

Nuneaton Muslim Society Funeral Directors

What to do one someone dies Procedure for Funeral Arrangements

One thing in life is certain and guaranteed to take place is death. However when death takes place in a family the majority of us are ignorant of the procedures to be followed to ensure burial takes place smoothly in accordance with Islamic Shariah and the Law.

The procedure below provides a guide to assist the bereaved in arranging the funeral.

Firstly the following people should be notified immediately

- i. Family Doctor
- ii. Funeral Director
- iii. Relatives and Friends of the deceased

Now depending on the circumstances of the death, different processes will need to be followed:

Death Occurs at Home/Hospital AND Cause of Death Known

1. If the deceased person's GP had attended them, at home during their illness and, can certify the cause of death or, if at hospital, the doctor is aware of the cause of death, then a Medical Certificate will be issued free of charge, stating the cause of death.
2. Inform the Funeral Director that a Medical Certificate has been issued.
 - i. They will make arrangements with the cemetery for burial.
 - ii. They will arrange for the body to be taken for Ghusl (Bath).
3. To register the death, you should take the Medical Certificate to the Registrar of Births and Deaths of the area where the death took place (the Registrar is usually based at the Civic Offices or the Town Hall – your doctor, local council, post office, or police station should know the address).
Nuneaton's Registrar is normally based in the registrar office in Riversley Park
4. When you go to the registrar you should take the following: the deceased's NHS medical Card (if available), Birth and Marriage Certificates (if available). You should inform the registrar of: the date and place of death; the deceased's usual address; the deceased's date, town and country of birth; the date and place of death; the deceased's occupation and (if married) the date of birth of the deceased's widow/er.
5. The Registrar issues 2 free certificates:
 - i. Certificate for Disposal
(Green form) – this form should be given to the funeral director as an authorisation for burial.
 - ii. Certificate of Registration of Death
This is for Social Security purposes and for probate etc... This certificate can be taken to the Social Security Office if you wish to claim death grant or widow benefits. You have to wait for this certificate to be issued, otherwise it will be posted to you.
During public holidays or after office hours the certificate of disposal can be obtained from the registrar of Births and Deaths office. This service is only available in the event of an emergency i.e. if burial needs to take place and offices are closed.
6. In hospital deaths:
 - i. The doctor may want to carry out a post-mortem purely for their or the hospital's satisfaction but, they have to obtain permission of the nearest relative. You do not have to give permission in these cases and your decision is respected.
 - ii. The body would normally be transferred from the ward to the hospital mortuary. But if arrangements are made swiftly, the body can be collected by the funeral director from the ward and taken to the mosque or funeral director's mortuary ready to be bathed.

7. If burial is to take place the next day, most funeral directors do have facilities to keep the body overnight in the mortuary, often at a mosque.

Death Occurs at Home/Hospital AND Cause of Death Unknown

1. If, at home, the deceased person's GP is unable to certify the cause of death, then he/she will inform the police who in turn will inform the Coroner
2. If, at hospital, the doctor is unable to certify the cause of death, then he/she will inform the coroner. The Coroner is usually a doctor or lawyer responsible for investigating certain deaths).
3. The matter is referred to the coroner if death occurs in any of the following circumstances at home or at the hospital;
 - i. If the deceased person was not attended by a doctor during his last illness or after death within 14 days prior to death
 - ii. If the cause of death is uncertain
 - iii. If death was sudden, violent or caused by an accident
 - iv. If death was caused by an industrial disease
4. The Coroner will probably arrange for a post-mortem examination of the body. The main purpose of this is to ascertain the cause of death. The consent of the relatives is not needed for this. They are, however, entitled to be represented at the examination by a doctor, if they are represented, the Coroner will, if practicable, tell the relatives the time and place of examination.
5. After the post-mortem:
 - i. If the death was found to be of natural causes then the Coroner's Office will issue a Pink Form.
To register the death, you should take the Pink Form to the Registrar of Births and Deaths of the area where the death took place and obtain Certificate for Disposal and Certificate of Registration of Death.
6. If the cause of death is uncertain or was due to an accident, violence, or industrial disease, then an Inquest will be held.
 - i. An Inquest is an enquiry into the medical cause and circumstances of death. It is held in public and sometimes with a jury. It is up to the Coroner to decide how to organise the enquiry in a way to best serve the public interest and the interest of the relatives.
 - ii. It may be very important to have a lawyer to represent you if the death was caused by a road accident, or an accident at work, or other circumstances which could lead to a claim for compensation. Contact your nearest Citizen Advice Bureau to see if you can get Legal Aid for this.
 - iii. After the inquest, the Coroner will give you, free of charge, an Order for Burial, this gives permission for the body to be buried and should be given to the funeral director so that the funeral can be held. The Coroner will also send a Certificate After Inquest, stating the cause of death, to the Registrar. This allows the death to be registered.

Ghisl (Washing of the Body)

It is recommended that at least 4 persons be present to help bathe and carry the body. Washing will normally take place at the Mosque. The Imam of the local mosque will be available to guide for the washing and preparation of the kafan.

Janaza Salaat

The Janaza Salaat will usually take place at the Mosque or at the Cemetery if suitable.

Burial

After the Janaza Salaat, the body is taken to the graveyard. During the winter months, the latest for burial is 3pm and during the summer months the latest time for burial is 7pm. Certain cemeteries do not allow coffin boxes to be opened at the graveyard. Therefore ensure the head of the deceased is placed in a manner such that it is facing the Qibla before entering the cemetery.

Please note that these are some general guidelines. Please contact the relevant authorities for further information.