

US CREMATION CONSUMER GUIDE · 2026 EDITION

Direct Cremation Providers Compared

*U.S. coverage, prices & who actually serves your area
— the top 12 national cremation brands, verified
against primary sources.*

The same direct cremation can cost
\$795 with one company and **\$3,500+**
with another — in the same city.

Against a national average of roughly \$2,200, choosing the right kind of provider is routinely a four-figure decision.

VERIFIED JULY 2026

Researched & written by **Sara Marsden-Ille**, Founder & Editor.
Every coverage figure and price checked directly against each
company's published locations and price lists.



A four-figure decision, hidden behind marketing

If you search for cremation today you'll find no shortage of providers — many calling themselves “national.” Some genuinely operate across much of the country; others serve a single state behind nationwide-sounding branding. Some publish prices openly. Others won't show you a single dollar figure until you're on the phone with a salesperson.

For a family arranging a cremation, these differences matter enormously. More families face this choice every year: the U.S. cremation rate reached **62.8% in 2025** and is projected to approach 70% by 2030, per the Cremation Association of North America. The average price for a direct cremation currently sits around **\$2,200**.

This guide compares twelve of the most visible cremation brands and networks operating in the United States. As far as we know, it is the only comparison of its kind built from **primary-source verification**: in July 2026 we researched each company's published service areas, location pages, and price lists — every state page, every partner listing, every General Price List we could find — rather than repeating each brand's marketing claims. Where a company publishes no prices, we say so and cite independently reported figures with that caveat attached.

Disclosure

US Funerals Online operates **DFS Memorials**, an independent referral network of local cremation providers, which is included in this comparison. We have applied the same verification standard to DFS as to every other entry, and we tell you exactly what DFS is and isn't inside.

Key findings — what our verification revealed

We checked every provider's actual service coverage, published pricing, and active locations — not their marketing claims. As of July 2026:

- **Tulip Cremation** markets itself nationally but currently serves only the Northern California region — verify coverage for your zip code before assuming availability.
- **SCI / Dignity Memorial brands** (Neptune, National Cremation, Trident) publish no direct cremation prices online — every price must be obtained by phone or in person.
- **Smart Cremation** lists multi-state coverage, but we found one operating hub per state — transport distances can be significant.
- In the western U.S., **After, Meadow, and Smart Cremation** overlap in the same handful of metro markets — three “national” brands competing for one regional footprint.
- Every **price-publishing** company we verified priced **below** the national average; every **quote-gated** brand ranged above it.

12 U.S. cremation companies, verified

The centerpiece of this guide. Prices verified July 2026 against each company's published price lists; "reported" figures come from independent sources where the company publishes no prices.

U.S. Cremation Companies Compared — verified July 2026

Company	Owner / Type	States Active (verified)	Direct Cremation Price	Prices Public?
DFS Memorials	Independent family-run network	42 states + 3 Canadian provinces	\$795–\$1,495	Yes — fixed per provider
Apyre NCS	Family-owned (Chubenko family)	6 — NJ, PA, DE, IN, WV, FL (full state)	~\$1,000–\$1,200 all-in (\$595 service fee)	Mostly — fee published, local fees vary
After	Venture-backed startup	11 (metro areas only)	\$995–\$1,499 by state	Yes
Meadow Memorials	Venture-backed startup	4 — SoCal, TX, WA, AZ	\$995 / \$1,295 packages	Yes
Tulip Cremation	Foundation Partners Group	1 — Northern California only	From \$1,295	Yes
Altogether	Foundation Partners Group	20	\$795–\$4,645 (median \$2,255)	Yes — per location
Simple Cremation USA	Willow Enterprises (private)	27 (thin — 55 partner firms)	\$595–\$3,450 base + fees	Yes — per partner
Cremation-With-Care	ValMark Memorial Group	1 operating (FL); national network dormant	\$995–\$1,190 (Florida)	Yes (Florida only)
Smart Cremation	NorthStar Memorial Group	7 (one hub per state)	~\$1,195–\$1,495 (reported)	No — quote only
National Cremation	Service Corporation International	11 (23 offices; 48% in Florida)	~\$1,695+ (reported)	No — quote only
Neptune Society	Service Corporation International	31 (58 offices)	\$1,500–\$3,500+ (reported)	No — quote only
Trident Society	Service Corporation International	1 (California only)	SCI-typical range (reported)	No — quote only

The three types of cremation company

Corporate consolidators. SCI (Neptune, National Cremation, Trident, via SCI Direct), Foundation Partners Group (Tulip, Altogether), and NorthStar (Smart Cremation) own real infrastructure and decades of experience — but carry corporate overhead, lean on prepaid “pre-need” sales, and, with the notable exception of FPG’s Altogether, do not publish prices.

Venture-backed online startups. After (2020) and Meadow (2024) arrange everything by phone or online, own little real estate, and publish flat prices. Genuinely transparent and cheaper — but metro-only, concentrated in the same Western states, with footprints that can change as investor priorities shift.

Independent & family operations. Apyre, Simple Cremation USA, Cremation-With-Care, and DFS Memorials. Models vary, but this is consistently where the lowest genuine prices are found — because a local licensed provider performs the cremation, without a corporate margin stacked on top.

THE DETAIL

12 provider profiles, examined

1 DFS Memorials — the local-provider network

Founded: 2012 (part of US Funerals Online, publishing since 2003) · **Coverage:** 42 states + 3 Canadian provinces · **Direct cremation:** from \$795, typically \$795–\$1,495

Not a funeral home — an independent, family-run network that connects families directly with a vetted, licensed local cremation provider offering a fixed, published price. The provider owns the relationship from first call to return of the ashes.

It is the only entry here that meaningfully reaches beyond metro areas — every other brand focuses on cities. It has the widest verified coverage, the lowest entry price, and no corporate or venture margin. The honest trade-off: it’s a network of independents rather than one uniform brand, so the experience is more like a good local firm than a standardized national one.

Disclosure: DFS Memorials is our sister network. Figures are its published rates, held to the same verification standard as every other entry.

2 Apyre National Cremation Services — the East Coast family operator

Founded: digital operations since 2016, New Jersey · **Coverage:** all of NJ, PA, DE, IN, WV, FL · **Direct cremation:** \$595 service fee; typically \$1,000–\$1,200 all-in

The quiet standout. Run by the Chubenko family (the CEO is a licensed funeral director), it covers six states entirely — not metro slices — with a single-phone-call model: documents generated and signed electronically, no office visit, ashes ready in four to six days.

A published \$595 service fee plus pass-through crematory, mileage, and filing fees makes it the **least expensive multi-state operator we verified**, and the counter-example to the idea that tech-enabled cremation requires venture capital. The main limitation is simply reach — six states.

3 After — the online-first challenger

Founded: 2020, Provo/Lehi, Utah · **Coverage:** 11 states, metro areas only · **Direct cremation:** \$995 headline; state packages \$1,095–\$1,499

Built the template newer online players now follow: entirely online or by phone, transparent pricing, non-commissioned staff, and a hospice-referral channel. It carries a 4.9-star average across 1,700+ reviews and offers financing through LilyPay, including crowdfunding that lets extended family contribute.

The caveat is geography. Its own service-area pages show metro clusters rather than statewide coverage, and it withdrew from Northern California in late 2025. **In a served metro, After is strong; an hour outside one, it likely can't help.**

4 Meadow Memorials — the newest entrant, with memorials attached

Founded: January 2024 · **Coverage:** SoCal, Dallas–Fort Worth & Houston, Seattle, Phoenix/Tucson · **Direct cremation:** \$995 Basic / \$1,295 Signature

Co-founded by a former Stripe executive and the most recently funded company here (\$11M raise in early 2026). A “contemporary funeral home without the home”: no public facilities, software handling paperwork, and — uniquely among the online players — full memorial services at partner venues from \$1,970, plus a no-cost body-donation pathway and Spanish-language support.

Its four states all overlap After's footprint directly — the most head-on competition in the market. The considerations are the flip side of its youth: a two-year track record and a footprint built at venture speed.

5 Tulip Cremation — a cautionary tale in coverage claims

Founded: 2017, San Francisco; acquired by FPG 2019 · **Coverage today:** Northern California only · **Direct cremation:** from \$1,295

Pioneered the instant online quote model and remains one of the most transparent cremation websites in the country — a real price in about a minute. But its footprint has quietly collapsed: it holds licenses in 10 states yet is not accepting new arrangements in 9 of them, redirecting those families to parent FPG's Altogether network, generally at higher prices.

Tulip also absorbed fellow startup Solace Cremation after FPG acquired it in 2022. **For everyone outside Northern California, it's a lesson in checking the service map, not the slogan.**

6 Altogether — the corporate network that publishes its prices

Owner: Foundation Partners Group · **Coverage:** 200+ owned locations across 20 states · **Direct cremation:** \$795–\$4,645 (median \$2,255)

FPG's consumer portal for its owned funeral homes and cremation centers — and the only corporate network here that publishes direct cremation prices for every location. The data shows two networks under one brand: dedicated cremation specialists starting at \$795, and traditional funeral homes listing \$3,000–\$4,645 for the same service.

The brand name tells you nothing about which kind you're calling; the published price does. Check it before assuming “corporate” means expensive — or affordable.

7 Simple Cremation USA — the small online marketplace

Founded: 2013, Chatham, NJ · **Coverage:** 27 states on paper; 55 partner firms in practice · **Direct cremation:** partner base prices \$595–\$3,450 (median ~\$1,365) + fees

A genuine e-commerce operation: select a partner funeral home, see its actual itemized order form, and pay online, after which the independent partner performs the cremation. That level of itemized transparency is rare and commendable.

The limitation is depth — its 27 “covered” states are mostly one or two partner firms each (California is a single Santa Ana mortuary). Whether it can help depends entirely on whether a partner is near you. The site is also heavily monetized with affiliate links.

8 Cremation-With-Care — a Florida operator with a national brand attached

Owner: ValMark Memorial Group, Fort Myers, FL · **Operating coverage:** ~22 Florida counties · **Direct cremation:** \$995–\$1,190 (published FL price list)

Two quite different things. In Florida, a real, licensed, centralized direct-cremation operator with a published GPL and a genuinely budget-tier price. Nationally, the “CWC Network” of 306 funeral homes across 38 states is a brand-licensing program whose affiliate renewal fees were paused in January 2021.

If you find a CWC “exclusive provider” page for your town, treat it as a lead to an independent funeral home — and verify affiliation and pricing directly with that firm.

9 Smart Cremation — the private corporate, quote-gated

Owner: NorthStar Memorial Group, Houston · **Coverage:** 7 states (CA, AZ, NV, WA, OR, TX, FL) · **Direct cremation:** not published; reported ~\$1,195–\$1,495, from \$995 in Phoenix

A hub-and-spoke model: one licensed facility per state, each serving a long list of surrounding cities — its Dallas hub lists towns as far as Austin. Its parent lends real operational substance.

The consumer experience follows the corporate pre-need playbook: no prices on the website, a “free cremation guide” lead form, seminars, and sales reps. A travel-and-relocation feature makes prepaid plans portable — useful for retirees who move. **Just know you won’t see a price until you hand over your contact details.**

10 National Cremation Society — SCI’s cremation flagship

Founded: 1973, FL · **Owner:** Service Corporation International (SCI Direct) · **Coverage:** 23 offices in 11 states — nearly half in Florida · **Direct cremation:** not published; reported from ~\$1,695

Bills itself as the oldest cremation society in the nation, with 190,000+ families served and 450,000+ pre-arranged plans — and that pre-need book is the heart of the business, promoted through seminars, direct mail, and “\$99 down” financing.

The infrastructure is real, but the value equation is hard to assess because no prices are published. **Independent reporting consistently places SCI cremation brands 30–50% above local independent specialists** for the equivalent service.

11 Neptune Society — the best-known name, at a brand premium

Founded: 1973 · **Owner:** Service Corporation International (renamed SCI Direct) · **Coverage:** 58 offices across 31 states — heaviest in FL and TX · **Direct cremation:** reported \$1,500–\$3,500+

Probably the first name most Americans think of for cremation, and its scale is genuine — it was the nation's largest direct cremation organization when SCI acquired it. Its pre-need program and sea-scattering heritage are real differentiators.

What it doesn't deliver is price transparency or independent-level pricing: no prices online, sales primarily through in-home and seminar presentations, and typically well above local specialists. Prepaid plans are brand-specific; **a local provider funding the same arrangement through a state-regulated trust is usually transferable on comparable or better terms.**

12 Trident Society — California only, despite the name

Owner: Service Corporation International · **Coverage:** 7 offices, all in California · **Direct cremation:** not published; only public price list dates to 2016

Neptune's California sibling: seven offices, each serving roughly a 100-mile radius. It offers genuinely distinctive options — sea scatterings from its own yacht in San Francisco Bay, memorial reef placements, even memorial spaceflights.

It's also the **least price-transparent company in this entire comparison.** California requires a goods-and-services disclosure; Trident's lists every item without a single dollar figure, "available upon request." If you engage, request the General Price List in writing before any presentation — the FTC Funeral Rule entitles you to it.

Want a fixed, published price from a vetted local provider?

DFS Memorials connects families directly with a licensed local cremation provider offering a fixed direct cremation price — from \$795, across 42 states.

Find Affordable Cremation Prices Near You →

dfsmemorials.com/local-providers/

MATCH PROVIDER TO NEED

Which company is best for you?

The right provider depends on what each offers, your needs, where you live, and who operates near you. Here is each company at a glance.

Company	Best for...	Think twice if...
DFS Memorials	Lowest published price from a vetted local provider; anywhere outside major metros	You specifically want one uniform national-brand experience
Apyre NCS	Lowest all-in cost in NJ, PA, DE, IN, WV, FL; full-state coverage; family-owned	You're outside its six states
After	Fully online arrangement in its metros; financing or crowdfunding; strong reviews	You're outside a served metro — including all of Northern California
Meadow Memorials	Online arrangement <i>plus</i> a real memorial gathering; Spanish support; body donation	You want a long track record — the company is two years old
Tulip Cremation	Northern California families who want an instant online quote	You live anywhere else — it's one region only
Altogether	Checking a published price at a corporate-owned location near you; its budget specialists	You assume the brand means one price level — it spans \$795 to \$4,645
Simple Cremation USA	Itemized online checkout — if one of its 55 partners is near you	Your state's "coverage" is a single distant funeral home
Cremation-With-Care	Budget direct cremation in SW/central Florida (\$995–\$1,190, published)	You found it via a national "exclusive provider" page — verify directly
Smart Cremation	Portable prepaid plans for retirees who may relocate (Sun Belt/Pacific)	You want to see a price before handing over contact details
National Cremation	A 50-year brand with owned offices, mainly FL; SCI backing behind a pre-need plan	Price matters — expect 30–50% above local independents
Neptune Society	Widest branded office network (31 states); name recognition; sea-scattering heritage	No published prices; seminar-led pre-need sales
Trident Society	California families wanting SCI infrastructure with distinctive options (yacht scattering)	You want any pricing at all before a sales conversation

Who actually serves your area?

The West Coast & Sun Belt corridor (CA, AZ, NV, OR, WA, TX) is crowded: After, Meadow, Smart Cremation, and Trident all compete there, alongside Altogether. Notably, After and Meadow serve *Southern* California only, while Tulip serves *only* Northern California — leaving NorCal families with fewer online options than the marketing suggests.

The Eastern seaboard is comparatively wide open online: Apyre covers NJ, PA, DE, and WV in full, largely without direct online-brand competition. **Florida** is where everyone converges — eleven of the twelve have a presence.

Rural America, everywhere beyond the metro clusters, is served essentially only through the DFS local-provider network and, in their six states, Apyre's full-state coverage.

PROTECT YOURSELF

How to choose: a 5-point checklist

Whatever direction you lean, five checks protect you and your family.

- 1 Confirm they actually serve your location** — the specific town, not the state. Metro-only coverage is the norm among online brands.
- 2 Get the General Price List.** Under the FTC Funeral Rule, every provider must give you itemized prices on request. Reluctance to email a GPL is the single biggest red flag in this industry.
- 3 Get the all-in figure in writing** — including crematory fees, transport mileage, death certificates, and any “cash advance” items. Headline prices rarely include everything.
- 4 Ask who performs the cremation and where.** Marketplaces and online brands may subcontract to third-party crematories; there's nothing wrong with that, but you're entitled to know.
- 5 For prepaid plans, ask about transferability** before signing — what happens if you move, or if the company changes its service area (as more than one company in this guide has).

A caution: “Heritage Cremation Provider” / “Legacy Cremation Services”

These heavily search-optimized “local” cremation websites were the subject of a 2022 federal lawsuit filed by the DOJ on behalf of the FTC. Per the FTC, the companies misrepresented themselves as local providers, charged more than posted prices, and in some cases withheld cremated remains to extract payment; the case settled in 2023 with civil penalties. It's the clearest illustration of why the checklist above tells you to confirm the actual physical location and get the itemized price list in writing.

QUICK ANSWERS

Common questions

What is the cheapest national cremation option?

Among multi-state operators verified here, Apyre's ~\$1,000–\$1,200 all-in (six Eastern states) and DFS Memorials' published \$795–\$1,495 (42 states) sit at the bottom of the market. Online startups After and Meadow start at \$995 in their metros. A “cheap” headline price is only meaningful once fees are included — always compare all-in figures.

Is Neptune Society owned by SCI?

Yes. Service Corporation International acquired Neptune between 2011 and 2014, and Neptune's corporate entity was renamed SCI Direct — the division that also operates National Cremation Society and Trident Society. All three are sibling brands under the same owner.

Why won't some providers show prices online?

Providers built around prepaid pre-need sales — including all three SCI brands and Smart Cremation — route pricing through consultations and presentations. In our verification, every price-gated company priced above every price-publishing company. The FTC Funeral Rule still entitles you to an itemized General Price List on request.

Is Tulip Cremation still operating?

Yes, but only in Northern California. Tulip stopped accepting new arrangements in the nine other states where it holds licenses, and its parent redirects those inquiries to the Altogether network. Existing arrangements are unaffected, per the company.

Are online cremation companies safe to use?

The reputable ones are fully licensed funeral establishments — license numbers are typically in the site footer, verifiable with your state funeral board. The practical differences from a traditional funeral home are the arrangement channel (phone/online) and, often, price. Apply the same checklist regardless of channel.

What's the difference between a cremation “society” and a service provider?

Today, usually nothing but branding. Historic membership societies largely evolved into or were acquired by commercial operators — National Cremation, Neptune, and Trident are all SCI brands despite their “Society” names. Don't assume a membership fee buys nonprofit pricing.

Other names you may encounter

Inpeace (NY, NJ, CT) — a private online operator offering cremation and aquamation from ~\$1,595, notable because the fragmented Northeast is otherwise barely served by transparent online brands. **CremateSimply** — Park Lawn Corporation's online direct cremation brand (CO, NM, TN and other Park Lawn markets). **Advantage Funeral & Cremation Services** — SCI's value-positioned brand within the Dignity Memorial network, another door into the same SCI pricing structure.

TRUST & TRANSPARENCY

Methodology & how to use this guide

Coverage and pricing were verified in July 2026 by collecting each company's published service-area pages, location listings, and price lists, supplemented by SEC filings, press releases, state licensing records, and FTC public records. Market statistics are attributed to the Cremation Association of North America (cremation rate) and Funeralocity (national average direct cremation price). Third-party price figures are identified as “reported.” Companies change footprints and prices without notice; US Funerals Online re-verifies this guide quarterly and welcomes corrections from providers.



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Founder and editor, US Funerals Online. 18+ years in funeral consumer advocacy. This guide was researched and collated by the US Funerals Research Team, who compiled the data matrix while consuming copious amounts of coffee. US Funerals Online has provided independent funeral consumer guidance since 2003.

Further reading

Guide	What it covers
Cremation Costs by State	What a cremation costs where you live, and why prices vary so widely between states and cities.
Understanding Cremation Laws	How state cremation laws — waiting periods, authorizations, permits — affect arranging a cremation.
Cremation Nation	The data behind America's shift to cremation — rates, regions, and what's driving the change.
The FTC Funeral Rule	Your rights as a consumer — including the itemized General Price List every provider must supply.

Find all of these at us-funerals.com/funeral-resources/

Compare fixed direct cremation prices near you

Skip the sales call. See published prices from licensed local providers in your area starting at \$795 — across 42 states.

Check DFS Memorials Options →

dfsmemorials.com/local-providers/