

# A Practical Guide for Bereaved Muslims in the Greater Colchester area

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## FOREWORD PERTAINING COVID-19

All thanks is due to Allah ﷺ, The Most Merciful The Most Kind.

As Muslims, we see the COVID-19 pandemic as a reminder of the Allah's ﷺ Might, that all things are subservient to His Will and Decree and that all things good or bad is a test from Allah ﷺ.

**Verily Allah ﷺ says in the Holy Quran:**

*"Does man think that they will be left to say, "We believe" and they will not be tried? We have certainly tried those before them, and Allah will surely make evident those who are truthful, and He will surely make evident those who are false." (Ch29:V2-3)*

These are indeed trying times with mass deaths being reported. Our only salvation being our faith and trust in Allah.

**Verily Allah ﷺ says in the Holy Quran:**

*"And seek help through patience and prayer" (Ch2:V45)*

May Allah ﷺ bestow His infinite Mercy upon us, Pardon our faults, Cure our sick and Allow our deceased eternal paradise without reckoning Ameen.

**Yours in Islam**

Sh Ismael Van Der Schyff

*on behalf of the Learned Scholars of Colchester, the Burial Support Team Colchester,  
the Colchester Islamic Cultural Association & the Colchester Islamic Community Centre*



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## INTRODUCTION

There is no doubt that death will come to each and every living being; be they male or female, rich or poor, black or white, sick or healthy, is death. For many, COVID-19 has made the prospect of death a reality and with the reporting of hundreds of deaths on a national scale, there are lots of uncertainty about what happens if a family member dies from the COVID-19 virus.

This publication is designed to allow a greater understanding of what happens and to fully prepare in the event of someone in the near family passing away.

It features a practical guide of what needs to be done, fulfilling both governmental and Islamic requirements. Thereafter it goes through the complete Islamic rites of passage, including the relevant prayers, avoiding customs which are usually adopted by people ignorant of the correct Sunnah method.

Please note that every precaution should be taken to ensure the safety and well-being of the living. These procedures were determined keeping the rules of Islamic jurisprudence at the forefront, while considering the harm of the spread of the virus. Our aim in creating this publication is to honour our deceased as per Islamic guidelines while ensuring the safety and good health of the funeral workers and the general community.

To ensure this publication can be read by non-Arabic speaking persons, all Arabic texts have been written using transliteration.

It is also hoped that this publication can be a reminder for each of us to prepare for our own inevitable end.

A special **thank you** to the learned Scholars and support persons in the greater Colchester area for assisting with this publication. May the Almighty bestow His choicest Blessings and infinite Mercy upon you Ameen.

**And Verily Allah ﷺ Almighty knows best!**

## **WHEN A MUSLIM DIES AFTER CONTRACTING COVID-19 (IN HOSPITAL)**

1. When a person dies from COVID-19 whilst at hospital the body will be held by the hospital or at the mortuary.
2. The deceased will be released to the Undertakers (possibly Hunnaball of Colchester) and will not be permitted to go to the family home in any instance. If the appropriate Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) is available and if allowed by the Undertakers then the Islamic washing (GHUSL) and shrouding of the deceased will be performed by no more than 2 persons. **PLEASE CHECK WITH THE COLCHESTER MOSQUE IMAAM AS THIS IS SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY.** If the deceased family were wanting to view their loved one at the Hunnaball of Colchester Chapel of Rest no more than two people should attend the viewing.
3. In the **absence** of these safety requirements, the Islamic washing and shrouding of the deceased will NOT take place, the deceased will remain untouched in the sealed plastic body bag and sent directly to the cemetery for burial. **THIS IS INLINE WITH VARIOUS ISLAMIC DECREES WHICH AFFIRMS THAT THE ISLAMIC BURIAL RITES SHOULD NOT COMPROMISE THE LIVES OF THOSE PERFORMING THOSE BURIAL RITES.**
4. The deceased will not be taken to the Masjid in any circumstance. The funeral prayer will therefore take place at the cemetery before the burial is performed.
5. Colchester Cemetery are happy for Muslims to carry out any Muslim burial in the normal way, with a proviso of no more than 10 people are in attendance. PPE at the graveside does not need to be worn - sensible precautions only and the deceased may be interred in the shroud as previously done. The Imaam will advise the family of the exact number of family members allowed at the Cemetery as this number may reduce as the number of deaths increase. At all times the 2-metre social distancing rule will have to be maintained.
6. **PLEASE NOTE:** The death should be registered as soon as possible (within 5 days). The death can be registered using an online service via the following weblink:  
<https://s14.sishost.co.uk/ES/Agenda/TelephoneRegistration/appointment.html?pg=db57abec-7dc3-441b-b3f8-d022732881cd>

## **WHEN A MUSLIM DIES AFTER CONTRACTING COVID-19 (NOT IN HOSPITAL)**

If you are a member of the public or a family member and you come into contact with a deceased person who has been confirmed as having coronavirus (COVID-19), or who had symptoms of the infection, try not to come into direct contact with them. Move to at least 2 metres away or another room. Please call the GP (if the GP is not available you will be connected to out of hours) or 111 for further advice. If the death was unexpected and you have not been engaging with the healthcare system regarding the patient's condition prior to the death, please call 999 and explain the situation.

## **GUIDANCE FOR COMMUNITIES MANAGING A DEATH**

There is an increased risk of transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19) where families and communities come together following the death of a loved one, from any cause. While recognising the importance of these rituals and gatherings, it is strongly advised that the actions detailed in the following sections are taken to reduce the spread of infection, particularly to vulnerable people who are at risk of developing a severe infection. See detailed information on social distancing and

protecting older people and vulnerable groups. See additional information on the extremely vulnerable.

It is recognised that household members of the deceased person may have already been exposed to the virus during the course of the preceding illness. However, steps should be taken to minimise further exposure, and these should be rigorously applied in cases where individuals who are not part of the household and those at risk of severe illness would otherwise come into contact with the virus.

To ensure organisations managing funerals are able to cope with the increased number of deaths, **it is important that people do not delay funerals**. We understand how difficult this will be for the families and friends of lost loved ones, however the current guidance will be in place **for the foreseeable future for public safety reasons**.

Those organising a funeral should adhere to the following:

- restrict the number of mourners who attend so that a safe distance of at least 2 metres (3 steps) can be maintained between individuals
- only the following should attend:
  - *members of the person's household*
  - *close family members*
  - *if the deceased has neither household or family members in attendance, then it is possible for a modest number of friends to attend*
- at no point should mourners mix closer than 2 metres apart from each other
- mourners should follow the advice on social distancing when travelling to and from the funeral gathering
- mourners should avoid any direct face-to-face or physical contact, for example, hugging each other unless they are part of the same household, that is, they have already been living in the same house as each other
- mourners in attendance, should follow the general advice on hand hygiene and preventing the spread of infection:
  - wash your hands more often than usual, for 20 seconds using soap and hot water, particularly after coughing, sneezing and blowing your nose, or after being in public areas where other people are doing so. Use hand sanitiser if that's all you have access to and wash your hands with soap and hot water as soon as you can
  - to reduce the spread of germs when you cough or sneeze, cover your mouth and nose with a tissue, or your sleeve (not your hands) if you don't have a tissue, and throw the tissue away immediately. Then wash your hands or use a hand sanitising gel
- before and after each service, clean and disinfect the area in which the service has taken place, as well as frequently touched objects and surfaces using your regular cleaning products to reduce the risk of passing the infection on to other people
- mourners who are unwell with symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19), or are part of a household with possible coronavirus (COVID-19) infection, should not attend any gatherings
- in many situations the household members of the deceased person will be the next of kin; they may be having to self-isolate in line with household guidance. Where the funeral is scheduled to take place before the period of household isolation has been completed (14 days from the first case in that household), there should be no mixing between mourners who are self-isolating and those who are not.
- mourners who are symptomatic should not attend in any circumstance.

## **FOR NON COVID-19 RELATED DEATHS**

### **EVENTS PRECEDING DEATH (Non COVID-19 death)**

A person on whom the signs of death are clearly seen is called a **Muhtadar**.

It is sunnah to let them lay on their right side facing the **Qiblah (facing Makkah)**. It is permitted that they be positioned to lay on their back with their feet towards the **Qiblah**, and the head slightly raised with a cushion so that it faces the **Qiblah**. All the bed linen must be **tahir** (clean). If moving the **Muhtadar** causes them any discomfort then leave them in any convenient position.

It is desirable to use **loban** (Frankincense), Attar (perfume) or any other aromatics that are **tahir** in the room. At this time the recital of Surah Yasin and Surah Ar Ra`d of the Holy Quran is recommended. This may be done in the same room. When one is incapable of reciting the Qur'an, someone else may be requested to recite these chapters or any other portions of the Qur'an.

**Talqin:** Talqin is to remind the dying, of the Shahadah.

**ASH-HADU 'ALLAA ILAHA ILL'ALLAH  
WAHDAAHU LA SHAREE KA-LAH  
WA ASH-HADU ANNA MUHAMMADAN `ABDUHU WA RASULUH.**

**I testify that there is none worthy of worship but Allah , One is He, no partner hath He, and I testify that Muhammad (*peace and blessings upon him*) is His servant and His messenger.**

When the end nears, the dying person's breath quickens, the knees become so weak that they cannot move, the nose becomes bent and the temples subside. By these signs understand that the person is nearing their end. The **Talqin** should be read before the dying person takes their last breaths, the **Muhtadar** must not be asked or ordered to read the **Kalimah** but must be helped to recall it. i.e. those present should continually repeat it aloud, in front of the dying. Once the departing person utters the **Kalimah**, all who are present should remain silent. The dying person should not be drawn into any worldly discussions, but if they discuss any worldly affairs, then the **Talqin** should be repeated.

### **PRACTICAL TASKS IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE MOMENT OF DEATH**

1. As soon as a person dies their eyes should be gently closed.
2. Gently press the chin upward while holding the top of the head. Then place a strip of cotton under the chin and around the head, tying it firmly at the top. (if necessary)
3. Remove any jewellery such as rings, necklaces, bracelets and nose studs. (It is especially important to remove rings before swelling occurs).
4. Straighten the limbs carefully and gently. If they will not straighten (i.e. due to a stroke) do not force them, as this could cause breakage.
5. The face should be turned towards Qibla (towards the right if possible)
6. Place the toes together and bind (if necessary) the ankles carefully.
7. Do not cut nails or remove unwanted hair from the dead body.
8. The body should be covered by a **tahir** (clean) sheet until the time of the deceased's bathing.

## IF DEATH OCCURS IN HOSPITAL AND CAUSE OF DEATH KNOWN (Non COVID-19)

1. If the doctor is aware of the cause of death then he/she will issue a **Medical certificate** so that the disposal **certificate** can be obtained from the registrar of Deaths.

The medical certificate can be obtained from the **Bereavement Administration Office (01206 742 812)**. The person collecting the certificate need not be the next of kin and should have suitable identification. The office is based at Colchester General Hospital **with appointments made by telephone**.

### Normally you will be provided with:

1. A medical certificate which states the cause of death. This will be in a sealed envelope addressed to the Registrar.
2. A formal notice that states that a doctor has signed the medical certificate. This may be delayed if the Coroner has to be informed (see later section on "The Coroner") The doctor may want to carry out a post-mortem but he/she has to obtain the permission of the nearest relative. If a post-mortem is required purely for the satisfaction of the doctor or the hospital then the permission is **not normally** given by the relative, in which case the **body** will be released to the undertaker for burial and procedures outlined on burial arrangements should be followed.
3. Normally they would transfer the body from the Ward to the hospital mortuary. But If arrangements are made swiftly then the body can be collected by the undertaker from the ward and taken to the **Appointed Undertaker for Muslim Burial**. It is important to bear in mind that the death must be registered in the district or borough of the hospital where the death takes place once the doctor has issued the **Medical Certificate**.

## HOW DO I REGISTER THE DEATH?

To register a death the next of kin or a person eligible to register a death will need to:

- Telephone or book online for an appointment at the registration office
- Take the medical certificate issued by the Doctor and the deceased person's birth and marriage certificates if possible. These documents are not essential but will help the next of kin to answer some of the questions the registrar will ask.

You can also register a death online via the following link:

<https://s14.sishost.co.uk/ES/Agenda/TelephoneRegistration/appointment.html?pg=db57abec-7dc3-441b-b3f8-d022732881cd>

## WHAT THE REGISTRAR DOES

The Registrar will:

- Issue the certification required for burial free of charge, and a certificate of death which the next of kin will have to pay for (they are about £4 each). As the next of kin

- will need to send the certificate of death to utility companies, life insurance companies, etc they may find it useful to purchase more than one copy.
- Ask the next of kin for details of any benefits or pensions the deceased may have been claiming. By giving the information to the registrar the next of kin will be informing a host of agencies about the death, and this prevents the next of kin from having to contact each agency individually which can be very beneficial.

Registration is also required for a stillborn baby, and the registrar will issue an "After registration" form.

### Contact the local Register Office

Colchester Library  
21 Trinity Square  
Colchester  
Essex CO1 1JB

Monday - Friday: 9am - 5pm  
Saturday: 9am-12pm (births only)

Tel: 0345 603 7632

Email: [registration@essex.gov.uk](mailto:registration@essex.gov.uk)

### What do I need to take with me to the Register Office?

- Medical Certificate of Cause of Death
- Date and place of Birth of the deceased
- Address of the deceased
- Occupation of the deceased
- Marital Status of the deceased
- Husband or Wife's details of the deceased (*i.e. Full name, Home address, date of birth, occupation*)

### Book an appointment online and more information

For more information about registering a death and to book an appointment with our office online go to [Essex County Council Register a death](#).

### What will the Registrar give me?

#### Forms issued free of charge

The Registrar will give you a **green form**, which should be handed to the Funeral Director. This allows the funeral arrangements to be made:

A **white form** (BD8) is also issued for Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) purposes.

#### Forms for which you will be charged a fee

You may also need one or more certified copies of the death entry to apply for probate

or for use at banks, post offices, building societies, insurance companies or private pension providers. These can be obtained from the Registrar at the time of registration for a small fee. (They will cost more later)

## **The following persons should be contacted immediately when death has taken place in the family**

1. Inform the Imam of the local mosque (for ghusl, and Janazah prayer)
2. Inform the local undertaker / funeral directors with guidance from the above:

### **Imam and Local Mosque Address and Opening Times:**

The Imam  
 Colchester Mosque  
 2 Priory Street  
 Colchester  
 CO1 2PY

Telephone **01206 794919**  
**Imam Shamsul Islam 07758 003527**  
**Imam Bashir Goni 07912 026383**  
**Mr Koyosor Chowdhury 07907 701495**

## **WHEN TO HOLD A MUSLIM FUNERAL**

According to Islamic law (shariah), the body should be buried as soon as possible from the time of death, which means that funeral planning and preparations begin immediately. The Local community above will help make arrangements for the funeral service and burial (if required). They will also assist in identifying an appropriate funeral directors and co-ordinate with the local authorities for burial (if required). Because of the prohibition of embalming and cosmetology, and the urgency in which the body must be buried, it is not permissible to transport the body from one country to another (repatriation of deceased).

Many Muslims living in the United Kingdom have a desire to be buried in the country of their ancestry. This cultural practice, while acceptable in some communities, is a conflict with Sharia. If you require any more information on this, please contact your local Imaam.

### **CREMATION IS FORBIDDEN FOR MUSLIMS**

## **CORONER**

1. The **CORONER** (a qualified doctor or lawyer) will probably arrange for a post-mortem examination of the body. The consent of the relatives is not needed for this but they can choose a doctor to be present. The main purpose for carrying out the post-mortem is to ascertain the cause of death.
2. The CORONER'S office will issue a **PINK** form if the post-mortem shows that death was due to natural causes. You must take the **PINK** notice to the **Registrar of Deaths** to obtain a **Certificate of disposal** and a **Certificate of Registration of Death**.

3. The rest of the procedures are exactly the same for burial arrangements (as on pages 5 & 6).
4. If after the post-mortem examination, the cause of death is uncertain or was due to an accident, violence, or industrial disease then an inquest will be held.

## **AN INQUEST**

An **Inquest** is an inquiry into the medical cause and circumstance of death. It is held in public and is sometimes with a jury. It is up to the CORONER on how to organise the inquiry in a way to best serve all parties. Relatives can attend and ask questions to witnesses with the CORONER'S permission, or be represented by a lawyer. It may be important to have a lawyer to represent you if death was caused by a road accident or an accident at work, which could lead to a claim for compensation. But you **cannot** get legal aid for this. After the inquest the CORONER will give free of charge an **order** for burial or will send a **certificate** to the Registrar stating the cause of death. The death cannot be registered until after the inquest, but the coroner can give you an interim death certificate to prove the person is dead. You can use this to let organizations know of the death and apply for probate.

## **HOW TO GET IN TOUCH WITH CORONER IF REQUIRED (OUT OF HOURS/ HOLIDAYS)**

The families can either ring the Coroner's Office direct (0333 013 5000) where there are instructions for them to follow and a mobile number is given if it is an emergency or it is usually better for family funeral directors to liaise with the Coroner's Officer on their behalf.

### **Address for visiting Coroner's office or attending Coroner's court**

Ground floor Seax House  
 Essex County Council  
 Victoria Road South  
 Chelmsford  
 CM1 1LX

## **FUNERAL (JANAZAH) arrangements**

Once the Registrar has issued the **Death Certificate** and the Undertaker has confirmed the time of burial (this is done in association with the local authority), arrangements should be made for bathing of the body and **janazah**. The undertaker will transport the body from the hospital to the place of washing. If burial is to take place the next day, most undertakers do have facilities to keep the body overnight in the mortuary. **At present a number of mosques throughout the country do have facilities for a mortuary.**

## **OUT OF HOURS BURIALS PROCEDURE-FUNERAL DIRECTORS**

### **Saturday/Sunday/Bank Holidays only**

If you need to make arrangements for an urgent burial, please follow this process. Once you have received the medical death certificate for the deceased, contact your funeral director who will contact the on-call registrar. The Register Office is open between 10am and 4pm on a Saturday but he will use the registrars' mobile number. The registrar will call the funeral director back and check whether a disposal certificate can be issued depending on the cause of death.

When the registrar has confirmed that a disposal certificate can be issued, the funeral director then contacts the Imaam who will contact the on-call burial team and makes arrangements with them regarding the time of the funeral.

The registrar will arrange either to see the family at their Chelmsford Offices or to attend the funeral director's office (Sundays and Bank Holidays) to issue a disposal certificate. The family will be given an appointment to register the death at 9am on the first available working day.

The on-call burial team will ensure the grave is ready and all earth moved to the graveside for infilling. The on-call burial team will be present whilst the burial takes place.

The funeral director must ensure all fees and forms are delivered to Bereavement Services on the morning of the first working day after the burial.

## **WASHING AND SHROUDING OF THE COVID-19 DECEASED**

A COVID-suspected body may be received from the morgue in one of two circumstances: with or without a 'DO NOT OPEN' tag.

1. In the case of a DO NOT OPEN tag, those performing the cleansing rite should don PPE and wipe over the sealed body bag from head to toe, after having applied some water to their gloved hands.
2. In the case where there is NO 'do not open' tag, and in light of PHE guidelines, it is possible for the deceased to be given a minimal washing with the following conditions:
  - a. that those washing the body wear all the appropriate PPE and are properly trained in its donning/removal,
  - b. that all reasonable means are taken to minimize risk of transmission, such as avoiding procedures that are aerosol-generating (like moving the body around),
  - c. that the deceased does not suffer from any other condition that creates a significantly higher-risk of transmitting disease, and
  - d. that those in charge of burial are able to provide a safe and dedicated space for washing that is properly disinfected/decontaminated after every washing procedure.
3. The minimal washing consists of:
  - a. Minimal movement of the deceased's body
  - b. Avoiding removing the disinfectant covering from the face
  - c. Pouring water over the deceased's body from neck down
  - d. Flowing hair may be washed or wiped
  - e. Avoiding performance of *istinja* or pressing the abdomen to extrude contents
4. If any of the steps above cannot be safely undertaken, including not having access to adequate PPE, then the option to wipe over the body bag should be utilised.
5. If one is either (1) advised by morgue staff that the risk of infection is extremely high, or (2) the rate of then – as a last resort – the deceased can be buried without either ghusl or wiping.

Ordinarily, shrouding is carried out immediately after *ghusl*, and it is recommended to use three white sheets (cotton or partly synthetic) for men and five for women. This is unlikely to be possible for a COVID-suspected deceased. In this case, many scholars and articles sighted in the references at the end of this publication confirms that **the body bag will fulfil** the religious requirement of shrouding. An additional shroud may be wrapped over the body bag, though this is not required,

and the body then placed in the casket. The outer part of the casket should be wiped with the appropriate disinfectant as part of transfer procedures.

## **CHECK LIST FOR WASHING AND SHROUDING OF THE DECEASED.**

1. 5 pieces of clean sheets, preferably white material, cut into the required lengths. (see below "SHROUDING")
2. Approximately 15 yards of material required.
3. 5 wraps for a woman / 3 wraps for a man.
4. 3 thin strips of cotton for tying the shroud. One long enough to go around the middle of the body and two shorter ones to secure the ends of the shroud (only if required).
5. 2 pieces of thicker material of any dark colour to cover the body while washing - towelling material is recommended. Each sheet should be large enough to cover the body fully with overhang at the sides (black single bed sheets is generally used), there should be no Quranic scriptures on these items.
6. 2 large clean towels for drying the body. These should preferably not be new, as towels that have been washed absorb moisture better.
7. Cotton buds, and 4 small flannels (towels).
8. A box of disposable surgical gloves.
9. 2 bags of Cotton wool and Shampoo (if required)
10. 4 bars of soap (Dove) and liquid soap in a dispenser (if required).
11. Nail polish remover (if required).
12. 2 pairs of scissors (masking tape and plaster if required)
13. Mothballs, 1 litre of Rose water and a non-alcoholic form of perfume (attar) 2 off.
14. Bin bags for disposing of rubbish and for taking soiled material and towels to be washed.
15. Jug and a large bucket.

### **THE METHOD OF WASHING (non-COVID 19).**

**It is recommended that at least four people be present to help bathe and carry the body (6 ladies in the case of a female death). Priorities of washing firstly lie with the next of kins i.e. Sons, Daughters, Brothers etc.**

- Washing will normally take place at the undertaker's premises.
- The Imam of the Masjid will usually be available to **guide** the washing and shrouding (**kafn**) of the deceased.
- Only women should wash female bodies and men should wash male bodies. A Woman may also wash the body of a young (minor) boy.
- The dead body should be handled very gently, hard rubbing must be avoided.
- Everyone should be wearing disposable gloves.
- All those assisting should help to lift the body carefully and gently onto the washing table, at the same time someone should hold the head and the feet.
- One person should hold the head of the deceased firmly but gently from each side, for the rest of the process, to avoid the possibility of breaking the neck. (This job can be given to a relative who may not feel confident to assist in the washing).
- Then the washer should begin by covering the body from the neck to the ankles for (females) or at least from navel to knee for (males) with one of the thick sheets.

- Four people should hold the sheet slightly raised from the body, in order to allow the washer and his/her assistants to work unhampered.
- Intravenous drips or catheters etc. should be removed where possible (if already not done by the hospital). If the tubes cannot be fully removed then cut as near to the skin as possible. This is likely to cause bleeding, so place a small pad of cotton wool over the wound or tube and secure it with masking tape or plaster. Also remove any dentures.
- Remove any nail polish with cotton wool and nail polish remover.
- Cut away any hospital clothes and discard.
- Make sure all the equipment is ready and that the water in the shower is warm, or if using a jug, mix the water to the correct temperature in a large bucket.
- The person washing should then press the stomach of the deceased firmly but gently and clean the excreta with wet cotton wool and wash away until fully clean.
- If the person died recently, the head and shoulders can be slightly raised while the stomach is pressed to assist the evacuation of any waste materials. However extreme caution should be taken, especially in the cases of death during childbirth or during an operation, as this can cause excessive bleeding.
  - The body should then be tilted to the left side, and the area of the back passage should be similarly cleaned with flowing water.
  - Then the areas washed in WUDHU (ablution) should be washed i.e. the hands and arms, three times starting with the right. Then wash the face 3 times, then wipe over the hair from the forehead backwards. Then finish by washing the right foot to the ankle and then the left foot to the ankle. The mouth and nose are washed three times only if the deceased was in a state of ritual impurity that would have obliged them to make GHUSL (ritual bath) before praying. (i.e. if the deceased was menstruating)
- This can be done with small pieces of wet cotton wool, which are then discarded.
- At this point, it is a good idea to place thick pads of clean dry wool over the eyes, mouth, ears and nose. This is to prevent excess water running in during the main washing.
- Next, wash the hair with water and shampoo. According to the Sunnah, for females if the hair is braided it should be undone, washed and then parted into half and brought forward to the front, If a headrest is available this should be used during the washing of the hair otherwise two people can support the shoulders.
- It is advisable to wash the neck at the same time. This is to limit the number of times the body is moved.
- The washer should soap and wash the front of the body. (Excess movement should be avoided throughout the process).
- This should be done quickly without staring at any exposed part of the body. Always ensure that the water is flowing away from the body and is not accumulating underneath it at any point.
- The body should be tilted to the left to soap and wash the right side of the back and then tilted to the right to soap and wash the left side of the back. While tilting the body, again check for any discharge of excretion, washing the area thoroughly with plenty of water if any is found.
- If there are any tube or wounds that have been covered with cotton wool, remove the soiled cotton wool, wash the area quickly and tape a fresh pad over the wound.

- The whole body should then be rinsed with clear, warm water leaving no trace of impurities or soap.
- The body should be rinsed an odd number of times, the preference being given to three, according to the Sunnah. There is no harm if members of the family wish to help with the rinsing.
- The last rinse should be done using (moth balls) and rose water, which may be dissolved in warm water in a bucket.
- The body should then be dried. One towel should be draped around the head in order to dry the hair. The second towel should be used to dry the body on the front sides. At the same time the wet sheet should be removed and a clean, dry sheet should be placed over the body. All this should be done without exposing the private parts of the body. (e.g. two people should hold the wet sheet slightly raised from the body. The towel is then used to dry the body. As it is taken down the body, two more people follow with the rolled up dry sheet, gradually enfolding it as they go).
- The body is tilted to the left side and the towel is placed underneath and tucked as far under as possible. The body is then tilted to the right side and the towel drawn through. It is useful at this point for someone to quickly wipe the table with paper towels to take up the excess moisture. (This only applies when the table is not equipped with straps or rollers, which raise the body slightly from the surface).
- Finally, the body should be perfumed an odd number of times, preferably three according to the Sunnah. A non-alcoholic form of perfume should be used. Attar can also be put on the body. The table is then wheeled next to the coffin which should be on a table of similar height. The shroud should already be laid out in the correct order in the coffin as mentioned in **Section How to lay the Shroud**.
- Then everyone present should help to lift the body gently and carefully as possible into the coffin. One person still remains holding the head and another should be at the feet. Then several people stand on the far side of the coffin to receive the body and several next to the table to lift the body. The body is carefully raised and passed over, and then lowered into the coffin.
- The towel underneath should be kept in place until the body is in the coffin and the body should be tilted to side, rolling the towel up and then sliding it out.
- The body is then shrouded as described in the method for shrouding.

## TAKING A SHOWER AFTER BATHING THE DECEASED

For a person who bathes the body of the deceased, it is desirable (Mustahab) that he/she themselves take a bath once this process is over. According to a narration from the blessed Companion, Abu Hurayra. The Holy Prophet (SAW) said:

**"The person who bathes the deceased should himself take a bath."**

## PURCHASING THE SHROUD

A shroud should be of good quality but not extravagantly expensive. It is not permitted for a man to be buried in a silk shroud. Nor is it permissible for a female as this is extravagance.

The shroud or its price should come from the wealth of the deceased even if that is the only wealth he or she has. If there is no money the responsibility then falls on the guardian, then the public treasury, and then, the individual Muslims of the family, in the order of closeness to the deceased.

## PREFERABLE PRACTICES IN SHROUDING

- The shroud should be pleasant, clean and large enough to cover the entire body.
- Twenty-two yards of material will be needed for the shroud as some wraps need to be double in width to make them wide enough for wrapping.
- A shroud should be white, as this was the practice of our beloved Prophet, (SAW).
- The shroud should be scented and perfumed. The shroud should be **3** wraps for a man and **5** wraps for a woman.

## WOMAN'S SHROUD

Material 60" wide (5ft) Length Width

1. **Lifafah** - Outer sheet 8 ft by 5 ft
2. **Sina'band** (Chest wrap) 7 ft by 5 ft
3. **Izar / Loin Cloth** 7 ft by 5 ft
4. **Qamis / Kurta** or shirt 5 ft by 4/5 ft  
(For the Qamis) fold in half and from the center make a **T shaped** cut for the neck front region without sleeves. (Usually done by the Imam)
5. **Orhni / Scarf** 4ft by 2 ft
6. **3 stripes of cotton material** for keeping the shroud in place (if required)

## MEN'S SHROUD

(sizes same as above)

It has a:

1. **Lifafah** outer sheet
2. **Qamis / Shirt**
3. **Izar / loin cloth**

### NOTE:

If a pilgrim dies, he is to be washed in the same way any non-pilgrim is washed, but he should be shrouded in his Ihram. His head should **not be** covered, nor should any perfume be applied to his body, because the restrictions of Ihram still apply to him.

## HOW TO LAY THE DEAD IN THE KAFN (SHROUD)

### The method of shrouding

1. Place **three** thin strips of cotton material for tying the shroud tape them outside the coffin to keep them in position (if required). The stripes must be placed - one near the head, one in the middle and one near the feet.
2. Spread the **Lifafah** outer sheet in the coffin.
3. Spread the **Sina'band / chest piece** from the shoulder position.
4. Spread **Izar** from the feet and upwards.
5. Spread the back of the **Qamis / shirt** & roll up the front and keep it near head end. (From neck down to feet)

6. Leave the **Orhni** / scarf on one side which will be put on last.

## HOW THE KAFN SHOULD BE PUT ON

1. Lower the body gently on to the **Kafn / shroud**. Cover the top part of the body up to the calves with the folded portion of **Qamis**.
2. Remove the sheet used for covering the body.
3. Rub **Attar** on places of Sajdah Forehead, nose, both palms, knees and forefeet.
4. The hair should be divided into 2 parts, and put onto the right and left shoulder over **Qamis**
5. Cover the head and hair with **Orhni**/scarf. Do not fasten, but tuck in properly.
6. Fold the **Izar** the left flap first and then the right over the Qamis and scarf.
7. Now close the **Sina'band** (chest cover) in the same manner as above.
8. Close the **Lifafah**, the left flap first then right.
9. Lastly fasten the ends of the Lifafah at the head-side, then the feet and then around the middle with the strips of cloth (if required), to keep the complete kafn in place.

## PROHIBITED ARTICLES IN THE KAFN

1. It is prohibited to enclose any charter, or verses of the Holy Qur'an or any du`a in the kafn.
2. It is forbidden to write the Kalimah, or any other du'a on the kafn or chest of the dead person.

## WHAT TO DO AFTER THE KAFN

With the completion of the ghusl and the Kafn, the Mayyit (deceased person) is ready for the Dafn (burial). The Janazah solaah should be arranged without delay. Rasulullah has said, 'If a person passes away, hasten him to his grave and do not keep him away'. The Janazah solaah must be arranged quickly and the Mayyit should be buried in the nearest Muslim graveyard (cemetery). To transport the body over long distances is undesirable. It is also makruh (frowned upon) to delay the Janazah solaah and wait for the latecomers to increase the congregation.

### IMPORTANT

It is ONLY permissible for the Mahram woman folk of the deceased male to see his face. They are his wife, mother, grandmothers, sisters, aunts, daughters and granddaughters. The Shariah does not allow any other woman to view the face of the deceased male. Similarly only the Mahram males should view the face of the deceased female. In both cases of the male and female Mayyit, the face of the dead person should not be kept open after the Kafn is put on. The Quran may be recited next to the body before the Janazah is carried away.

## HOW THE JANAZAH SHOULD BE CARRIED

1. If the deceased is an adult, it should be put on a Janaazah and carried on the shoulders by four men. It is Makruh to transport the corpse by hearse over short distances unnecessarily.
2. If the deceased is an infant or small child, it should be carried in the arms individually by different persons.
3. All those who lift or carry the Janazah should recite:

**BISMILLAHIR RAHMANIR RAHIM**

**In the name of Allah, Most beneficent, Most Merciful.**

4. Those accompanying the Janazah should not sit before it is lowered to the ground. The sick and weak are excused.
5. It is Masnun to carry the Janazah hastily, but Not in a manner that the body is jolted or shaken about.
6. It is Mustahab to follow the Janazah, and not to go ahead of it.
7. It is Makruh for those accompanying the Janazah to recite any du`a or ayah of the holy Qur'an aloud. They may, however, read softly.

**LA ILAHA ILLAL-LAHU MUHAMMADUR RASULUL-LAH**

**There is none worthy of worship but Allah, Muhammad (SAW) is Allah's Messenger.**

One should abstain from speaking of worldly affairs or laughing and Joking.

## **JANAZAH PRAYER (FUNERAL PRAYER)**

It is the right of a Muslim that when he passes away other Muslims should pray Janazah prayer for him. Janazah prayer is a supererogatory prayer. If no one from the whole of the Muslim Community offers the Janazah Prayers, then the whole community will be considered sinful in the sight of Allah. If some of the people offer the Janazah prayer then the whole community will be saved from the anger of Allah even though the reward will only be given to the participants. In many a hadith, the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) emphasised and encouraged the Muslims to attend funeral ceremonies. So every Muslim male should try his best to fulfil his duty towards the deceased.

1. Janazah prayer should be offered in congregation, as this is more rewarding. It can be prayed in more than one congregation but by different people.
2. Janazah prayer should be offered in an open place but in case of rain or bad weather or any other reason it can be prayed in a mosque or a hall, etc.
3. It is makruh to perform the Janazah solaah; : *When the sun's rising appears until it has risen up; when the sun is at the zenith until it passes, and when the sun begins its setting, until it has set.* Besides these three times, which last for a very short period, the solaah can be performed at any time during the day or night. It can also be read after the Asr solaah.

## **WHILE PRAYING JANAZAH PRAYER**

The Imam should stand level with the head and shoulders of the dead body of a male, and should stand level with the abdomen of a female body.

## **WHERE JANAZAH PRAYER DIFFERS**

Janazah prayer is very different from other prayers in the sense that there are no ruku or sujud or tashahhud in it. There is no fixed time for offering this prayer but makruh times must be avoided. It has to be offered standing up. Other conditions like purification, facing Qiblah, dress etc. have to be observed as in the usual prayers

## **CONDUCT OF JANAZAH PRAYER**

1. Like other prayers, facing the Qiblah is a necessary condition. The Imam should advise the people to straighten the rows. There should be an odd number of rows as it is more rewarding.
2. **Intention:** Making intention is necessary in Janazah as it is necessary in other prayers. Before beginning prayer, the intention should be made in the heart as uttering any words of Niyah

aloud was not the practice of Prophet Muhammad (SAW), nor of his Companions.

3. **First takbir of Takbir Tahrimah:** Janazah Prayer contains 4 takbirat. First takbir is Takbir Tahrimah. The Imam says Allahu Akbar and raises his hands up to shoulder level with fingers stretching to the earlobes and the congregation does the same. Then the Imam folds his hands on his navel or chest, right hand over left.
4. **Du'a of Starting:** After the Imam has initiated the Prayer, the person can read one of those Du'a which are recommended in the first rak'ah of the usual prayer before recitation of Fatihah.

For example :-

**SUBHANAKAL-LAHUMMA WA BIHAMDIKA WA TABARAKAS-MUKA WA TA`ALA JADDUKA WA JALLA THANNA UKA WA LA ILAHA GHAYRUK.**

**"Glory be to you, O Lord, and all Praises are due unto you, and blessed is your name and high is your majesty and your praises Are elevated and none is worthy of worship but you."**

This is the normal opening du'a of solaah with a small addition towards the end. Thereafter the Imam will say the second takbir

#### 5. SECOND TAKBIR

Then the Imam should say the second takbir and the congregation should follow. One should not raise the hands.

#### 6. AFTER THE SECOND TAKBIR

After the second takbir the person praying Janazah should recite Durud in his heart. It is preferable to read the Durud, which is recited in Tashahud.

**ALLAHUMMA SALLI `ALA MUHAMMADIW-WA `ALA 'ALI MUHAMMADIN KAMA  
SALLAYTA `ALA IBRAHIMA WA `ALA ALI IBRAHIMA INNAKA HAMIDUM-MAJID  
ALLAHUMMA BARIK `ALA MUHAMMADIW-WA `ALA 'ALI MUHAMMADIN KAMA  
BARAKTA `ALA IBRAHIMA WA `ALA ALI IBRAHIMA INNAKA HAMIDUM-MAJID**

**O Allah shower Thy Blessings on Muhammad and the descendants of Muhammad as Thou did shower Thy Blessings on Ibrahim and the descendants of Ibrahim; Thou art the Praiseworthy, the Glorious.**

**O Allah, Glorify Muhammad and the descendants of Muhammad as Thou did Glorify Ibrahim and the descendants of Ibrahim; Thou art the Praiseworthy, the Glorious.**

#### 7. AFTER THE THIRD TAKBIR

After the third takbir the dua of Janazah is said.

### **DU'A OF JANAZAH (FOR AN ADULT MALE OR FEMALE)**

Abu Hurairah said that the Messenger of Allah prayed Janazah of a Muslim and he said in his du`a (the following words):-

**ALLAHUM-MAGHFIR LI HAYYINA WA MAYYITINA,  
WA SHAHIDINA WA GHA'IBINA, WA SAGHIRINA  
WA KABIRINA, WA DHAKARINA WA UNTHANA,  
ALLUHUMMA MAN AHYAYTAHU MINNA  
FA AHYIHI `ALAL ISLAM, WA MAN TAWAF-FAYTAHU  
MINNA FATAWAF-FAHU `ALAL IMAN.**

**O Allah, forgive our people who are still alive and who have passed away, forgive those who are present here and those who are absent, forgive our young and our elderly, forgive our males and females. O Allah, the one whom you wish to keep alive from among us make him live according to Islam, and anyone whom you wish to die from among us, let him die in the state of Iman (Belief).**

`Awf bin Malik said that the Messenger of Allah prayed a Janazah and I heard him saying the following du`a and I memorised it.

**ALLAHHUM-MAGHFIRLAHU WARHAMHU WA`FU `ANHU  
WA `AFIHI WA AKRIM NUZULAHU WA WASSI`  
MUDKHALAHU, WAGHSILHU BIL MA'I WATH-THALJI  
WAL BARADI, WA NAQ-QIHI MINAL KHATAYA KAMA  
YUNAQQATH-THAWBUL- ABYADU MINAD DANASI  
WA ABDILHU DARAN KHAYRAM MIN DARIHI,  
WA AHLAN KHAYRAM MIN AHLIHI. WA ZAWJAN  
KHAYRAM MIN ZAWJIHI, WA ADKHILHUL-JANNATA,  
WA QIHI FITNATAL QABRI WA `ADHABAN NAR.**

**"O Allah, forgive him, have mercy on him, pardon him, grant him security, provide him an enjoyable place and spacious lodgings, wash him (of his sins) with water, snow and ice. Purify him from his sins as a white garment is cleansed from dirt, replace his present abode with a better one, replace his present partner with a better one, make him enter paradise and save him from the trials of the grave and the punishment of hell."**

### **DU'A FOR MINORS**

#### **BOYS:**

**ALLAHUM-MAJ`ALHU LANA FARATAW WAJ`ALHU LANA AJRAW  
WA DHUKHRAW WAJ`ALHU LANA SHAFI`AW WA MUSHAFFA`A**

**O Allah, make him a means for our salvation, and make him a reward and treasure for us in the Hereafter, and him an intercessor for us, one whose intercession is accepted by you.**

**GIRLS:**

**ALLAHUM-MAJ`ALHA LANA FARATAW WAJ`ALHA  
LANA AJRAW WA DHUKHRAW WAJ`ALHA LANA  
SHAFI`ATAW WA MUSHAFFA`AH**

**O Allah, make her a means for our salvation, and make her a reward and treasure for us in the Hereafter, and her an intercessor for us, one whose intercession is accepted by you.**

There are also other du'a which are narrated from the Prophet Muhammad and they can be found in the various books of hadith. Any of them can be read but the above are generally more accepted, and well known.

## **LATE COMERS TO THE JANAZAH SOLAAH**

When a late comer fears that if he engages himself in wudhu, he will miss the Janazah solaah, then it is permissible for him to make Tayammum and join the Jam'ah. This rule applies to the Janazah solaah only. Whoever arrives for the Janazah solaah after the Imam has said one or more Takbir, should wait and join the Imam when he says the next takbir. After the salaam he should complete the missed takbir by merely saying Allahu Akbar once for every takbir missed. No du'a should be read. If the Imam has completed the fourth takbir then too, the late comer should join and complete all the missed takbir (before the Imam says the Salaam).

## **AT THE TIME OF BURIAL.**

At the time of burial, when lowering the body into the grave, this Dua should be recited:

**BISMILAHU WA BIL-LAHU WA `ALA MILLATI  
RASULIL-LAHU SALLALLAHU `ALAYHI WA SALLAM.**

**In the name of Allah and on the creed, religion and faith of Rasulullah r.**

## **THE SHAR'I METHOD OF DAFN (BURIAL)**

1. After the Janazah solaah is performed the Mayyit should be buried as soon as possible. The Mayyit should be carried and placed at the Qiblah side of the grave. The head should be on the right side of the grave if one faces the Qiblah.
2. It is desirable that Mahram or close relatives (of a female Mayyit) enter the grave to lower the body. The husband should not enter the grave to bury his wife. It is Not Masnun (Sunnah) that there be an odd number. All those who enter the grave should face the Qiblah.
3. It is Mustahab to hold a sheet over the grave while lowering and burying a female. If there is fear of her Kafn opening then it is Wajib to do so.
4. It is Mustahab for those present to recite this dua whilst the body is being lowered:  
**BISMILAHU WA BIL-LAHU WA `ALA MILLATI  
RASULIL-LAHU SALLALLAHU `ALAYHI WA SALLAM.**

**In the name of Allah and on the creed,  
religion and faith of Rasulullah (SAW).**

5. After placing the body into the recess of the grave it is Masnun to turn it onto its Right side to face the Qiblah.
6. The strips of cloth tied at the head side, chest and leg side should now be untied (if used).
7. The recess should then be covered with unbaked bricks, bamboo or timber

## **HOW THE KABR (GRAVE) SHOULD BE FILLED AND SHAPED**

1. It is Mustahab to begin closing the recess or trench from the leg side for males and from the head side for females. All the remaining little openings should be closed with mud or grass. The use of any fabric or blankets is unnecessary and wasteful. All those present should participate to fill the kabr with at least three handfuls of soil.

When throwing the first handful in the grave recite:

**MINHA KHALAQ NAKUM**

**From the earth did We create you.**

During the second handful:

**WA FIHA NU'IDUKUM**

**and into it shall We return you.**

At the time of the third handful:

**WA MINHA NUKHRIJUKUM TARATAN UKHRA**

**and from it shall We bring you out once again.**

2. It is Makruh to add more soil to the Qabr than that which was dug out from it.
3. The shape of the kabr when filled should be like the hump of a Camel. The height should be approximately 25 to 30 cm. It should not be made square or into any other shape. All types of buildings and enclosures on or around the kabr are not permissible.

Buildings on the kabr have been emphatically denounced in the hadith of Rasulullah (SAW).

### **4. Types of Graves**

- a. **THE LAHD:** Where the ground and sides of the Kabr are firm, then a recess should be dug on the Qiblah side to allow placing the body in the recess. Unbaked bricks should preferably be used to close the recess, and made to fit neatly.
- b. **THE SHIQ:** Where the soft nature of the ground does not allow a Lahd to be made, then a shallow trench should be dug in the centre at the bottom of the Kabr to allow

the body to be placed in this trench. Timber may be used to cover this. The use of any fabrics or blankets etc, is undesirable and wasteful. The bamboo or planks must be cut to size and set to fit properly in the grave before burial, to avoid last minute inconvenience.

## **TA'ZIAT (To Sympathise with The Bereaved)**

It is from the teachings of Rasulullah (SAW) that one should console and comfort a Muslim who is in distress. Rasulullah (SAW) has said: "He who consoles the one in distress shall be rewarded as much as the bereaved."

### **ONE SHOULD TAKE NOTE OF THESE FEW POINTS:**

- One should be humble.
- Express grief.
- Speak less about worldly affairs.
- Should not joke or laugh.
- Mention the good acts and deeds of the deceased and abstain from the ill ones.
- Rasulullah (SAW) has said, "*Mention the good actions of your deceased and abstain from the offensive ones.*"
- The time for ta'ziat extends for three days after the death. It is makruh to make ta'ziat after this period except in cases where one is not present at the janazah or when the bereaved is absent.
- Ta'ziat before the burial is permissible.

## **VISITING THE GRAVEYARD**

Rasulullah (SAW) has mentioned, "Visit the graves, for surely visiting the graves lessens worldly love and reminds you of the hereafter." The graveyard can be visited on any day. Friday is preferred for this visit and if possible, it should be on a weekly basis. It has been related in a Hadith that, "*Whoever will visit his parents grave every Friday will be granted Maghfirah and he will be recorded as an obedient son of his parents.*"

## **WHAT TO READ WHEN ENTERING THE GRAVEYARD**

Rasulullah (SAW) taught the Sahabah these words as salutation to the people of the graves and pray for their forgiveness:

**AS-SALAMU `ALAYKUM AHLAD-DIYARI MINAL MU'MININA WAL MUSLIMINA WA  
INNA IN SHA-'ALLAHU BIKUM LAHIQUN. NAS'ALUL-LAHA LANA WA LAKUMUL`AFIYAH.  
Peace be upon you, O you of the believers and Muslims dwelling in these abodes.  
Behold, if Allah wills, we shall meet you. We beseech Oh Allah safety for us and for you.**

## **WHAT TO RECITE WHEN IN THE GRAVEYARD**

There are many supplications that may be read at the graveside, the best being the recital of the Holy Qur'an. Stand facing the grave (back towards the Qiblah) and recite as much of the Qur'an as possible and make Du'a for the Maghfirah (forgiveness) of the departed. A few ways of praying for the dead, as related in the ahadith, are given hereunder:

Recite Surah Al Ikhlas 11 times.

It is related in a Hadith that whoever visits the graveyard and recites Surah Al Ikhlas 11 times and then prays for the dead, will be rewarded as many fold as the number of dead in the graveyard.

It has also been related in another Hadith that whoever visits the graveyard and recites the following chapters of Al Fatihah, Al Ikhlas and At Takathur and then prays for the dead, the people of the grave will also ask Allah for such a person's forgiveness.

### **SURAH AL FATIHAH**

**BISMILLAHIR-RAHMANIR-RAHIM**

**AL-HAMDU LILLAHI RABBIL-'ALAMIN. AR-RAHMANIR-RAHIM.**

**MALIKI YAWMID-DIN. IY-YAKA NA'BUDU WA IY-YAKA NASTA'IN.**

**IHDINAS-SIRATAL-MUSTAQIM. SIRATAL-LADHINA AN`AMTA `ALAYHIM.**

**GHAYRIL-MAGH-DUBI `ALAYHIM WA LAD DWALLIN. AMIN**

**In the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, Most Merciful.**

**Praise be to Allah, Lord of the worlds. The Beneficent, the Merciful.**

**Master of the Day of Judgement. Thee alone we worship and to Thee alone we turn for help.**

**Guide us to the Straight Path. The path of those whom You favoured,**

**Not of those who earned Your anger, nor of those who went astray.**

### **SURAH AL IKHLAS**

**BISMILLAHIR-RAHMANIR-RAHIM**

**QUL HUWAL-LAHU AHAD. ALLA-HUS-SAMAD.**

**LAM YALID WA LAM YULAD. WA LAM YAKUL-LAHU KUFU-WAN AHAD.**

**In the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, Most Merciful.**

**Say: He is Allah, the One! Allah, the eternally Besought of all!**

**He begetteth not nor is he begotten. And there is none comparable unto Him.**

### **SURATUH AT TAKATHUR**

**BISMILLAHIR-RAHMANIR-RAHIM**

**ALHAKUMUT-TAKATHUR. HATTA ZURTUMUL MAQABIR.**

**KALLA SAWFA TA'LAMUN. THUMMA KALLA SAWFA TA'LAMUN.**

**KALLA LAW TA'LAMUNA 'ILMAL YAQIN. LATARAWUNNAL JAHIM.**

**THUMMA LATARAWUNNAHA 'AYNAL YAQIN. THUMMA LATUS'ALUNNA**

**YAWMA'IDHIN 'ANIN NA'IM.**

**In the name of Allah, Most Beneficent, Most Merciful**

**Greed of wealth has made you negligent. Until you visit your graves.**

**Nay, you will soon realise. Then Nay, you will soon realise.**

**Nay, if you knew, you will gain the conviction. Verily you have to see the Blazing Fire.**

**Then you have to see it with sure vision. Then you will be interrogated That Day about the delights (of the world).**

## **SURAH YASIN**

In a Hadith it is reported that if a person recites Surah Yasin in the graveyard, the punishment of the dead will be eased and the reciter will be rewarded just as much as the dead.

In this manner the Sahabah of Rasulullah (SAW) visited the graveyard. The words in the Hadith indicate only salutations and Du'a for the dead and remembering death.

## **IDDAH & SOME MASA'IL**

### **PERIOD OF IDDAH**

1. The period of waiting only applies to the remaining wife / wives and after one's husband dies is called iddah. This period is of four months and ten days.
2. During this period, the wife/wives should remain in the dwelling that they occupied at the time of the death of her husband. She is not allowed to leave this house if she has sufficient provision. If she is the sole bread winner with no other means of income, then only is she permitted to leave her house during the day. At night she should return to his house.
3. The widow that is expecting a child at the time of the death of her husband, her Iddah will be until the birth of that child. The four month and ten days should not be reckoned in this instance.
4. If a woman is not at home at the time of her husband's death, she should return as soon as possible and pass the period of Iddah at home. The days of Iddah will be calculated from the time of the demise.
5. A woman in Iddah should abstain from wearing fancy clothing, makeup or jewellery.

The above Masa'il are not a form of suppressing the women, rather they are there to avoid long-term problems, e.g. if a woman got married immediately upon her husbands' death and unbeknown to her she was pregnant then there would be a problem with ascertaining the child's parentage and the new husband may not be willing to father the child.

## **A FEW NOTEWORTHY MASA'IL**

The trustee of the deceased should pay all debts as soon as possible. Isaluth-thawab for the deceased should be made by feeding the poor, giving sadaqah, istighfar etc. No specific dates or days such as the third, seventh, eleventh or fortieth are mentioned in Shari'ah for such devotions. When giving charity on behalf of the deceased, it is desirable to make niyyah for the fulfilment of Qadha (neglected) solaah of the deceased. The shari'ah has not specified any particular type or colour of clothing that should be worn by those that are bereaved.

A Mayyit is one who was born alive and then passed away. It must be named and Ghusl, Kafn and Janazah must be performed.

### **STILLBORN CHILDREN**

A stillborn child can be named, and should be given Ghusl and wrapped in a piece of cloth, (not Kafn) and then buried in a respectable manner. There is no janazah solaah for still born children.

### **MISCARRIAGES**

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In the case of a miscarriage, if the limbs are formed, then it can be named, and should be given Ghusl, wrapped in a piece of cloth and buried just as a still born child. If the limbs are not formed, no name will be given and there will be no ghusl. A malformed child should just be wrapped in a piece of cloth and buried.

If any one of the parents of a still born child is a Muslim, then that child will be regarded as a Muslim. Janazah Solaah should be performed for that child.

Janazah Solaah shall be offered for that person who has committed suicide or has died because of a major sin (e.g. drugs). Janazah Solaah must be performed for all Muslims, pious or sinful. It has been narrated by Abu Hurayrah that Rasulullah (SAW) said:

*"One that accompanies the janazah of a Muslim with sincerity and with the intention of thawaab, and remains with it until the solaah is performed and the mayyit is buried will return (home) with two Qiraat thawab, one qiraat is equal to the mountain of Uhud. A person who only performs the janazah solaah and returns, will return with one qiraat thawab."*

#### **POINTS TO PONDER OVER.**

Allah has stated in the Qur'an the following verses for us to remember. They when remembered will help us forget our temporary worries and make us instead concentrate on our preparations for eternity.

**AYNAMA TAKUNU YUDRIK-KUMUL MAWTU  
WA LAW KUNTUM FI BURUJIM-MUSHAYYADAH.  
Wheresoever you may be, death will overtake you  
even if you are in fortresses built up strong and high!**

**QUL INNAL MAWTAL-LADHI TAFIRRUNA MINHU  
FA'INNAHU MULAQIKUM. THUMMA TURADDUNA  
ILA `ALIMIL GHAYBI WASH-SHAHADATI  
FA YUNAB-BI'UKUM BIMA KUNTUM TA`LAMUN.  
Say (to them): "Verily, the death from which you flee  
will surely meet you, then you will be sent back to (Allah),  
the All-Knower of the unseen and the seen,  
and He will tell you what you used to do."**

**QUL YATAWAFFAKUM MALAKUL MAWTIL-LADHI WUKKILA  
BIKUM THUMMAILA RABBIKUM TURJA`UN  
Say: "The angel of death, who is set over you,  
will take your souls. Then you shall be brought to your Lord."**

## **USEFUL ADDRESSES:**

### **Colchester Mosque**

2 Priory St, Colchester CO1 2PY  
01206 794919

### **Hunnaball Of Colchester**

41 Mersea Rd, Colchester CO2 7QT  
01206 760049

### **Colchester General Hospital (Bereavement Suite)**

Ground floor, Main Building  
Turner Road, Colchester, CO4 5JL  
Relatives enquiry line: 01206 742 812  
Bereavement Office: 01206 744 245  
On-Call Chaplain: 01206 747 474 (Ask switchboard to page the on-call chaplain)

### **Colchester Register Office**

Colchester Library  
21 Trinity Square, Colchester, Essex, CO1 1JB  
Monday - Friday: 9am - 5pm  
Saturday: 9am-12pm (births only)  
Tel: 0345 603 7632

### **Essex Coroner Service**

A Block, Chelmsford County Hall, Victoria Rd S, Chelmsford, CM1 1QH  
0333 013 5000

The Colchester Mosque provides many other services which can be found on their website below:

<http://www.colchestermosque.co.uk>

## **BEREAVEMENT SERVICES**

Cost for burials can be obtained from the Colchester Borough Council website:  
<https://www.colchester.gov.uk/cemetery/>

## **HOSPITAL CARE FOR MUSLIMS DYING/DEATH**

The following procedure will be adhered to by the Hospital Trust as part of their policy.

The dying Muslim may wish to sit or lay with his/her face towards Mecca. Moving the bed to make this possible will be appreciated. The family may recite prayers around the bed. If no family member is available any practising Muslim can help.

The patient/service user may ask for the Imam (Muslim religious leader) to visit. **This will be arranged by the Hospital; they will also issue a Muslim funeral guide booklet which will have contact information as well as what to do.**

After death Health workers will ask you on how to prepare the body. The body should be prepared according to the wishes of the family who will be able to get Islamic guidance from the booklet given to them which covers the Islamic requirements in detail.

**If the family are not available, the following procedures should be followed:**

- As soon as a person dies their eyes should be gently closed.
- Gently close the mouth if open by holding the head and lifting the chin up.
- Straighten the limbs carefully and gently if possible.
- Place the toes together if possible.
- Turn the head towards the right shoulder before rigor mortis begins. This is so that the body can be buried with the face towards Mecca.
- Remove any jewellery such as rings, necklaces, bracelets and nose studs.
- Do not wash the body, nor cut hair and nails.
- Wrap the body in a plain white sheet.
- All devices should be removed where practicably possible before rigor mortis begins.
- Body should be covered totally including the head with a clean sheet; this is so that dignity is maintained.
- Muslims belief in the resurrection of the body after death therefore Muslims are always buried never cremated.
- The family and Muslim undertakers before burial will ritually wash the body. Muslim funerals take place as soon as practicable according to the Shariah (Islamic Law). If a delay is unavoidable explain the reasons carefully to the relatives. If a death has to be reported to the Coroner, the Coroner should be informed that the patient/service user was a Muslim and be asked if the procedures can take place as quickly as possible.
- If the family wish to view the body, staff should ask the mortician to ensure that the room is free of any religious symbols (not an Islamic requirement but can be removed if family wish).

**Post Mortem** – Post mortems are forbidden unless ordered by the coroner in which case reasons for it must be clearly explained to the family. Any organs removed should be returned to the body after examination.

## **How to get in touch with Coroner if required (out of hours/ holidays)**

The families can either ring the Coroner's Office direct (0333 013 5000) where there are instructions for them to follow and a mobile number is given if it is an emergency or it is usually better for family funeral directors to liaise with the Coroner's Officer on their behalf.

## **Access to the morgue if required/ retrieval of body from hospital morgue.**

There is always member of staff available out of hours to attend the mortuary if a body needs to be released quickly. They are contactable via the hospital switchboard 24 hours a day.

## **Does the body have to be put in the morgue if burial is organised quickly?**

No. The family should be told that it is possible to have the body collected directly from the ward, but depends on three factors.

- Whether the ward can accommodate the deceased until they are collected (This should be within a maximum of 4 hours and with permission of the Ward Manager).
- Whether the deceased is required to be referred to the Coroner (If an autopsy is required then the deceased will have to be admitted to the mortuary).
- The availability of a doctor(s) to sign a death certificate form, if needed.
- If the ward can accommodate the deceased and there is to be no autopsy, then the family must make arrangements with their nominated Funeral Director to remove the body immediately. The Mortuary Transfer Form should be sent to the mortuary and the deceased booked into the mortuary register as normal with an explanation that the body has been removed directly from the ward. The Funeral Director will be required to visit the mortuary to sign for the body.

## REFERENCES:

Colchester Cemetery - 12 April 2020

<https://www.colchester.gov.uk/info/cbc-article/?catid=colchester-cemetery&id=KA-01478>

Colchester Death Registration – 12 April 2020

<https://www.colchester.gov.uk/info/cbc-article/?catid=colchester-cemetery&id=KA-01479>

<https://www.essex.gov.uk/topic/births-ceremonies-deaths>

Colchester General Hospital (Bereavement Services) – 12 April 2020

<https://www.esneft.nhs.uk/service/bereavement-services/>

Colchester Mosque – 12 April 2020

<https://colchestermosque.co.uk/>

Colchester Cemetery - 12 April 2020

<https://www.colchester.gov.uk/info/cbc-article/?catid=colchester-cemetery&id=KA-01478>

Essex Coroner Service – 12 April 2020

<https://coroner.essex.gov.uk/>

Eternal Gardens (South London) - 10 April 2020

<https://eternalgardens.org.uk/>

Gardens of Peace Cemetery (Ilford, London) - 10 April 2020

<https://gardens-of-peace.org.uk/>

Ghusl, Janazah and burial guidelines (Canada) – 23 March 2020

<https://eternalgardens.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Ghusl-and-Burial-Guidance-23-March.pdf>

Government guidance for care of the deceased with suspected or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) – 12 April 2020

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-care-of-the-deceased/guidance-for-care-of-the-deceased-with-suspected-or-confirmed-coronavirus-covid-19>

Hunnaball of Colchester – 11 April 2020

<https://hunnaball.co.uk/branch/hunnaball-of-colchester/>

Islamic Council of Europe (COVID-19 Islamic Decree) – 02 April 2020

[http://burial.mend.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/ICEeurop\\_Fatwa.pdf](http://burial.mend.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/ICEeurop_Fatwa.pdf)

National Burial Council 11 April 2020

<http://www.bbsi.org.uk/covid-funeralguidance/>

Registration of deaths – 12 April 2020

<https://s14.sishost.co.uk/ES/Agenda/TelephoneRegistration/appointment.html?pg=db57abec-7dc3-441b-b3f8-d022732881cd>