



Islamic Burial Services



An Islamic guideline on what to do at the time of death

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"Every soul shall have a taste of death" is the promise of Allah Almighty who is the Creator of this Universe. We are to remember death and reflect upon the Hadith, which helps us to live each day as it were the last. Prophet Mohammad (SalAllahuAalayhiWasalam) said, "Be in the world as though you were a stranger or a wayfarer." "At evening do not expect to live till morning, and at morning do not expect to live till evening. Take from your health for your illness and from your life for your death." Bukhari. Knowing how to prepare for Janaza (funeral) will give us peace of mind and keep us on the track of enjoying what we do in life to earn Allah's blessings and rewards because we do not know when the end will come.

Abdullah bin Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) narrates: Allah's Apostle (SalAllahuAalayhiWasalam) said, "It is not permissible for any Muslim who has something to will to stay for two nights without having His last will and testament written and kept ready with him."

HOW TO GET STARTED

The five stages that follow the death of a Muslim are:

1. The final bathing (ghusl) of the deceased - *tajheez*.
2. The shrouding (kafan) of the deceased - *takfeen*.
3. The funeral prayers - *janazah salah*.
4. The funeral procession - *carrying the bier to the grave*.
5. The burial of the deceased - *tadfeen*.

It is very important to complete the above stages as quickly as possible, for Rasulullah (SalAllahuAalayhiWasalam) has emphasised:

"Make haste at a funeral; if the dead person was good, it is a good state to which you are sending him on; but if he was otherwise it is an evil of which you are ridding yourselves."

Even if the person dies on a Friday, the scholars have stated, *"it is better to make all arrangements and bury the deceased before Jumu'ah salah"* and that *"delaying the funeral with the thought that there will be more participants after jumu'ah is undesirable"*.

Moreover, the blessings and forgiveness for the deceased that will be acquired by adhering to the command of Rasulullah (SalAllahuAalayhiWasalam) is more worthy than delaying the janazah salah, even with the possibility that more participants may attend.

Sharee'ah has also prohibited the delaying of the burial on account of a certain relative being overseas and this person's inability to arrive quickly, for example, due to the unavailability of a flight.

Please note, to enable the burial to take place as quickly as possible we need to comply with the formalities of the law of this country, which requires that the death is certified and registered. These formalities (summarised below) are extracted from the official document What to do after a death in England and Wales.

If the Death Occurs in a Hospital

If the death occurs in hospital, the hospital staff will contact the person named by the deceased as next of kin. The hospital will then keep the body in the hospital mortuary until the executor arranges for it to be taken away and the hospital staff will arrange for the nearest relative to collect the deceased's possessions.

If the Death Occurs Elsewhere

If the death was expected, you should contact the doctor who attended the deceased during their final illness.

If the death was unexpected/sudden or you discover a body, you should contact the following people:

1. The family doctor
2. The deceased's next of kin
3. The local mosque

If there is any reason to suspect that the death was not due to natural causes, do not touch or remove anything in the room.

Cause of Death

If the cause of death is quite clear the doctor will give you:

1. A **Medical Certificate** that shows the cause of death (this is free of charge and will be given in a sealed envelope addressed to the registrar).
2. A **Formal Notice** that states that a doctor has signed the Medical Certificate and tells you how the death can be registered.

If the cause of the death was known to be a natural illness, but the doctors wish to know more about the cause of death, they may ask the relatives for permission to carry out a medical examination of the body (i.e. post-mortem) to find out more about the cause of death. Islam does not permit post-mortems in this instance and no such permission should be given.

If the death follows illness from HIV or AIDS there may be special rules about handling the body.

Reporting a Death to the Coroner

The coroner is a doctor or lawyer responsible for investigating deaths in particular situations and may be the only person able to certify the cause of death.

In any of the following circumstances, the doctor may report the death to the coroner and write on the Formal Notice that the death has been referred to the coroner:

1. An accident or injury
2. An industrial disease
3. During a surgical operation
4. Before recovery from an anaesthetic
5. If the cause of death is unknown
6. The death was sudden and unexplained, e.g. a sudden infant death (cot death).

If the doctor treating the deceased had not seen him or her, either after the death or within 14 days before the death, the death must be reported to the coroner.

The coroner may arrange for a post-mortem examination of the body. The consent of the relative is not needed, but they are entitled to be represented at the examination by a doctor. When relatives have told the coroner they wish to be represented, the coroner will if at all practicable, tell them when and where the examination will be.

The coroner will pay for the removal of a body from the place of death to the mortuary for post-mortem examination. The relatives may choose the funeral director.

If the post-mortem shows that death was due to natural causes, the coroner may issue a notification known as the **Pink Form (Form 100)**, which gives the cause of death so that the death can be registered. The coroner usually sends the form direct to the registrar but may give it to you to deliver.

If the death was violent, unnatural, caused by an industrial disease, occurred in prison or if the cause of death remains uncertain after post-mortem examination, the coroner will hold an inquest. An inquest is an enquiry into the medical cause and circumstances of a death. It is held in public, sometimes with a jury, and it is up to the coroner how to organise the enquiry in a way that best serves the public interest and the interests of the relatives.

If an inquest is held, the coroner must inform the following people:

1. The married partner of the deceased
2. The nearest relative (if different)
3. And the personal representative (if different from above).

Relatives can attend an inquest and ask questions of witnesses but they may only ask questions about the medical cause and circumstances of the death. It may also be important to have a lawyer to represent you if the death was caused by a road accident or an accident at work.

The coroner may give you an **Order for Burial (form 101)** so that the funeral can take place and may be done before the inquest is completed, provided the body is not required for further examination.

The coroner will also send the registrar a **Certificate After Inquest (form 99 [rev])** stating the cause of death - this allows the death to be registered.

If you want advice or information about a death which has been reported to the coroner, contact the coroner's officer. You can get the address from the police station or, if the death was in hospital, the hospital official dealing with deaths.

Registering the Death

To avoid delay, the death must be registered by the Registrars of Births and Deaths for the sub-district in which the death occurred. You can find their address by visiting the official website of the General Register Office, in the phone book under 'Registration of Births, Deaths & Marriages', from the doctor, local council, post office or police station.

Check when the registrar will be available and whether only you need to go along. It may be that someone other than you will be needed to give information for the death to be registered.

If the death has been referred to the coroner, it cannot be registered until the registrar has received authority from the coroner to do so (see above), otherwise, go to the registrar as soon as possible.

When you go to the registrar you should take all these:

1. The medical certificate of the cause of the death
2. The deceased's medical card, if possible
3. The pink form (form 100), if one has been given to you by the coroner
4. The deceased's birth and marriage certificates, if available

You should tell the registrar:

1. The date and place of death
2. The deceased's last (usual) address
3. The deceased's first names and surname (and the maiden name where appropriate)
4. The deceased's date and place of birth (town and country if born in the UK, and country if born abroad)
5. The deceased's occupation and the name and occupation of their spouse
6. Whether the deceased was getting a pension or allowance from public funds
7. If the deceased was married, the date of birth of the surviving widow or widower.

The Registrar will give you:

1. A **Certificate for Burial - known as the Green Form** - (unless the coroner has already given you an Order for Burial). These forms will give permission for the body to be buried and should be taken to the cemetery to enable the funeral to take place.
2. Leaflets about widows' benefits and income tax for widows.
3. A **Certificate of Registration of Death (form BD8 [rev])**. This is for Social Security purposes only. Read the information on the back of the certificate. If any of it applies, fill in the certificate and show it to your Social Security office.

The Death Certificate

The death certificate is a certified copy of the one in the death register and the registrar can let you have one if you wish, but you will have to pay a fee. You may need a Death Certificate for the will and for any pension claims, savings bank certificates etc. You may wish to ask for several copies of the Death Certificate straight away as the price increases if you need one later on.

Frequently Asked Questions

Who should be contacted to make arrangements for burial?

The family of the deceased should contact the funeral directors named at the back of this brochure.

Do I have to fill out any papers at the cemetery?

Any paperwork which is required will be presented to the family of the deceased during the funeral process.

Where should the body be washed?

The body should be washed at the funeral home of your choice then transported to The Masjid for funeral prayer (Salatul Janazah). Hounslow Jamia Masjid does not endorse one funeral home over another but we have negotiated with several local funeral homes to provide the Islamic required services at a reduced cost. Please contact the Funeral Director for further information.

What is needed to prepare the body?

The burial kit will be provided by the Masjid. Please discuss this with the funeral director.

Who pays the funeral home?

Paying all charges of the funeral home is the sole responsibility of the deceased's family. The funeral home normally expects to be paid in full on the day services are rendered.

Where is the Salat ul Janazah held?

The Salat ul Janazah will be arranged and held at The Masjid. If the body is brought to the Masjid before Zuhr prayer, a funeral prayer will be held after the salat so that the body may be buried before Maghrib.

Are the gravesites in the cemetery designated? Who will dig the grave?

The exact location of the gravesite will be determined by the Funeral Director who will assign the grave based upon a "first come first serve" master plan for the cemetery. The digging of the grave will be arranged by the funeral director.

How do I pay for the grave digging?

Full payment for the services provided by the grave digger is sole responsibility of the family of the deceased.

Full payment is to be made on the day services are rendered. Please speak to the Funeral Director for the current price for the grave digging service. This is subject to change depending on circumstances. Please verify before the burial.

What about placing flowers or other decorations on the grave?

"The Prophet, peace be upon him, passed by two graves and said, 'Those two are being punished for a minor matter. The first did not clean himself carefully after urinating. The second one used to spread lies.' Then the Prophet, peace be upon him, asked for a fresh branch of a palm tree, broke it into two parts, and then placed a part on each of them, saying, 'I hope that this will reduce their punishment for as long as the branch remains fresh.'

What about Reciting the Al Quran in the masjid after the funeral service?

Imam al-Halabi states in his Sharh al-Munya al-Kabir:

It is said that there is nothing wrong in reading loudly and collectively, for listening to the recitation is Fard Kifaya, thus this can be achieved by some or one member of the group remaining silent". (See: Imdad al-Muftiyyin, 1/ 284).

The dead person's debts

If the deceased has any debt or anything owing then it should be cleared as soon as possible because it is quoted in the Hadith that the deceased is worried about their debt and in one narration it is stated that the soul remains stuck until the debt is cleared.

Janaza prayer

The Namaz of Janaza is Farz-e-Kifaya, meaning even if one person prayed it then all would be relieved of the responsibility and if no-one prays it then those who are aware of it will have committed a sin. Jamaat is not a condition for this Namaz and if therefore if one person prayed it the Fard will be fulfilled.

Moaning and Wailing for the dead

To scream and wail and perform lamentation about the deceased in a gathering is Haram and the same way to scream and shout the forthcoming difficulties is also Haram. To rip your clothes, rub your face, undo the hair, to beat your head, to beat your chest are all Haram. It is quoted in the Hadith that those who hit their face or rip their clothes and scream illiterate words are not with me [Bukhari, Muslim].

Method of visiting the graves

The method is to enter from the feet side of the buried and stand facing them and say this "Assalaamu Alaikum, Ya Ahia Daar'e Quamin Mu'mineena Antum Lanaa Salfuw Wa Insha Allanu Bikum Lahiqoon Nas'alullaha Lana Walakumul Afwa'Wal Aafiyata Yarahamullahul Mustaqdimeena Minna Wal Musta'akhireena Allahumma Rabbul Arwaahil Faaniyah Wal Ajsaadil Baaliyah Wal Izaamin Nakhira ad Khil Haazihil Quboora Minka Raw'haw Wa Reehanaw Wa Minna Tahyataw Wasalaama". Then pray the Fatiha and if you wish to sit then sit at the same distance when you sat near him when he was alive [Radd-ul-Mohtar].

Do not approach the grave from the head side of the buried as it will cause the dead pain, meaning that they will have to turn their head to look at you [Radd-ul-Mohtar, Bahar]

Respect of the Grave

To sit, sleep, walk, excrete and urinate on a grave is forbidden. If you wish to reach a relative's grave but to get there you will have to walk on other graves then this is forbidden. Therefore pray the Fatiha from a distance. To go and visit the graves is Sunnah. You should go once a week, either on Friday, Thursday, Saturday or Monday is all valid. The best time is in the morning on a Friday. It is allowed to go and travel to the graves of the Aulia-e-Kiram and the Aulia provide benefit for those who do this.

Sending Sawab (Reward) to the deceased

When visiting the graveyard pray 'Alhamdo Sharif and Alif Laam Meem upto Muflihoon and Ayatul Kursi and Amanarrasooluh to the end of the Surah. Also pray Surah Yaseen and Tabarakal Lazi and Surah Takathur once each and pray QuI Huwallaho Ahad either twelve, eleven, seven or three times and then send all the reward to the dead. It is quoted in the Hadith Sharif that those who pray QuI Huwallaho Ahad eleven times and then send the reward to the dead, then he who sends it will gain reward equivalent to the amount of dead people [Durr-e-Mukhtar, Radd-ul-Mohtar, Bahar].

بالغ مرد و عورت کی میت کیلئے زُعا

Funeral pray for the Adult male and female

اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِحَيِّنَا وَمَيِّتِنَا وَشَاهِدِنَا وَغَائِبِنَا وَصَغِيرِنَا
وَكَبِيرِنَا وَذَكَرِنَا وَأُنْثَانَا اللَّهُمَّ مَنْ أَحْيَيْتَهُ مِنَّا فَأَحْيِهِ
عَلَى الْإِسْلَامِ وَمَنْ تَوَفَّيْتَهُ مِنَّا فَتَوَفَّهُ عَلَى الْإِيمَانِ

اللہ بخش دے ہمارے ہر زندہ کو اور ہمارے ہر متوفی کو اور ہمارے ہر حاضر کو اور ہمارے ہر غیر حاضر کو اور ہمارے ہر چھوٹے
کو اور ہمارے ہر بڑے کو اور ہمارے ہر مرد کو اور ہمارے ہر عورت کو الٰہی توہم میں سے جس کو زندہ رکھے تو اس کو اسلام پر زندہ
رکھا اور ہم میں سے جس کو موت دے تو اس کو ایمان پر موت دے

“O Allah, pardon our living and our dead and our present and our
absent and our young and our old and our men and women.

O Allah, whoever from among us lives, make him live adhering to Islam
and whoever from among us dies, let him die adhering to the Faith.”

That which has been narrated by Imam Muslim in the chapter of “The Rewards of Charity Reach the Deceased”, on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him), that a man said to the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him), “My father has passed away and has left wealth behind, but he has not left a will. If I give in charity on his behalf will it atone for what he has done?” The Prophet (peace be upon him) responded, “Yes” [Muslim, vol. 3, #1254].