

72.450 Disposal of body and valuables found thereon.

- (1) (a) A coroner who has possession of a dead body or a part thereof shall make a bona fide attempt of at least thirty (30) days to notify the spouse, if any, or next of kin of the decedent's death. In the event the coroner is unable to locate the spouse, if any, or next of kin, or if the spouse or next of kin does not take possession of the deceased, he or she may cause the body to be:
 1. Buried; or
 2. Cremated and interred;at the expense of the fiscal court, consolidated local government, or urban-county government, whichever is appropriate.
- (b) The decision between burial or cremation and interment shall be made by the fiscal court, consolidated local government, or urban-county government that has responsibility for the expense pursuant to this subsection.
- (c) If a fiscal court, consolidated local government, or urban-county government has responsibility for the expense pursuant to this subsection, it shall consult with:
 1. The local county coroner before it makes the decision between burial or cremation and interment; and
 2. If the decedent is known to be a member of a religious community, any such religious community that has expressed, in writing, a willingness to the local county coroner that it will pay for, or otherwise provide, the burial expense of the community's members.
- (2) In the event the body is buried or cremated and interred at public expense, the coroner shall take possession of all money or other property found on or belonging to the decedent and shall deliver same to the fiscal court, consolidated local government, or urban-county government, whichever is appropriate. Any money or other property found on the body of the decedent or belonging to him or her shall be delivered by the coroner to the fiscal court, consolidated local government, or urban-county government, whichever is appropriate, to help defray burial or cremation and interment expenses. Any excess funds shall escheat to such governmental agency one (1) year thereafter.
- (3) In lieu of having an unclaimed body buried or cremated and interred at public expense, the coroner may deliver such body or part thereof to a state medical school in accordance with the provisions of KRS 311.300 to 311.350.

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History: Amended 2026 Ky. Acts ch. 127, sec. 1, effective July 15, 2026. -- Amended 2002 Ky. Acts ch. 346, sec. 74, effective July 15, 2002. -- Created 1978 Ky. Acts ch. 93, sec. 14, effective June 17, 1978.