



## **A step by step guide for Muslims on Burial and Bereavement**



Supporting Humanity is a compassionate charitable organisation that provides mental health and bereavement support to those in need. Established in 2020, we have already made a positive impact on many people's lives during their most vulnerable moments.

At Supporting Humanity, our mission is to empower, support, and uplift all members of our community, especially those who face neglected and overlooked issues such as mental health and bereavement.

We understand that it can be challenging to share your problems, which is why we strive to provide a safe and welcoming environment where individuals can turn to for emotional support and access to vital resources.

**Supporting Humanity's funeral services are all free of charge.**

At Supporting Humanity Charity, we are here to support and advise you throughout and guide you through the detail, advise you of all the options and choices available and work with you to arrange a funeral that is apt for the deceased's family.

The person making the arrangements must have the authority of the family to do so and be able to make decisions and give instructions.

**Our funeral service will cover:**

- Pick up of the deceased from either home, hospital or hospice.
- Ghush (washing and shrouding of the deceased under the supervision of qualified personnel).
- Transfer of the deceased after Ghush to the home or mosque, if required and as requested by families.
- Salaatul Janaazah at the cemetery or the mosque by prior arrangement.
- Burial

Please note that Supporting Humanity will not undertake any funeral service for the repatriation of the deceased.

For any bereavement support including funeral, ghush services and help

Please contact Supporting Humanity: 020 4551 1584 (option 4)  
[www.supportinghumanity.org](http://www.supportinghumanity.org) | [info@supportinghumanity.org](mailto:info@supportinghumanity.org)





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## FOREWORD

“In times of death, we extend our helping hands to the grieving families, always mindful of the verse:

Kullu nafsin zaikatul maut  
(every soul shall taste death) surah 3: verse 185

كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ

We believe in the power of compassion and selflessness, and crave the prayers of those who give during their own times of need. At Supporting Humanity, we strive to be an integral part of the family, willing to share their pain and shoulder their duties. Our hope is that our acts of support will be rewarded by the Almighty Allah, becoming a means of entry to Jannat for all of us, InshaAllah.”

**Idris Patel** BEM, BCAC  
Founder & CEO - Supporting Humanity



“To be present supporting a patient and their family in their time of most need, during illness, death or funeral, is always a privilege.

**Shaykh Yunus Dudhwala,**  
Head of Chaplaincy, Barts Health



“I'm blessed to visit people in their moments of need as a professional vocation.”

**Ustaadha Ruquyya bint Muhammad**  
Head of Sisters Ghul  
Supporting Humanity



“Being a Hospital Chaplain is very fulfilling as it allows me to be in a position to help patients and loved ones in a time of great need.”

**Imam Abdurrahman Anwar**  
Hospital Chaplain



## INTRODUCTION

Losing someone close to you can be a very difficult time in your life, this booklet has been designed to guide you through the steps following a bereavement.

At Supporting Humanity, we have an experienced team to advise and support you through the process of making the funeral arrangements.

There are some practical steps that must be covered which relate to the paperwork that needs to be completed to meet legal requirements and to organise the funeral itself.

In order to organise the funeral there are some steps which need to be taken such as contacting a funeral service, the cemetery and organising some paperwork.

If you are unsure about any aspect, or if you need assistance and support feel free to contact Supporting Humanity or consult with friends, family or your local mosque.

**Supporting Humanity: All bereavement services are provided FREE OF CHARGE**

At Supporting Humanity, we can help by:

### **Arranging the funeral**

We are here to support and advise you throughout this period, making you aware of all the options and work with you to arrange a funeral that is appropriate for the deceased's family.

The person making the arrangements must have the permission of the family/Next of Kin to do so, and be able to make decisions and give instructions.

The Supporting Humanity funeral service will cover:

- Pick up of the deceased from either home, hospital, or hospice
- Ghusl (washing and shrouding of the deceased under the supervision of trained personnel)
- Transfer of the deceased after the Ghusl to the home or mosque if required and as requested by families
- Salaatul Janaazah at the cemetery or the mosque (by prior arrangement)
- Burial

### **Paperwork**

Supporting Humanity aims to ease the process for you as much as possible and helps by liaising with hospitals, local authorities, Coroners, and Registrars to arrange all the required paperwork.

### **Bereavement support**

As a charity providing funeral services to communities, we are conscious that our role is much wider than just arranging the funeral, it also requires taking care of the family's needs and assisting them in their grieving process.

Supporting Humanity Charity provides trained and certified Emotional Wellbeing Support to all families in need of bereavement support.

## WHAT TO DO AT THE TIME OF DEATH OF A LOVED ONE

1. Make the person as comfortable as possible.
2. If possible, turn their face towards the qiblah.
3. Remove all jewellery, dentures etc.
4. Near the dying person one can recite the kalimah:

أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ  
وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ

*Ash-hadu an-La illaha ill Allahu, Wahdahu La Sharika lah, wa ash-Hadu anna Muhammadan 'abduhu wa Rasoolu*

I bear witness that there is none worthy of worship except Allah, the One and the Only, without any partner, and I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and his Messenger.

5. Do not discuss worldly things and divert the attention of the dying to the concerns of worldly affairs. Say good things and mention positive thoughts.
6. Reciting Surah Yasin, this lightens the hardship of death and can be recited in the vicinity of the dying (although there is no authentic sunnah to support this it still comes under good things to do in the presence of the dying and has been practiced by the Salaf al Saaliheen)



## WHAT TO DO IMMEDIATELY AFTER A LOVED ONE HAS PASSED

1. When the person departs from this dunya all should recite:

إِنَّا لِلّٰهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ

Inna lillahiwa Inna ilayhi raji'un

Indeed we belong to Allah, and indeed to Him, we will have to return

2. The eyes of the deceased should be closed gently.
3. All the limbs should be straightened, so the arms are by the side, parallel to the body and the legs closed.
4. The fingers should be straightened.
5. The Mouth should be carefully closed by placing a bandage or strip of cloth around the lower jaw and tied at the top of the head.
6. The person should be wrapped in a clean sheet and transported to mortuary / funeral home. If at the hospital, they will be placed in a bag and moved to the mortuary.
7. Make arrangements to bury the deceased as swiftly as possible. It is important and in accordance with Shariah that the burial should not be delayed on any account.

The Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said:

*"Hasten to bury your dead...." (Narrated by Bukhari/Muslim)*

**Note: Transporting the body overseas is strongly discouraged.**

There is a process of embalming that takes place. In this process the bodily fluids are removed and are replaced with other fluids such as alcohol to preserve the body. The process of embalment is also undertaken in non-modest conditions unlike the Ghusl.

### Process of embalment

1. The body is first washed in a strong disinfectant solution.
2. An artery (blood vessel) is then selected in the neck or the groin and opened to allow the introduction of a small tube. The small tube is used to pump embalming fluid into the blood vessel and throughout the body that replaces the blood, which is removed and discarded. Embalming fluid is a mixture of the following compounds in varying concentrations by volume:
  - a. Water
  - b. approximately 69% Formaldehyde, a strong tissue preservative and disinfectant
  - c. approximately 25% alcohol in the form of methanol
  - d. approximately 5% propanediol
  - e. approximately 1% a compound like antifreeze

The vessel used to introduce the fluid is then tied off.

3. A trocar, a metal tube with a removable pointed tip, is then inserted through the skin into body cavities and organs to remove excess fluid and gas. Any incisions are then repaired and the body dressed.

## HOW TO WASH THE DECEASED

At all times the body of the deceased must be handled with great care and attention to ensure no harm or discomfort is caused. Any injury caused to the body is like causing injury whilst the person was alive according to Islamic guidance.

### Washing the body

When a Muslim dies, it is the responsibility of their family or other Muslims within the local community to wash them according to the Islamic rites of washing the deceased. Usually three to four people will be involved in the process of ghusl (washing and shrouding). Families and relatives can also assist with this.

Giving ghusl is a Fard Kifayah (communal obligation) which must be completed by some members of the community, otherwise, the whole community will be sinful.

The Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said:

*“Whoever follows a Muslim’s funeral, out of faith and seeking to increase his account of good deeds, until he makes the funeral prayer for it will have a Qeeraat’s worth of reward. And he whoever follows it until it is buried, will get two Qeeraats”* He was then asked what two Qeeraats were and he replied, *“They are equivalent to two huge mountains; [the smaller of the two is like Mount Uhud].”* (Narrated by Bukhari and Muslim)

### Who should wash the body ?

The persons washing the deceased should be:

- Adult Muslims who are honest and trustworthy persons
- Of the same gender as the deceased i.e. if the deceased is male, then only males should wash him. For a young child, either males or females may do the ghusl. There is an exception for the husband who wishes to bathe his wife or vice versa
- Knowledgeable in the Islamic way of washing the deceased and be able to carry out the ghusl (Many places will have a lead volunteer present to help family members)
- Preferably in a state of wudhu (ablution)

### Maintaining dignity

When washing a body, whatever you see during the washing and shrouding process must not be discussed outside anywhere with anyone. Privacy must be maintained at all times.

Do not use water which is too cold or too hot, rather it should be moderate and lukewarm temperature.

### Process of Ghusl

Please note further considerations need to be made here depending on the state of the body.

1. Gently untie the cloth covering the deceased from the head and feet
2. Whilst maintaining the private parts of the deceased (awrah) remain covered, slowly remove the remaining clothing.



3. Gently raise the upper body (put your hand on the back of the person) and gently press the stomach 3 times – this will allow any waste to exit the body.
4. Use gloves, clean cloth or a sponge to gently clean private parts (whilst they are still covered). Gently lift the legs so you have access to the back and front. If you use a white cloth it will show you how much more washing may be required. You may need to clean the deceased once, twice or even more, enough times until the body is clean.
5. After you have cleaned the private areas of the body, throw away the used cloths. Ensure respect is shown to the deceased and the same cloths are not used for the remaining parts of the body – to do so would be disrespecting the deceased and very unhygienic.
6. Now perform full wudu:
  - a. Gently clean the right hand by passing water in-between fingers. Always start from the right side.
  - b. Then do the same for the left hand up to the wrist.
  - c. Wet some cotton wool and gently rub the mouth area.
  - d. Using some wet cotton do the same to the nose, cleaning the inside of the nose.
  - e. Now gently wash the face (like in wudu).
  - f. Clean the right hand & arm. A person should lift the arm while another person gently washes it. Do the same for the left arm.
  - g. Now clean the back of the head (Masah), neck, ear and top the head.
  - h. Wash both feet including in between toes.
  - i. Now wash entire body (water must go everywhere, including the private parts).
7. After Wudu the entire body can be washed, shower gel can be used. You can also use berry leaves or similar fragrances. At the time of Prophet Muhammad (SAW), boiled berry leaves and Dor Sidhar (in lukewarm water) was used.
8. Remove soap from the entire body and ensure the back is clean.
9. It is recommended to wash an odd number of times (1, 3, 5, 7) and clean as much as possible to ensure there are no impurities on the body.
10. If available, apply crushed Camphor to the body as this has a pleasant fragrance and preserves the body. Put it in a tub of water, mix and then put it all over the body, especially on places of prostration (sajdah) – the forehead, nose, hands, knees and legs.
11. Change the towel on the body
12. Dry the body and gently dab the body with a cloth.
13. If the body is decomposed or not intact due to it being involved in an accident, if it is possible to wash the body with water then do so, if not then it is possible to do Tayammum.



## GHUSL – KEY POINTS

1. Clean away any impurities from the body using warm water, particularly around the awrah area.
2. Press lightly on the stomach of the deceased to remove any impurities. Wash the body of all impurities using water.
3. Perform wudhu of the deceased except inserting water in the nose and mouth (you can use wet cotton to clean this area).
4. Wash the body with water and soap starting from head, then upper right side of the body, then the left side of the body. Hereafter the lower right side and then the lower left.
5. For females the hair should be loosened, washed, and loosely braided.
6. In the last wash use camphor in the water to pour over the body. 'Itr (Oil Perfume) is to be placed on the forehead, nose, hands (all parts that touch the floor in salah).
7. The body should be dried (always maintaining privacy)
8. The body is then ready to be shrouded

## SHROUDING THE DECEASED

Shrouding should start immediately after washing the body of the deceased. It is recommended to use white sheets from inexpensive material. Extravagance is not recommended in the Kafn (Shroud). All measurements may vary depending on the height and build of the deceased. The material of the sheet should not have any stitching, not be silk, nor should any gold be used.

A clean kafn/shroud is used. A white shroud is used because the Prophet (saw) said:

***“Wear white clothing it is the best of your clothes and wrap the dead with it.”***

[Reported by Imam Abu Dawood, Tirmidhi, and Ibn Majah]

The shroud consists of three pieces for the male, and of five pieces for the female. This limit was placed as it was what the Sahabah (r) practiced for the Prophet (saw):

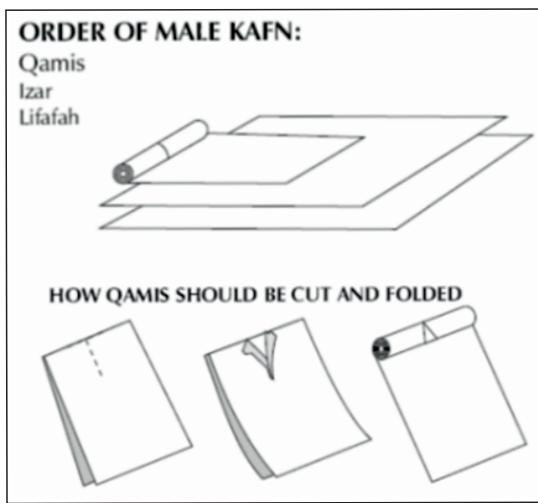
***“The Prophet (S.A.W.) himself was shrouded by the companions in three white sheets.”***

[Reported by Imams Bukhari, Muslim and others].

## The Kafn of a Male

The Kafn of a male should consist of three white wrapping sheets, and 3-4 tie ropes:

- Outer sheet -Lifafah (Sheet)
- Second sheet -Izaar (Loincloth)
- Third sheet -Qamees (shirt)
- 3-4 ties



## Steps on Shrouding a Male

- The wrapping sheets should be opened and spread out, one on top of the other.
- Roll up the front half of the top sheet towards the head – Qamees (shirt).
- The deceased, covered with a sheet (satar), is lifted and laid on his back on this top sheet (Qamees).
- The Qamees is then unrolled over the front of the body and once the body is covered then remove the satar (covering sheet).
- Some scent, perfume or sandal wood paste may be put on the parts of the body upon which one rests during prostration, that is the forehead, nose, hands, knees, and feet.
- If it is possible the deceased's left hand should be placed on their chest, then put their right hand on the left hand, like how they are laced in Salah (Prayer). If not place the hands on the side of the body.
- The edge of the next sheet (Izaar) is then folded over the deceased's right side, then the other edge over their left side.
- Then the last sheet (Lifafah) should be folded the same way.
- These sheets should be fastened with a thin piece of cloth (tie ropes), one above the head, another under the feet, and two around the body.
- This completes the shrouding for the male.

## The Kafn of a Female

The Kafn of a female should consist of five white garments and 4 (rope ties).

- Outermost sheet - Lifafah (Sheet)
- Second sheet - Izaar (Loincloth)
- Third sheet - Seenah-band (Chest Band) -to cover from under armpits to the thighs.
- Fourth layer - Qamees (Shirt)
- Last piece -Orhni/Headband- to cover the head and hair.
- 3-4 ties

## Steps on Shrouding a Female

All the sheets should be spread out in layers.

- Roll up the front half of the top sheet towards the head – Qamees (shirt).
- The deceased (still covered with a sheet, Satar), is lifted and laid on her back on this top sheet (Qamees).
- The Qamees is then unrolled over the front of the body and once the body is covered then remove the satar (covering sheet).
- Some scent or perfume may be put on those parts of the body upon which one rests during prostration, that is the forehead, nose, hands, knees, and feet.
- The Sinaband (loin cloth) is bound round (acts like underwear).
- Put the head veil on.
- The deceased hands should be placed on side of body
- The edge of the Izaar sheet is folded over the deceased right side, then the other edge over her left side.
- Then the last (Lifafah) sheet should be folded the same way.
- These sheets should be fastened with a piece of cloth (tie ropes), one above the head, another under the feet, and one or two around the body.

### ORDER OF FEMALE KAFN:

Orhni (not shown)

Qamis

Sinabhand

Izar

Lifafah



## PROCESS OF GHUSL AND SALATUL JANAZA FOR BABIES, STILL BORN, FOETUS.

### Funeral Arrangements

- If a baby is a miscarriage before 24 weeks of pregnancy it is treated as a 'non-viable foetus' The family will be given a form recording the details of the non-viable foetus. No registration of death is required.
- If a baby is stillborn after 24 weeks, the family will be given a Medical Certificate of Stillbirth, this is signed by the midwife or doctor. This will need to be registered with the local Registrar of Deaths.
- The family can contact a Cemetery and book a burial time.
- A Muslim Cemetery/Funeral Director will facilitate washing and shrouding.
- There is no cost for child funerals
- Family can arrange transport of the foetus/child themselves (in a car) to the cemetery.

### Burial & Janazah

If a stillbirth happens before 4 months (120 days /17.14 weeks), there is a burial, however, no funeral prayer will take place.

If a baby is born alive (breathes) and then dies, it is named and at the time of burial a special funeral prayer (Janazah) is offered.

This is according to all opinions.

There is a difference of opinion amongst scholars regarding a miscarriage that happens after 4 months:

- For some, if a stillbirth happens after 4 months the baby is still named, and a special prayer is offered.
- For others, there is no naming nor any formal funeral prayer.



## **MAKING BURIAL ARRANGEMENTS: PRACTICAL STEPS**

There are 5 key steps to the Islamic burial:

1. Have the right documents for burial. You must have one of the following:
  - a) a green slip provided by the registrar.
  - b) a burial order issued by the coroner
2. Arrange for the body to be held in a mortuary (Some Masjids also have facilities).
3. Arrange Ghusl
4. Shroud the body in the Kafn
5. Funeral prayers (Janazah salah)
6. Burial

To enable the burial to take place as quickly as possible, by law, in order for a burial to take place the death must be certified and registered.

NOTE: Latest details can be found on the government website. The details in this book were sourced from there at the time of publication.

### **Different steps for different scenarios**

Expected death

1. Expected death at hospital.
2. Expected death at home or another place.



## EXPECTED DEATH

### Expected Death at Hospital

If the death occurs in hospital, the hospital staff will contact the person named by the deceased as next of kin and will liaise with them.

A doctor will issue a Medical Certificate of Cause of Death (MCCD). The hospital will keep the body in the hospitals designated mortuary space until the next of kin arranges for it to be taken away for the ghusl. Please note that the hospital will not normally release the body until the Certificate for Burial (Green Form) is obtained from the Registrar of Deaths.

You can contact the hospital Chaplains for any assistance.

Hospital staff will also arrange for the next of kin to collect the deceased's possessions.

### Expected Death at Home or Another Location (Hospice/Care Home etc)

#### ***During Surgery Hours:***

If the death of your loved one was expected (*i.e. they were suffering from an illness or family had brought them home from hospital for end of life care*), you should call the GP.

If the doctor can certify the cause of death (they need to have seen the deceased as a patient in the last 28 days), they will give you a Formal Notice that states that the doctor has signed the Medical Certificate and this also tells you how to get the death registered. The MCCD will be emailed over to the Council Register office by the surgery.

If the doctor attending the deceased had not seen them ***either after the death*** or within 28 days before the death, the death will be reported to the Coroner.

#### ***Out of Hours:***

If a family member passes away at home and the death is expected (*i.e. family has taken their loved one home from hospital*) then there is no need to call an ambulance, the family should call their GP and an out of hours number will be mentioned in the answering machine. Call that number and an 'out of hours GP' will visit and verify the death, they will also give a 'Verification of Death' form which needs to be signed by the deceased's GP.

The form should be taken to the GP in the morning so it can be signed. Once the form has been signed it will be sent to the Registrar Office by the surgery.

The Registrar Office will call the family to confirm details and will then issue a green form (Burial Form). This is required for burial.

After the Dr attends you can contact the Funeral Directors (such as Supporting Humanity) or a local masjid and they can arrange for the body to be held in the mortuary until the Ghusl.

### Post Mortem When Death is Expected

If you are asked for permission to do a post-mortem, then you should try and avoid this. As it is an expected death, doctors will only ask for research purposes and a post mortem is not a requirement. The cause of death has been certified by the doctor.

*Islam does not permit post-mortems if they are not required by the law.*

## UNEXPECTED DEATH

Unexpected death in **hospital** will be referred to the Coroner.

Unexpected death at **home or other place** should in the first instance be reported to the Police who will then report to the Coroner's Office.

As of July 2023, there are new Medical Examiner requirements that come in from April 2024. All unexpected deaths will be scrutinised by Medical Examiners both in the community and the hospital. There is a new and digitised Medical Certificate of Cause of Death. When Medical Examiners become part of the statutory death certification process, Medical Certificates of Cause of Death (MCCDs) will need to be countersigned by a Medical Examiner before the death can be registered. A new form will be required. Full updates can be found on the NHS website.

### Post Mortem When Death is Unexpected

The Coroner must, by law, order a post mortem examination if the cause of death is potentially unnatural or if is not known. In some cases, it is possible to determine the cause of death by post mortem medical scanning. A scan is not always suitable or useful, as there are many medical conditions that the imaging techniques do not pick up. Your Dr may be able to give you advice on whether there is a realistic chance of it being successful for your relative or whether it's even a possibility.

You should inform the hospital that Islam requires you to hold the funeral as soon as possible. This is so they can inform the coroner and try to perform the post mortem examination as soon as possible – there will not be a set timescale and you should not arrange the funeral until you have clarity on the time lines.

### Practical steps to remember in relation to paperwork

- Register the death within 5 days
- Tell the government about the death using their 'tell us once service' which allows you to inform all the relevant government departments when someone dies.
- Tell banks, utility companies, landlords and Housing Associations where relevant.
- Check if you can get bereavement benefits.
- Check your own benefits, pension and taxes as this may change depending on your relationship with the person who died.
- Check if you need to apply for probate and pay inheritance tax before you can deal with any assets.
- Deal with the Estate – pay any debts owed by the person who died before distributing any assets as set out by the will or law.

### Register the Death

Register the death within 5 days - this includes weekends and Bank Holidays. The person registering the death should take documents that show your proof of address. The MCCD will be emailed to the register office by the hospital/GP/Coroners. You do not need any ID for the deceased.



## Register Office

You should go to the local Register Office in the Borough where the death has taken place, not where the deceased resided (the hospital or GP will inform you of this).

Registering the death will take about 30-45 minutes - you might need to make an appointment. Where an appointment system is in place, turn up at the Register office and explain the need to obtain a Burial Order urgently for faith reasons. At times they may issue a Burial Form and ask you to come at a later time for registering the death (This is so the burial can happen quickly).

**Who should register the death :** A relative should register the death. In some circumstances others can register the death, please speak to the registrar for more details.

## Documents you will receive from the Registrar :

When you register a death, you will receive:

- a Certificate for Burial (the 'green form') - gives permission for burial
- a Certificate of Registration of Death (form BD8) - you may need to fill this out and return it if the person was getting a State Pension or benefits (the form will come with a pre-paid envelope, so you know where to send it)

You can buy extra death certificates if needed for sorting out the person's affairs.

## Visiting the cemetery

Abū Hurayrah t narrates that the Prophet s has mentioned:

زُورُوا الْقُبُورَ فَإِنَّهَا تَذَكِّرُكُمُ الْآخِرَةَ

zu rulquboor, fa inahaa tozukirokumul aakhira

“Visit the graves for they will remind you of the hereafter.” (Ibn Mājah 1596, Nasaī 2034)

In Islam, the purpose of visiting graves is to reflect and remind ourselves of death, as well as life in the Barzakh. Additionally, it is also a way to commemorate the owner of the grave and remember their good deeds and traits.

**Dua when entering:** The Prophet Muhammad SAW taught the following words as salutation to the people of the graves and a prayer for their forgiveness:

اَلسَّلَامُ عَلَیْكُمْ اَهْلَ الدِّيَارِ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِیْنَ وَالْمُسْلِمِیْنَ وَاِنَّا  
اِنْشَاءَ اللّٰهُ بِكُمْ لَا حَقُوْنَ نَسْأَلُ اللّٰهَ لَنَا وَلَكُمْ الْعَافِیَةَ

Assalamu alaikum ahlad diyar, minal-mu'mineena walmuslimeena, wa 'innaa 'in shaa' Allaahu bikum laa hiqoona as'alullaaha lanaa wa lakumul- 'aafiyata.

Peace be upon you oh dwellers of the graves, among the believers, and Muslims, and we shall be joining (you) Allāh willing. I seek well-being from Allāh for you and us.

(Sahīh Muslim 975)

## Females attending the cemetery

There is a difference of opinion as to whether females are allowed to visit the cemetery or not.

In the Hanafi School, it is permissible for old women to visit graves provided no act which is contrary to the Shariah is practiced. If there is a fear of loud crying, wailing or the intermingling with men, then it will be impermissible. As far as young women are concerned, if the above mentioned conditions are met with, then it is permissible, although disliked. It is stated in one of the foremost references for Fatwa in the Hanafi School al-Fatawa al-Hindiyya the Scholars differed about women visiting graves. Imam al-Sarakhsi (Allah have mercy on him) said:

***“The most correct opinion is that it is not wrong.”*** (al-al-Fatawa al-Hindiyya, V.5, p. 350).

The great Hanafi jurist, Allama Ibn Abidin (Allah have mercy on him) states in his Radd al-Muhtar (Super commentary on al-Haskafi’s Durr al-Mukhtar, and one considered a fundamental source in the Hanafi School); The soundest opinion in the School is that, it is permissible for women to visit the graves. Al-Ramali said:

“If they visit graves to renew their sorrows, or to cry and wail, as is the customary practice of many, then it is not permissible. This is how the Prophetic Hadith “Allah has cursed women who visit graves” is understood. However, if they visit for contemplation, compassion and seeking Baraka, then it is not wrong if they are elderly. It is disliked if they are young.” (Radd al-Muhtar, 2.424)

From the foregoing we can conclude that there are two conditions for the permissibility of women visiting graves:

- There should be no wailing and loud crying
- There is no fear of Fitna

If the above two conditions are complied with, then it would be permissible for women to visit graves although disliked for young women. However, if there is fear of wailing / loud crying or more importantly Fitna (intermingling with the opposite sex), then it would be impermissible. Therefore, if by women attending the funeral prayer or burial, there is fear of Fitna, then it will not be permissible for them to attend and Allah knows best.

If a female decides that she does want to visit the cemetery, then she must be mindful of the following:

1. Intention - I am going to the cemetery to remember death, especially my death
2. To pray/make dua for our loved ones and all the deceased and to recite Qur’an for the reward of the deceased

- Dress in a modest manner - this is a place where one must remember death. One cannot dress in a way which displeases our Lord.
- Whilst there, remember death constantly. Think about the grave and its loneliness, and one day we will be in a grave.
- A few ways of praying for the dead, as related in the Ahadith are:
  - ~ Recite Surat Ikhlaas 11 times.  
It is related in a Hadith that whoever visits the cemetery and recites Surat Ikhlaas 11 times and then prayed for the dead will be rewarded as many fold as the number of deceased in the cemetery.
  - ~ It has been reported in a hadith that whoever visits the cemetery and recites Surat Fatiha, Surat Ikhlaas, Surat Takaasur and then prays for the dead, the people of the grave will also ask Allah for such a person's forgiveness.
  - ~ Recite Surat Yaseen. In a hadith it is reported that if a person recites Surat Yaseen in the cemetery, the punishment of the dead will be eased, and the reciter will be rewarded just as much as the dead.
  - ~ Recite 4 quls and send reward on all deceased
- If one goes in a group, one should stay as alone as much as possible, as this is a place not to mingle, talk or socialise. Keep the tongue busy in dua and remembrance of Allah SWT.



## **GUIDANCE FOR EVERY MUSLIM THAT LOSES A LOVED ONE**

### **1. Make lots of dua / supplications**

As a believer, one of the greatest assets we have is the ability to make dua which will benefit our loved ones in the grave and seek forgiveness for them. It is through prayer and dua that we can support our loved ones.

Dua and prayers should be done in abundance and do not have to be done at the gravesite or in special gatherings on special days – there is no proof of this in the Ahadith and nor was this the practice of the scholars of the past.

Dua and prayer should be offered in accordance with the Quran and Sunnah.

### **2. Try to adopt patience**

One of the hardest acts is observing patience after losing a loved one. Practicing patience is not the same as blocking our emotions.

It is important to remember that grief is a natural reaction to the loss of a loved one and can feel different at different times to everyone. There is often no end date, only different ways of coping.

Our beloved Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) experienced countless moments of grief throughout his lifetime and had tears in his eyes when losing his son, as well as losing loved ones during different stages of his life, showing us that in this is a real human experience, we are not alone.

### **3. Don't suffer alone and look after yourself**

It is quite common to be overcome by grief with the death of a loved one. Whilst we shouldn't suppress our emotions, we are warned away from feelings of despair, for they can be self-destructive during a period of grief. As Muslims, our bodies have a right over us, and it is our duty to take care of our hearts, soul and mind.

Let the death of a loved one be a lesson on detaching from the world and to hold Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) in your heart above all others. Where possible, talk through your emotions with someone.

### **4. Give charity for the deceased**

Charity is an important part of someone's legacy once they have passed. The deceased person may have donated Sadaqah Jariyah (ongoing charity) during their lifetime, which benefits them in the afterlife.

Donating Sadaqah on behalf of someone you love who has passed away is a way of honouring their legacy in this life. When done sincerely for the sake of seeking the pleasure of Allah (SWT), it will earn them rewards while they can no longer do so themselves.

Some other forms of charity are:

- Helping build a mosque or water well
- Sponsoring an orphan
- Performing acts of worship (umrah / hajj)
- Fasting

These acts of worship will also benefit you.

## **5. Forgiveness**

If someone hurts us, it is natural for us to hold resentment against them. The Quran says:

***‘Indeed Qiyamah is approaching, so pardon (those who wrong you) with most graceful pardon (without revenge).’ Quran 15:85***

We should forgive the deceased as being merciful to others will lead Allah to be merciful to us.

## **6. Try and have some routine and focus**

We all need time to heal and experience the feeling of grief as it comes. But, it is important to ensure you have some routine and focus in your life as a healthy distraction to the mind and body.

It is common to reflect on what things you could have said or done, feeling guilt or sadness. Remember with hardship there is ease.

## **7. Give yourself time**

Grief goes through many phases: Shock, Denial, Anger, Bargaining, Depression, Acceptance/hope and processing the grief. And although they don't always follow a particular order or have an exact timeline for a healing process or grief, time will help. In addition seeking emotional support can help.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### 1. **Can the spouse give ghusl to their deceased husband or wife? In practice, males should give Ghusl to males and females to females.**

It is not practically possible for the spouse alone to do the entire Ghusl singlehandedly. Therefore, if the spouse is going to wash, they will be in the presence of members of the opposite gender, which can lead to discomfort and embarrassment for both parties, not to mention the disrespect the deceased may be subject to.

However, in terms of permissibility;

- All schools of thought allow a woman to do the Ghusl of her deceased husband.
- All schools of thought allow a male to do the Ghusl of his deceased wife (except the Hanafi school of thought)

There is precedent in the practice of some Sahaba .

### 2. **How do you do the ghusl if the deceased is menstruating?**

The blood should stop. Perform the Ghusl as normal. Make use of padding or nappy if necessary.

### 3. **What happens if the coil, crowns, contact lenses, dentures are left in?**

Only items which impact the Ghusl and can be easily reached and removed, need to be removed. Any others, such as the above mentioned can be left.

Attempting to remove dentures or contact lenses, would result in inflicting harm and pain on the deceased, which is not allowed.

### 4. **What if the deceased wants to be buried abroad?**

Islam encourages us to bury a deceased as soon as possible and within close vicinity or where the deceased passed. Transporting involves embalming, please refer to the section of the book that discusses this.

The Will and Command of Allah swt and our Shariah take precedence over our own desires, it also takes precedence over what a loved one had wished for or given nasihah of.

It is very important to have these conversations with our loved ones whilst alive.

**5. Do we have to use unperfumed shampoo, soap, etc?**

No. The masjid will provide the appropriate shampoo, soap or bodywash. However, bereaved families are welcome to bring their own.

**6. Is it true that nail polish or eye lash extensions cannot be removed?**

Correct. Removal of regular nail polish is dependent on how long it has been since the deceased passed. Unless removed immediately upon death, it is very difficult, often impossible to remove nail polish off a deceased. Acrylic nails, eye lash extensions cannot be removed under any circumstances, due to the nature of force which would be required to remove them

**7. Do we recite anything whilst washing?**

No recitation takes place whilst bathing and the same rules apply here. Recitation is allowed when shrouding.

**8. Do I have to have Wudu to wash the deceased?**

Yes

**9. Do I need to do ghusl myself afterwards?**

Doing ghusl after washing the deceased is mustahabb (Recommended), but it is not obligatory.

If there is time afterwards you can do Ghusl. We should do everything with Ihsaan (excellence) in Islam.

However, you MUST be in the state of wudu when going to read Salatul Janazah, after preparing the deceased.

**10. Can I wash and shroud when on my menstrual cycle?**

No.

However, there is an opinion that if there is a compelling situation and there is no other person present to perform the ghusl for the deceased except a menstruating woman, then under such compelling circumstances a menstruating woman can wash the dead body, but under normal circumstances, they should not do so.

**11. How many people are required to wash a deceased?**

Anything between 4-6. There can be more, dependent on the size and weight of deceased.



**12. How do you do the ghusl if there has been a post mortem?**

The same process applies – but extra care and sensitivity is applied to the operated areas. Any cuts should be stitched so you can put water over it and wash it.

Please see our step-by-step guide on washing and shrouding

**13. If a person missed some takbeers of the Janazah prayer, how should he make up for them?**

The individual does not make up parts of the janazah prayer, it is still valid

**14. How long is iddah ?**

For a woman whose husband has died, the iddah is four lunar months and 10 days (I.e. about 128) after the death of her husband.

We hope you found the contents of this book helpful.

For any further information please refer to the Supporting Humanity website.



## Dua of Janazah For An Adult Male or Female

اَللّٰهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِحَيِّنَا وَمَيِّتِنَا وَشَاهِدِنَا وَغَائِبِنَا  
وَصَغِيرِنَا وَكَبِيرِنَا وَذَكَرِنَا وَأُنْثَانَا اَللّٰهُمَّ مَنْ  
اَحْيَيْتَهُ مِنَّا فَاحْيِهِ عَلَى الْاِسْلَامِ وَمَنْ تَوَفَّيْتَهُ مِنَّا  
فَتَوَفَّهُ عَلَى الْاِيْمَانِ

Allaahum-maghfir lihayyinaa, wa mayyitinaa, wa shaahidinaa, wa ghaa'ibinaa, wa sagheerinaa wa kabeerinaa, wa thakarinaa wa 'unthaanaa. Allaahumma man 'ahyaytahu minnaa fa'ahyih 'alal-'Islaami, wa man tawaffaytahu minnaa fatawaffahu 'alal-'eemaan

O Allah forgive our living and our dead, those who are with us and those who are absent, our young and our old, our menfolk and our womenfolk. O Allah, whomever you give life from among us give him life in Islam, and whomever you take away from us take him away in Faith.

Abu Dawud: 3201, At-Tirmidhi: 1024



Notes:

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# The Questions of The Grave

من ربك؟

Who is your Lord?"

— You will be asked so worship only Allah

ما دينك؟

What is your religion?"

— You will be asked so live and die on  
Islam

من نبيك؟

Who is your Prophet?"

— You will be asked so follow Rasulullah  
صلى الله عليه وسلم



[www.supportinghumanity.org](http://www.supportinghumanity.org)

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