

# Responding to an Epidemic of Loneliness

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*Cremstar Launches Campaign to Help Singles Designate a New Next-of-Kin*

PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA, UNITED STATES, June 6, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The U.S. Surgeon General recently released [an advisory](#) calling attention to the public health crisis of loneliness, isolation, and lack of connection in the United States. Research shows that approximately half of U.S. adults experience loneliness daily. It also highlights that a lack of social connection can present significant health risks, since loneliness can increase risk of premature death by 26% and social isolation by 29%, as well as myriad other negative health conditions.

Singled out

Perhaps not completely coincidentally, the United States is closing in on another significant milestone. Today, nearly 50% of U.S. adults also happen to be single. That's 126.9 million unmarried people, according to [U.S. Census Bureau statistics](#). Plus, a recent Gallup poll (found at <https://news.gallup.com/poll/148355/americans-preference-smaller-families-edges-higher.aspx>) revealed that 58% of U.S. adults now believe having two children or fewer is the ideal number for a family. Indeed, many families are opting to have no children at all.

The growth in the single population is driven mainly by the [decline in marriage](#), rather than a hike in divorce rates per se. Nearly all the growth in the unpartnered population since 1990 has come from a rise in the number of people who have never been married.

One hidden consequence of these trends is that individuals today often have no Next-of-Kin (NOK), or they'd prefer to choose someone other than their natural NOK, when it comes to the disposition of their body after they pass. While the ability for unmarried couples to gain disposition rights is available through domestic partnerships and Civil Unions, or by drafting or changing a Will, very few couples avail themselves of these legal options. Setting them up takes time and money, and many couples simply don't want to sign anything that might link them together in a formal way. Plus, once Gay Marriage became legal, the need and demand for many of these other covenants evaporated.

No, not a Travel Agent. Not a Secret Agent. A Designated Agent

It doesn't have to be this way. Cremstar, the leading online direct cremation service covering New Jersey and Pennsylvania, has just launched a campaign to raise awareness about something called a Designated Agent form. A Designated Agent is someone you designate to be responsible

for what happens to you after you transition, instead of a traditional next-of-kin. Most states have an official Designation of Agent for Body Disposition (DABD) form, a simple agreement saying you designate a particular person as the agent responsible for the disposition of your body after you pass. That's it. Nothing else. And while some state DABD forms require a notary public, most simply ask for just one or two witness signatures.

For those who have no NOK, or would rather choose somebody else besides a normal NOK, Cremstar offers a free Designated Agent Kit designed to guide folks through the process, available on its Forms & Kits page (see footer at cremstar.com). "In ancient Roman mythology, Charon the boatman ferried you across the river Styx into the afterlife once you'd passed on," says Cremstar CEO J.G. Sandom. "Find your Charon, your Designated Agent, someone who will outlive you. Make sure there's someone there you trust to help you make the journey we're all going to be making ... one day."

Who should get a Designated Agent Form?

- Single people who have no kids or other immediate next-of-kin.
- Unmarried couples who would rather have their life partner take care of things instead of blood relatives.
- Those who'd rather have someone else take charge, like a grandchild over a child, rather than the one at the top of the NOK pecking order (i.e. Will or DABD, spouse, kids, parents, siblings, uncles/aunts, etc.).
- Folks who are estranged from their kin; e.g., the ex is no longer in the picture and you want to make one of your kids responsible instead.
- Unmarried gay couples not in an officially recognized domestic partnership or Civil Union.
- Large far-flung families, when choosing just one person to handle a passing makes it easier: in some states, like NJ and PA, people need the majority of the children for a parent's passing, or both parents to sign for a child; in others, like NY, just one!
- All those who just plain don't want the government telling them how to transition.

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