

إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّآ إِلَيْهِ رَٰجِعُونَ

Innā lillāhi wa innā ilayhi rājiʿūn. Indeed we belong to Allah, and indeed to Him we will return. Qurʾān, 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 director 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 has not yet been reviewed by people in Denmark. If something here is wrong or out of date where you live, please tell us at hello@lifeistemporary.com.

WHAT THE LAW SAYS IN DENMARK

Death certificate and request for burial	A doctor examines the body and fills in the death certificate, usually online, which notifies the death within 2 working days. The family then asks for the burial on borger.dk with MitID, after agreeing the details with the cemetery. The burial authority is the parish priest where the deceased lived, and there can be no burial until the request is approved. borger.dk, Guide: Når livet slutter; Begravelse eller bisættelse; Lov om begravelse og ligbrænding (LBK nr. 766/2023) §§ 6 and 10
Police and forensic autopsy	The doctor must report a death to the police if it was not natural, if the person was found dead, or if it was sudden and unexpected. The police decide on a forensic autopsy. If the closest relatives object, the police must bring the question before a court within 24 hours. Unless the deceased gave written consent, a medical autopsy may not take place if the deceased or the closest relatives said no, or if it must be assumed to go against their beliefs. Styrelsen for Patientsikkerhed; Sundhedsloven (LBK nr. 275/2025) §§ 186-187
Timing and burial abroad	Burial should normally take place at the latest 8 days after the death, counting the day of death. The cemetery board can extend this to 14 days if the body is kept at no more than 4°C; longer needs the Danish Patient Safety Authority. No earliest time was found on an official page. Styrelsen for Patientsikkerhed, Udsættelse af begravelse; borger.dk, Guide: Når livet slutter
Timing and burial abroad	Taking a body to another country needs a body pass (ligpas) from the Danish Patient Safety Authority. A sealed zinc coffin needs a soldering certificate and air transport needs an embalming certificate, except to Finland, Iceland, Norway or Sweden unless the carrier asks. The destination country's consulate sets its own conditions. Styrelsen for Patientsikkerhed, Udstedelse af ligpas
Burial and graves	Everyone has a right to burial in the Church of Denmark cemetery of the parish where they lived, and some cemeteries have Muslim sections (Copenhagen's Vestre

	Kirkegård has four). A Muslim burial ground in Brøndby, run by the Danish Islamic Burial Fund, is open to all Muslims in Denmark. A coffin grave is paid for at least 20 years. Aarhus requires a coffin in its Muslim section; we could not confirm on an official page whether burial without a coffin is allowed anywhere. borger.dk, Begravelsespladser; Københavns Kirkegårde, Gravsteder Vestre Kirkegård; Aarhus Kommunes Kirkegårde, Muslimsk afdeling
The probate court and the estate	The probate court (Skifteretten) is always involved and decides how the estate is settled. Banks block the deceased's accounts, including joint ones, until the court's certificate (skifteretsattest) is issued. With children, a spouse inherits half; a quarter of each child's and the spouse's share is reserved, so ask a lawyer how the heirs can agree to follow the Islamic shares. borger.dk, Guide: Når livet slutter; Arveloven (LBK nr. 1347/2021) §§ 1, 5, 9, 10 and 50
Small estates (boudlæg)	If the deceased leaves only a small estate once the funeral is paid and the home is cleared, the probate court can hand it to the closest relatives (boudlæg), and the deceased's debts do not have to be paid. borger.dk, Guide: Når livet slutter (boudlæg)
Funeral grant (begravelseshjælp)	If the probate court has handed you the estate and the deceased had Danish health insurance, Udbetaling Danmark pays a tax-free funeral grant (begravelseshjælp): at most 13,550 kr. for an adult in 2026, reduced according to the wealth of the deceased and any spouse, and a fixed 11,300 kr. for a child under 18. Most funeral directors can apply for you. borger.dk, Begravelseshjælp

From official sources, checked October 2026. Laws change; your funeral director and a lawyer can confirm them.

WHERE YOU ARE

Denmark has one national law for burial and estates, and this guide describes that national framework. Cemeteries are run by the Church of Denmark or the municipality, and each sets its own rules for its Muslim section, so ask the cemetery office where you live. Greenland and the Faroe Islands are not covered.

1

Have the death confirmed

In the first hour

A doctor examines the body and fills in the death certificate (dødsattest), usually online. This also notifies the death, at the latest 2 working days after it.

- [ ] In a hospital, a hospital doctor writes the certificate
- [ ] At home, call the deceased's own doctor or the out-of-hours doctor (lægevagt)
- [ ] If the death was violent, such as an accident, call the police
- [ ] In an emergency, call 112
- [ ] Tell the staff early that the family needs a quick burial for religious reasons

WHO SIGNS

At home, the deceased's own doctor or the out-of-hours doctor; in hospital, a doctor there. The doctor notifies the death through the certificate. borger.dk, Guide: Når livet slutter (læst den 10. oktober 2026)

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

EVIDENCE

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

- [ ] Straighten the arms and legs
- [ ] Cover the body with a clean sheet
- [ ] Pray for them, and say only good

2 Call the mosque's funeral service

In the first few hours

Many mosques and Muslim associations help with the washing, the shroud, the prayer and the burial, and know which funeral director (bedemand) to use.

- [ ] Call the mosque's funeral service 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?
Call the nearest large mosque. They will know who to call.

3 Ask whether the police are involved PAPERWORK

If the death was sudden or violent

The doctor must report the death to the police if it was not natural (a crime, a suicide or an accident), if the person was found dead, or if the death was sudden and unexpected. The police then hold a forensic inquest (retslægeligt ligsyn) with a doctor, and decide whether there will be a forensic autopsy.

- [ ] Ask the doctor or the police whether the death has been reported to the police
- [ ] If you object to an autopsy, tell the police at once, so that a court can decide

WHO DECIDES
The police decide whether a forensic autopsy is carried out. Styrelsen for Patientsikkerhed, Indberetning af dødsfald, retslægeligt ligsyn og obduktion (læst den 10. oktober 2026)

- [ ] Ask the police, early, to release the body as soon as possible for religious reasons

IF THE FAMILY OBJECTS

If the closest relatives object to a forensic autopsy, the police must bring the question before a court within 24 hours. The court rules, and an appeal must be made within 3 days. Where evidence would otherwise be lost, the autopsy can go ahead before the court decides. Sundhedsloven (LBK nr. 275 af 12/03/2025), § 186

A HOSPITAL AUTOPSY

An autopsy for medical purposes, outside any police case, may go ahead if the deceased gave written consent after turning 18. Otherwise it may not take place if the deceased or the closest relatives said no, or if it must be assumed to go against their beliefs. In other cases the closest relatives are asked for permission; if they do not want to decide, they are told they can object within 6 hours, and it cannot happen before then unless they agree. Tell the hospital straight away if the family objects. Sundhedsloven (LBK nr. 275 af 12/03/2025), § 187, stk. 2, 3 og 5 (lægevidenskabelig obduktion)

4 Request the burial on borger.dk PAPERWORK

In the first days

The family asks for the burial online, using MitID, on borger.dk. The burial authority is the Church of Denmark parish priest where the deceased lived. First agree the practical details with the cemetery, then send the request.

- [ ] Contact the cemetery or Muslim burial ground and agree the details first
- [ ] Send the request for burial (anmodning om begravelse) on borger.dk with MitID
- [ ] Or give the funeral director a power of attorney to send it for you
- [ ] Ask the parish office for a paper form if you cannot use MitID

THE APPROVAL
The body may not be buried until the request is approved. The approved request goes to your Digital Post, the probate court (Skifteretten) and the cemetery. borger.dk, Begravelse eller bisættelse (læst den 10. oktober 2026) ; Bekendtgørelse af lov om begravelse og ligbrænding (LBK nr. 766 af 12/06/2023), §§ 1, 2, 6, 8, 9 og 10

THE BURIAL AUTHORITY
The parish priest where the deceased lived. If they did not live in Denmark, the parish priest where they died. Bekendtgørelse af lov om begravelse og ligbrænding (LBK nr. 766 af 12/06/2023), §§ 1, 2, 6, 8, 9 og 10

5 Choose the funeral director and the grave PAPERWORK

Within the first day

You do not have to use a funeral director (bedemand). A funeral director usually sends the request for burial, books the grave, supplies the coffin, dresses the body and lays it in the coffin. Burial must be in a Church of Denmark cemetery or another approved burial ground.

- [ ] Ask the funeral director in advance whether the mosque's team or the family may wash the body
- [ ] Ask the cemetery whether it has a Muslim section, and its rules there

A FUNERAL DIRECTOR
Using one is not required. If you do, they typically send the request for burial, book the grave, supply the coffin, dress the body and lay it in the coffin. borger.dk, Guide: Når livet slutter (læst den 10. oktober 2026)

- [ ] Ask about the Muslim burial ground in Brøndby, which is open to all Muslims in Denmark

MUSLIM SECTIONS

Everyone has a right to burial in the Church of Denmark cemetery of the parish where they lived. Some cemeteries have sections for Muslims; Copenhagen's Vestre Kirkegård has four. A Muslim burial ground in Brøndby, run by the Danish Islamic Burial Fund, is open to all Muslims in Denmark. borger.dk, Begravelsespladser (læst den 10. oktober 2026) ; Københavns Kirkegårde, Gravsteder Vestre Kirkegård (folder, læst den 10. oktober 2026)

A COFFIN

Aarhus requires a coffin in its Muslim section, under the national rules for Church of Denmark cemeteries. We could not confirm on an official page whether burial without a coffin is allowed anywhere, including Brøndby. Ask the cemetery. Aarhus Kommunes Kirkegårde, Vestre Kirkegård – Muslimsk afdeling: Retningslinjer (læst den 10. oktober 2026)

HOW LONG A GRAVE LASTS

You pay for the right to a coffin grave for at least 20 years, which is the rest period. It can usually be renewed. The holder must keep the grave tidy, or pay the cemetery to. borger.dk, Begravelsespladser (læst den 10. oktober 2026) ; Københavns Kirkegårde, Gravsteder Vestre Kirkegård (folder, læst den 10. oktober 2026)

IF RELATIVES DISAGREE
If the family cannot agree on the grave, the question can be brought before the probate court. Bekendtgørelse af lov om begravelse og ligbrænding (LBK nr. 766 af 12/06/2023), §§ 1, 2, 6, 8, 9 og 10

THE WASHING
We have not confirmed the rules on the family or a mosque team washing the body at a funeral home. Ask the funeral director in advance.

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 funeral service usually provides the cloth.

- [ ] Confirm who will wash
- [ ] Confirm the kafan is ready

How the washing and shroud are done ›

SPOUSES
A wife may wash her husband: Ibn al-Mundhir reports consensus. Most scholars allow a husband to wash his wife, and the Prophet ﷺ told ʿĀʾishah that if she died before him he would wash her (Ibn Mājah 1465); the Ḥanafī school does not allow the husband to. Ibn Qudāmah, al-Mughnī (Ḥanbalī, with the other schools), 2:390 ; Ibn ʿĀbidīn, Radd al-Muḥtār (Ḥanafī), 2:198–199

6

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.

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

- [ ] Tell family and community the time of the prayer
- [ ] Confirm the grave in a Muslim section or the Muslim burial ground
- [ ] Make sure the request for burial has been approved
- [ ] Ask the cemetery for the earliest time it can give

How to pray the janazah prayer ›

THE LAW

Burial should normally take place at the latest 8 days after the death, counting the day of death. The cemetery board can extend this to 14 days if the body is kept at 4°C or less; longer needs the Danish Patient Safety Authority. We found no official earliest time. Styrelsen for Patientsikkerhed, Udsættelse af begravelse (læst den 10. oktober 2026) ; borger.dk, Guide: Når livet slutter (læst den 10. oktober 2026)

LOCAL RULES

Cemeteries set their own times. In Aarhus, for example, the burial must be notified at least 2 days before, and the coffin lowered by 14:00 on a weekday. Aarhus Kommunes Kirkegårde, Vestre Kirkegård – Muslimsk afdeling: Retningslinjer (læst den 10. oktober 2026)

and

If the burial will be abroad PAPERWORK

Before the coffin is closed · at the same time as the step above

Some families bury their dead in another country. Ask the funeral director which paperwork it will handle. The estate usually pays, or the family if there is no money in it. Ask the funeral director what it costs and who signs before you agree, and check any insurance.

- [ ] Tell the funeral director early that the burial will be abroad
- [ ] Call the embassy or consulate of the country early: it sets its own documents and conditions
- [ ] Check any insurance and any repatriation fund you belong to

THE BODY PASS

A body pass (ligpas) from the Danish Patient Safety Authority is needed to take a body to another country. It needs the medical details from the death certificate, the burial authority's approval of the request for burial and the funeral director's request describing the coffin. Styrelsen for Patientsikkerhed, Udstedelse af ligpas (læst den 10. oktober 2026)

ZINC AND EMBALMING

A sealed zinc coffin needs a soldering certificate, and transport by air needs an embalming certificate. Neither is needed for Finland, Iceland, Norway or Sweden unless the carrier asks. Styrelsen for Patientsikkerhed, Udstedelse af ligpas (læst den 10. oktober 2026)

THE CONSULATE

Each country sets its own requirements. Ask its embassy or consulate in Denmark early, before the coffin is closed.

7

Get the probate court certificate PAPERWORK

In the first weeks

When a person dies, the bank blocks their accounts and cards, including joint accounts. You get access again once the first meeting with the probate court (Skifteretten) has been held and you have its certificate (skifteretsattest).

- [ ] Attend the first meeting with the probate court
- [ ] Keep copies of the certificate for the bank, Udbetaling Danmark and insurers

WHO NEEDS IT

The bank, to open the accounts again, and Udbetaling Danmark, which asks for it with the funeral grant application. Ask others what they need. borger.dk, Guide: Når livet slutter – bobehandling (læst den 10. oktober 2026) ; borger.dk, Begravelseshjælp (læst den 10. oktober 2026)

8

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
- [ ] Keep every receipt for the probate court
- [ ] 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

FUNERAL GRANT

If the probate court has handed the estate to you and the deceased had Danish health insurance, you can apply to Udbetaling Danmark for a tax-free funeral grant (begravelseshjælp). For an adult it is at most 13,550 kr. in 2026, reduced according to the wealth of the deceased and, if married, the spouse; for a child under 18 it is a fixed 11,300 kr. Most funeral directors can apply for you. borger.dk, Begravelseshjælp (læst den 10. oktober 2026)

and

Find the will PAPERWORK

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

The probate court uses the will when it decides how the estate is settled. If the will was made before witnesses, the family must find it; a will made before a notary is found by the court itself.

- [ ] Check papers at home, email, and with any lawyer
- [ ] Give the probate court any will you find
- [ ] Secure the house and car, and keep the phone line active for sign-in codes

WHO FINDS IT

The family is responsible for finding a will made before witnesses. The probate court finds a notarial will itself when it starts on the estate. borger.dk, Guide: Når livet slutter – bobehandling (læst den 10. oktober 2026)

A VALID WILL

A will is made in writing and signed before a notary, or before two witnesses aged 18 or over who are present together and know it is a will. Arveloven (LBK nr. 1347 af 15/06/2021), §§ 63 og 64

9

Settle and divide the estate PAPERWORK

In the months after

The probate court is always involved. It decides how the estate is settled, for example privately by heirs who agree, or by a professional administrator. Danish law reserves part of the estate to the children and the spouse, so dividing by the Islamic shares needs the heirs to agree. Ask a lawyer early.

- [ ] Attend the first meeting with the probate court
- [ ] Agree with the other heirs how the estate will be settled
- [ ] 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 ›

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)

PRIVATE SETTLEMENT

Heirs who agree can settle the estate privately, if the estate can pay its debts and at least one heir can pay their own bills. borger.dk, Guide: Når livet slutter – bobehandling (læst den 10. oktober 2026)

HUSBAND OR WIFE

With children, the spouse inherits half and the children the other half, sons and daughters equally. A quarter of each share is reserved (tvangsarv) and cannot be changed by a will. Arveloven (LBK nr. 1347 af 15/06/2021), §§ 1 og 9 ; Arveloven (LBK nr. 1347 af 15/06/2021), §§ 5, 10 og 50

10

Look after the family

Four months and ten days

A woman keeps the prescribed mourning (iḥdād: setting aside adornment and perfume) for no more than three days for any death, except for her husband: then four months and ten days, the length of her ʿiddah, or until she gives birth if she is pregnant.

- [ ] Bring food and help with the household
- [ ] Help the widow with errands and appointments
- [ ] Make duʿā for the one who has died

What to say and do when you visit ›

EVIDENCE

A woman who believes in Allah and the Last Day does not mourn 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 ; Qurʾān, al-Ṭalāq 65:4

FOOD

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

ʿIDDAH DATES

Work out when four months and ten days have passed, by the Hijri and the Western calendar. Open ↗

11

Write your own Islamic will

For those left behind

Without a valid will, Danish law decides who inherits, not the fixed shares, and sons and daughters inherit equally. An Islamic will in Denmark is an ordinary Danish will that directs the estate by the shares, within the part the law leaves free.

- [ ] Make it in writing and sign it before a notary, or before two witnesses who are present together
- [ ] Keep it where your family will find it
- [ ] Ask a lawyer how the reserved shares affect the Islamic shares

Work out the Islamic shares to take to a lawyer ›

VALID WILL

Before a notary, or before two witnesses aged 18 or over who sign straight after you and know it is a will.
Arveloven (LBK nr. 1347 af 15/06/2021), §§ 63 og 64

THE RESERVED SHARE

A quarter of each child's and the spouse's legal share is reserved. A will can limit each child's share to a fixed amount adjusted each year: 1,580,000 kr. in 2026. Ask a lawyer for the current figure.
Arveloven (LBK nr. 1347 af 15/06/2021), §§ 5, 10 og 50 ; Bekendtgørelse om regulering af beløb i henhold til arveloven (BEK nr. 1416 af 24/11/2025), § 2

General guidance, not a fatwa or legal advice. Danish law on burial and estates is national, but each cemetery sets its own rules for its Muslim section; your funeral director and a lawyer can confirm them.

Last reviewed October 2026. Something wrong? Tell us