

GUIDANCE FOR HANDLING BODIES FOLLOWING MUSLIM DEATHS FROM COVID-19

PRECAUTION AND DEAD BODY CARE

AT THE TIME OF DEATH

- *The dead body is classified by the attending physician as category risk.*
- *All tubes, drains, and catheters attached to the dead body should be removed.*

ADVISEABLE PRECAUTIONS FOR INFECTION CONTROL

- *Wear Protective Clothing (PPE): gloves, water resistant gown / plastic apron over water repellent gown, and surgical mask. Use goggles or face shield to protect eyes, if there is a risk of splashes.*
- *Contact with the deceased restricted to individuals under the age of 60 years and in good health.*

PRECAUTION AND DEAD BODY CARE HANDLING THE DECEASED

FUNERAL WORKERS

- *All dead bodies must have been identified and correctly labelled with identity labels and category tags.*
- *Move the body as prepared by the mortuary staff.*

ADVISEABLE PRECAUTIONS FOR INFECTION CONTROL

- *Avoid direct contact with blood or body fluids from the dead body.*
- *Observe strict personal hygiene and put on appropriate PPE. Avoid touching the body without gloves.*
- *Once the body is transported wipe down the stretcher and the inside section of the van with 1 in 4 diluted household bleach (mixing 1 part of 5.25% bleach with 4 parts of water) and allow to air dry.*
- *Remove PPE after handling of the dead body. Then, wash hands with liquid soap and water immediately.*

PREPARING THE BODY FOR FUNERAL

WASHING THE BODY

- *Wash the body as normal (Ghusl).*
- *Observe strict personal hygiene and put on appropriate PPE (mask, gown, gloves & eye shield).*
- *Avoid direct contact with blood or body fluids from the body.*
- *Make sure any wounds are covered with waterproof bandages.*

SHROUDING

- *Shroud the body as normal.*
- *Place the body in the coffin / casket and close the lid as normal.*

**ADVISEABLE PRECAUTIONS
FOR INFECTION CONTROL**

- Contact with the deceased should be kept to a minimum for people aged over 60 with underlying health conditions.
- Observe strict personal hygiene and put on appropriate PPE. Avoid touching the body without gloves.
- Thoroughly washdown environment clean the room including the wash trolley, tables etc and all areas with 1 in 4 diluted household bleach (mixing 1 part of 5.25% bleach with 4 parts of water) and allow to air dry
- Wipe the outside of the coffin / casket as with the trolley allow to air dry.

**PREPARING THE BODY FOR
FUNERAL**

PAYING LAST RESPECT

- Viewing can be arranged as normal in accordance with the family wishes and Islamic teaching.

**ADVISEABLE PRECAUTIONS
FOR INFECTION CONTROL**

- Keep the numbers for viewing to a minimum.
- 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 sanitizer if that's all you have access to.
- 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 sanitizing gel.
- Avoid transporting the body to different locations.
- **Contact with the deceased should be kept to a minimum for people aged over 60 with underlying health conditions or anyone with flu like symptoms should self-isolate and not attend the burial process.**

**PREPARING THE BODY FOR
FUNERAL**

JANAZAH AND BURIAL

- Janazah prayer can take place as normal.
- Burials can take place as normal (Shroud / coffin) please check with cemetery for local policy.
- Burying in a coffin is advised, to avoid further exposure to volunteers, though a shroud should not pose any additional infection risk (as long as those in contact with the body are protected appropriately, as discussed).

**ADVISEABLE PRECAUTIONS
FOR INFECTION CONTROL**

- Those handling the body / coffin to observe appropriate PPE (mask, gown, gloves & eye shield).
- Keep the number of people involved to a maximum of ten people, while practicing social distancing.
- If possible, the janazah prayer should be observed at the cemetery.

NOTE: Humanity Auxilium is a Canadian NGO working for humanitarian relief in medical and educational field around the globe. These guidelines have been adapted from the National Burial Council (NBC) of the UK, with adaptations to conform to Canadian government guidelines. The government guidance states the emerging evidence base on COVID-19 is rapidly evolving and this guidance will be updated as new evidence emerges. We will also review this guidance accordingly. **This is also a general guidance; please contact your local scholars before proceeding with any of the above.**
For Reference: NBC UK, WHO Guidelines