

HEALTH AND SAFETY CODE

SECTION 9000-9007

9000. This part shall be known and may be cited as the Public Cemetery District Law.

9001. (a) The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:

(1) There is a continuing need to provide for the respectful and cost-effective interment of human remains to meet the cultural, economic, religious, and social needs of California's diverse communities.

(2) The Legislature authorized the creation of public cemetery districts in 1909 to assume responsibility for the ownership, improvement, expansion, and operation of cemeteries and the provision of interment services from fraternal, pioneer, religious, social, and other organizations that were unable to provide for those cemeteries.

(3) For nearly a century, public cemetery districts have provided communities with the means to publicly finance the ownership, improvement, expansion, and operation of public cemeteries and the provision of interment services, particularly in rural and formerly rural communities.

(4) Interment customs and practices have changed since the creation of the public cemetery districts but communities continue to need the means to own, improve, expand, and operate public cemeteries that provide respectful and cost-effective interments.

(b) In enacting this part, it is the intent of the Legislature to create and continue a broad statutory authority for a class of special districts that can own, improve, expand, and operate public cemeteries that provide respectful and cost-effective interments.

(c) It is also the intent of the Legislature that local officials adapt the powers and procedures provided by this part to meet the diversity of local conditions and circumstances.

9002. The definitions in Chapter 1 (commencing with Section 7000) of Part 1 of Division 7 apply to this part. Further, as used in this part, the following terms have the following meanings:

(a) "Active militia" means the active militia as defined by Section 120 of the Military and Veterans Code.

(b) "Armed services" means the armed services as defined by Section 18540 of the Government Code.

(c) "Board of trustees" means the legislative body of a district.

(d) "District" means a public cemetery district created pursuant to this part or any of its statutory predecessors.

(e) "Family member" means any spouse, by marriage or otherwise, child or stepchild, by natural birth or adoption, parent, brother, sister, half-brother, half-sister, parent-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, nephew, niece, aunt, uncle, first cousin, or any person denoted by the prefix "grand" or "great," or the spouse of any of these persons.

(f) "Firefighter" means a firefighter as defined by Section 1797.182.

(g) "Interment right" means the right to use or control the use of a plot, niche, or other space, authorized by this part, for the interment of human remains.

(h) "Nonresident" means a person who does not reside within a district or does not pay property taxes on property located in a district.

(i) "Peace officer" means a peace officer as defined by Section 830 of the Penal Code.

(j) "Principal county" means the county having all or the greater portion of the entire assessed value, as shown on the last equalized assessment roll of the county or counties, of all taxable property within a district.

(k) "Voter" means a voter as defined by Section 359 of the Elections Code.

9003. (a) This part provides the authority for the organization and powers of public cemetery districts. This part succeeds the former Part 4 (commencing with Section 8890), as added by Chapter 60 of the Statutes of 1939, as subsequently amended, and any of its statutory predecessors.

(b) Any public cemetery district formed pursuant to the former Part 4 or any of its statutory predecessors that was in existence on January 1, 2004, shall remain in existence as if it has been organized pursuant to this part.

(c) Any indebtedness, special tax, benefit assessment, fee, election, ordinance, resolution, regulation, rule, or any other action of a district taken pursuant to the former Part 4 or of any of its statutory predecessors which was taken before January 1, 2004, shall not be voided solely because of any error, omission, informality, misnomer, or failure to comply strictly with this part.

9004. This part is necessary to protect the public health, safety, and welfare, and shall be liberally construed to effectuate its purposes.

9005. If any provision of this part or the application of any provision of this part in any circumstance or to any person, city, county, special district, school district, the state, or any agency or subdivision of the state is held invalid, that invalidity shall not affect other provisions or applications of this part that can be given effect without the invalid provision or application of the invalid provision, and to this end the provisions of this part are severable.

9006. (a) Any action brought to determine the validity of the organization or of any action of a district shall be brought pursuant to Chapter 9 (commencing with Section 860) of Title 10 of Part 2 of the Code of Civil Procedure.

(b) Any judicial review of an action taken pursuant to this part shall be conducted pursuant to Chapter 2 (commencing with Section 1084) of Title 1 of Part 3 of the Code of Civil Procedure.

9007. (a) Except as provided in this section, territory, whether incorporated or unincorporated, whether contiguous or noncontiguous, may be included in a district. Territory that is already within a public cemetery district or another type of special district that provides cemetery facilities and services shall not be included within a public cemetery district.

(b) Except as provided in this part, the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000, Division 3 (commencing with Section 56000) of Title 5 of the Government Code, shall govern any change of organization or reorganization of a district. In the case of any conflict between that division and this part, the provisions of this part shall prevail.

(c) A district shall be deemed an "independent special district," as defined by Section 56044 of the Government Code, except when a county board of supervisors has appointed itself as the board of trustees.