



إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ

Innā lillāhi wa innā ilayhi rāji'ūn. Indeed we belong to Allah, and indeed to Him we will return. Qur'ān, al-Baqarah 2:156

We are sorry. Here is what happens next.



As soon as you can, call your masjid's funeral committee.

They will arrange the washing, the shroud, the prayer and the burial, and tell you which funeral home to use.

You do not have to do this alone, or all at once. Your masjid has done this many times. Follow the steps in order, and open each one when you reach it.

New

This guide is new and under review by people in Canada. Each province and territory has its own rules on registering a death, coroners, probate and wills; the notes for each province and territory are drawn from official sources and say when they were checked. If something is wrong or out of date where you live, please tell us.

WHERE YOU ARE

Each province and territory has its own rules for registering a death, coroners and estates. Choose yours to see them.

Ontario • Quebec • British Columbia • Alberta • Manitoba • Saskatchewan • Nova Scotia • New Brunswick • Newfoundland and Labrador • Prince Edward Island • Yukon • Northwest Territories • Nunavut

1

Have the death pronounced

In the first hour

A death has to be confirmed before anything else can happen.

- ☐ In a hospital, hospice or palliative care, ask the staff to pronounce the death
- ☐ If the death was expected at home, call the doctor or palliative care team who were caring for them
- ☐ At home and unexpected, call 911
- ☐ Tell the staff early that the family needs a quick release for a religious burial

WHO TO CALL

Ontario, British Columbia and Alberta give the same advice: for an expected death, the doctor or care team; for an unexpected one, emergency services first. Unexpected deaths are then passed to the coroner or medical examiner. Government of Ontario, What to do when someone dies ; Government of Alberta, Report an unexpected or unexplained death

and

Close the eyes, cover the body, make duʿā

In the first hour • at the same time as the step above

Gently and without hurry. Those present can do this while the calls are made.

- ☐ Close the eyes and the mouth
- ☐ Straighten the arms and legs
- ☐ Cover the body with a clean sheet

EVIDENCE

The Prophet ﷺ closed the eyes of Abū Salamah and prayed for him. Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim 920

☐ Pray for them, and say only good

2

Call the masjid's funeral committee

In the first few hours

They arrange the washing, the shroud, the prayer and the burial, and usually know which funeral home to use.

☐ Call the funeral committee or the imam

☐ Tell them where the body is and who the next of kin is

☐ Agree a time for the ghusl and the janazah prayer

NO NUMBER?

Use the directory below, or call the nearest large masjid. They will know who to call.

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Ask whether a coroner or medical examiner is involved **PAPERWORK**

If the death was sudden

After a sudden, unexplained or violent death, a coroner (in some provinces a medical examiner) investigates and may order an autopsy, which can delay burial.

☐ Ask the hospital or police whether the death has gone to the coroner or medical examiner

☐ Ask whether an autopsy is required, and when the body will be released

☐ Tell the coroner's office early, and politely, about the religious need for a quick burial and for no autopsy unless it is necessary

RELIGIOUS NEEDS

Ontario's coroners must respect the religious views of the family and weigh religious factors when deciding on a post-mortem. Alberta's medical examiner says most bodies are examined within one working day so they can be released for burial. Neither page describes a right for the family to refuse an autopsy, so raise it early. Government of Ontario, Office of the Chief Coroner and the Ontario Forensic Pathology Service (coroners' code of ethics) ; Government of Alberta, Office of the Chief Medical Examiner: overview

WHERE YOU LIVE

Who investigates, and how to reach them out of hours, differs by province and territory. See the notes for Canada below.

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Choose a funeral home that allows ghusl PAPERWORK

Within the first day

Most families use a funeral home, or a masjid's own licensed funeral service. Your committee will usually name one.

- ☐ Confirm the committee can wash the body there
- ☐ Ask for no embalming and no viewing
- ☐ Ask the funeral home to register the death and get the burial permit
- ☐ If the body will be flown abroad for burial, tell the funeral home on the first call

MOVING THE BODY

Rules differ: Ontario, British Columbia and Alberta let a family make arrangements without a funeral home, while in Quebec a funeral services business must move the body. In practice a funeral home or a masjid service does it. Government of British Columbia, After a death: first steps ; Gouvernement du Québec, What to do in the event of death (2023 edition)

and

Register the death and get the burial permit PAPERWORK

Within the first days · at the same time as the step above

A doctor, nurse practitioner or coroner certifies the cause of death. The funeral home and a family member give the personal details, and the death is registered with Canada. Burial needs a permit.

- ☐ Give the funeral director the full name, date and place of birth, parents' names and the Social Insurance Number
- ☐ Sign the statement or registration of death as the informant

TWO DOCUMENTS

In Ontario, a Medical Certificate of Death from the doctor or coroner and a Statement of Death from the funeral director and a family member. The burial permit is issued when the death is registered. Government of Ontario, What to do when someone dies

- ☐ Confirm the burial permit has been issued before the burial

BEFORE THE PRAYER

Ontario law says no funeral or religious service for the burial may be held until the burial documents have been obtained. Ask the funeral home to have the permit ready before the janazah. Vital Statistics Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. V.4, s. 22 (Ontario e-Laws)

and

Wash and shroud the body

Within the first day • at the same time as the step above

Done by trained Muslims of the same sex, or by the spouse. The committee usually provides the cloth.

- ☐ Confirm who will wash
- ☐ Confirm the kafan is ready

How the washing and shroud are done >

A SPOUSE MAY WASH

The Prophet ﷺ told ʿĀʾishah that if she died before him he would wash and shroud her himself. Sunan Ibn Mājah 1465 (ḥasan)

5

The janazah prayer and the burial

As soon as possible

The prayer is often held after one of the daily prayers, and the burial follows straight after.

- ☐ Tell family and community the time of the prayer
- ☐ Confirm the grave in a Muslim cemetery or Muslim section
- ☐ Ask the plot price, the fee to open and close the grave, and whether a casket or liner is required
- ☐ Give the burial permit to the cemetery

HASTE

The Prophet ﷺ told us to hurry with the funeral. Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī 1315

MUSLIM CEMETERIES

The directory lists Muslim cemeteries, Muslim sections and funeral services across Canada. [Open ↗](#)

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Get copies of the death certificate PAPERWORK

In the first week

Banks, insurers and government offices will each want proof of death. A certificate can only be issued once the death is registered.

- ☐ Ask the funeral home for its statement of death or proof of death
- ☐ Order death certificates from the Canada vital statistics office
- ☐ Keep a list of who has been sent a copy

ONE STEP FOR MANY OFFICES

In a province, vital statistics tells the Social Insurance Number program automatically. In a territory, or for a death abroad, you must tell it yourself. Government of Canada, Notify of a death

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Pay the funeral costs and list every debt

In the first weeks

The funeral is paid from the estate first, then the debts. Nothing is inherited until both are settled.

- ☐ Pay the funeral costs from the estate
- ☐ List loans, bills and money owed to family
- ☐ Ask a scholar about any unpaid zakat

THE ORDER

Funeral, then debts, then bequests from a third, then the heirs. al-Sirājiyyah (al-Sajāwandī), opening chapter

and

Find the will, and tell Service Canada PAPERWORK

In the first weeks • at the same time as the step above

The executor (in Quebec, the liquidator) named in the will leads what follows.

- ☐ Check papers at home, email, and with any lawyer or notary
- ☐ Cancel CPP and Old Age Security payments, and tell the Canada Revenue Agency
- ☐ Apply for the CPP death benefit, and ask about the survivor's pension and children's benefits
- ☐ Secure the house and car, and keep the phone line active for sign-in codes

CPP DEATH BENEFIT

A one-time payment of up to \$5,000. The executor should apply within 60 days of the death; otherwise whoever paid for the funeral, then the spouse, then the next of kin may apply. In Quebec, apply to Retraite Québec instead. Government of Canada, Canada Pension Plan death benefit

SURVIVOR'S PENSION

A monthly CPP payment to the legal spouse or common-law partner. It continues if the survivor remarries. Government of Canada, Canada Pension Plan survivor's pension

FEDERAL CHECKLIST

Canada's own after-a-death page builds a checklist of who to tell. [Open ↗](#)

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Settle and divide the estate PAPERWORK

In the months after

Probate is provincial, so the steps and fees depend on Canada. Small estates may need no grant at all. One call to a local estate lawyer (in Quebec, a notary) will tell you.

- ☐ Apply for probate or administration if a bank or the land registry needs it
- ☐ Close accounts and cancel subscriptions

ONE THIRD

A bequest is limited to a third, and an heir cannot receive one. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* 2742 ; *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* 2870 (*ḥasan ṣaḥīḥ*)

☐ Pay any bequest, up to one third, to people who are not heirs

☐ Divide the rest by the fixed shares

See how the estate divides >

PROBATE DIFFERS

Ontario issues a Certificate of Appointment of Estate Trustee and charges Estate Administration Tax; British Columbia charges a probate fee above \$25,000; Alberta grants probate under its Surrogate Rules; in Quebec a notarial will needs no probate at all. See the notes for Canada. Government of Ontario, Estate Administration Tax ; Gouvernement du Québec, Probating the will

FAMILY CLAIMS

An Islamic will is respected, but Canadian courts can override it. Ontario dependants, a British Columbia spouse or child, and Alberta family members can ask a court for more than the will gives them, usually within six months (180 days in British Columbia) of the grant. Write your own will with a lawyer who knows this. Succession Law Reform Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. S.26, Part V, ss. 57, 58, 61 (Ontario e-Laws) ; Wills, Estates and Succession Act, S.B.C. 2009, c. 13, ss. 2, 60–61, 109–120 (BC Laws)

Look after the family

Four months and ten days

Mourning is kept to three days, except by a widow, who mourns four months and ten days, the length of her 'iddah, or until she gives birth if she is pregnant.

- ☐ Bring food and help with the household
- ☐ Help the widow with errands and appointments
- ☐ Make du'ā for the one who has died

What to say and do when you visit >

EVIDENCE

No mourning beyond three days except for a husband: four months and ten days. A pregnant widow's term ends with the birth. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* 1280 ; *Qur'ān*, al-Ṭalāq 65:4

FOOD

Prepare food for the family, for what has happened has occupied them. *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* 3132 (ḥasan)

'IDDAH DATES

Work out when four months and ten days have passed, by the Hijri and the Western calendar. [Open ↗](#)

General guidance, not a fatwa or legal advice. Rules on registering a death, burial and estates differ between provinces and territories; your funeral home and a lawyer can confirm them.

Last reviewed October 2026. Something wrong? [Tell us](#)