust meetings, communication, responding to enquiries, complaints management, record keeping, information security and privacy.

# Recruitment toolkit for Class B cemetery trusts

In early 2022 the Department of Premier and Cabinet published the [*Diversity on Victorian Government board guidelines*](https://www.vic.gov.au/guidelines-appointment-remuneration) <https://www.vic.gov.au/guidelines-appointment-remuneration> to provide advice about diversity and inclusion in recruitment and appointment processes.

As Class B cemetery trusts lead the trust member recruitment process, the unit has developed a recruitment toolkit to provide information about diversity and how to embed diversity considerations into recruitment processes.

The toolkit contains practical advice to support trusts and ensure the trust member appointment process meets government guidelines.

In August 2022 the unit distributed a hard copy of the toolkit to Class B cemetery trusts (excluding council-run trusts that do not have members appointed by the Governor in Council).

The toolkit contains 12 individual fact sheets covering topics including diversity on boards, planning a recruitment process and advertising vacancies to reach a diverse audience. The fact sheets are available for download from the unit’s [Recruitment and advertising webpage](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/cemeteries-and-crematoria/recruitment-and-advertising) <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/cemeteries-and-crematoria/recruitment-and-advertising>.

# Class B appointments in an election year

Due to the upcoming intervention of the caretaker period of government that occurs during an election year, all applications received by the department after 15 July 2022 have been placed on hold pending completion of this period.

In March 2022 the unit wrote to applicable trust members and their respective trusts to inform them about terms of appointment that are due to expire on 31 October 2022. This notification also advised that applications from members whose terms of appointment were going to expire on this date were required to be received by the unit on or before 15 July 2022. This would ensure applications could be processed and appointments made before the caretaker period begins.

**Note**: Applicants whose current term of appointment is due to expire on 31 October 2022 who haven’t yet sought reappointment are advised they will no longer be members from that date until formally appointed again. Former members will not be eligible to vote at trust meetings but may continue to attend them as an observer if the trust approves their attendance.

Applications currently on hold will be processed for consideration of appointment in 2023. It is anticipated that successful applicants will be appointed in February 2023.

# Update of contact details forms

The unit has received a good response from the sector regarding our request for members and primary contacts to provide an update of their contact details.

If you have not yet returned your completed form to the department, please do so at your earliest convenience, or send the required details in an [email to the unit](mailto:cemeteries@health.vic.gov.au) <cemeteries@health.vic.gov.au>.

# Governance and operational training

The governance and operational training programs for Class A and Class B cemetery trusts provide trust members with practical and relevant information and materials about their role. All trust members and trust secretaries are eligible to attend these department-funded training programs.

The program is delivered by Our Community, and further information has been attached. To register for a workshop, please visit the [Institute of Community Directors Australia website](https://www.communitydirectors.com.au) <https://www.communitydirectors.com.au>.

For more information, help with registrations or to arrange a governance and operational training workshop by request, please visit [Our Community’s website](https://www.communitydirectors.com.au/cemetery-governance) <https://www.communitydirectors.com.au/cemetery-governance> make direct contact:

Phone: 1300 137 475

[Email](mailto:learn@ourcommunity.com.au) <learn@ourcommunity.com.au>

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