

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 company 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 Italy. If something here is wrong or out of date where you live, please tell us at hello@lifeistemporary.com.

WHAT THE LAW SAYS IN ITALY

Declaring the death

The death must be declared within 24 hours to the civil registrar of the comune where it happened, by a relative, someone who lived with the deceased or their delegate; the funeral company usually does it. A hospital or care home sends notice itself. The registrar then gives the burial permit, free of charge, once 24 hours have passed and the death has been checked by the medico necroscopo. D.P.R. 3 novembre 2000, n. 396, artt. 72 and 74

The prosecutor and autopsy

If a crime is suspected, the public prosecutor establishes the cause of death and may order an autopsy, and there can be no burial without the prosecutor's order. Ask the prosecutor's office early, in writing, to release the body quickly for religious reasons. A hospital may also order an autopsy to check the diagnosis; the family can agree it with the medical director and have a doctor of their choice present. D.Lgs. 271/1989, art. 116; D.P.R. 396/2000, art. 77; D.P.R. 285/1990, art. 37

Timing and repatriation

Normally the coffin may not be closed, and the body may not be buried, until 24 hours after the death, or 48 hours after a sudden death; the medico necroscopo can confirm whether an exception applies, such as an ECG of at least 20 minutes. We found no national latest time for burial. To bury abroad, the prefect authorises the transfer: for a country outside the 1937 Berlin agreement on the consulate's consent, with the body in a sealed metal and a wooden coffin; for a country in it, with a mortuary passport. Ask the funeral company which applies. D.P.R. 10 settembre 1990, n. 285, artt. 8, 9, 27, 29 and 30

Burial and graves

The national rule requires a wooden coffin for burial in the ground, but some comuni allow burial in a cotton shroud alone in their sections for religions that require it (Modena, for example), with a coffin still used for transport. Cemetery plans may include separate sections for other religions, but not every comune has one. An ordinary grave is reopened after ten years; a concession lasts up to 99 years and can be renewed. Ask your

	comune. D.P.R. 285/1990, artt. 74, 82, 92 and 100; Comune di Modena, Regolamento comunale di polizia mortuaria, artt. 8 and 10
The estate and the succession return	Italian law reserves shares to the husband or wife and children: with a spouse and one child, a third each; with more children, half to the children and a quarter to the spouse. Ask a notary whether and how the estate can be divided by the Islamic shares. The succession return is due to the tax agency within 12 months of the death. Codice civile, artt. 536 to 542; Agenzia delle Entrate, Dichiarazione di successione
Small estates	No succession return is needed if the estate goes to the husband or wife and relatives in the direct line, is worth no more than €100,000 and includes no buildings or land and no rights over them. The heirs then tell the bank or post office that they are exempt. If in doubt, ask the tax agency or a notary. Agenzia delle Entrate; D.Lgs. 346/1990, art. 28, comma 7
Help with funeral costs	Whoever pays for a funeral can deduct from their income tax 19% of up to €1,550 of funeral costs for each death, whether or not they were related. Pay by a traceable method, such as a bank transfer, and keep the invoice. We have not found a general state funeral grant. Agenzia delle Entrate, Altre detrazioni e deduzioni 2026: Spese funebri (TUIR art. 15, comma 1, lett. d)

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

WHERE YOU ARE

Italy has one national regulation on deaths and burial and one Civil Code for estates, and this guide describes that national framework. Regions and comuni (municipalities) add their own funeral and cemetery rules, for example on Muslim sections and burial in a shroud, so ask the funeral company or your comune.

1

Have the death confirmed

In the first hour

A doctor has to confirm the death. A doctor appointed by the local health service, or in hospital by the medical director (medico necroscopo), then checks the death before burial can be allowed.

- [ ] In a hospital or care home, ask the staff to confirm the death
- [ ] At home, call the family doctor; in an emergency call 112
- [ ] If the death was violent or suspicious, call 112
- [ ] Tell the staff early that the family needs a quick burial for religious reasons

BEFORE BURIAL

The civil registrar can allow a burial only after 24 hours, and only once the death has been checked by the medico necroscopo: a doctor appointed by the local health service, or in hospital the medical director or a doctor they delegate. D.P.R. 3 novembre 2000, n. 396 (ordinamento dello stato civile), artt. 72, 74 e 77 (Normattiva, testo vigente, consultato il 10 ottobre 2026) ; D.P.R. 10 settembre 1990, n. 285, artt. 4, 8, 9 e 10 (Normattiva, testo vigente)

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
- [ ] Pray for them, and say only good

EVIDENCE

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

2 Call the mosque's funeral service

In the first few hours

Many mosques and Islamic centres help with the washing, the shroud, the prayer and the burial, and know which funeral company (impresa di onoranze funebri) to use and which cemetery has a Muslim section.

- [ ] 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 prosecutor is involved PAPERWORK

If the death was sudden or violent

If a crime is suspected, the public prosecutor (procuratore della Repubblica) establishes the cause of death and may order an autopsy. There can be no burial without the prosecutor's order.

- [ ] Ask the police or the hospital whether the prosecutor has been told
- [ ] Ask the prosecutor's office, early and in writing, to release the body quickly for religious reasons
- [ ] The funeral company will need the prosecutor's order before the burial

RELEASE
When a crime is suspected, the burial cannot take place without the prosecutor's order. After signs of a violent death, a magistrate or police officer, with a doctor, must first record the state of the body. Norme di attuazione del codice di procedura penale (D.Lgs. 28 luglio 1989, n. 271), art. 116 (Normattiva, testo vigente) ; D.P.R. 3 novembre 2000, n. 396 (ordinamento dello stato civile), artt. 72, 74 e 77 (Normattiva, testo vigente, consultato il 10 ottobre 2026)

A HOSPITAL AUTOPSY
A hospital can order an autopsy to check the diagnosis (riscontro diagnostico), for example when a person died without medical care or in hospital. The law lets the family agree it with the medical director and have a doctor of their choice present. Tell the doctors straight away if the family objects. D.P.R. 10 settembre 1990, n. 285 (regolamento di polizia mortuaria), art. 37 (Normattiva, testo vigente)

4

Declare the death to the comune PAPERWORK

Within 24 hours

The death must be declared within 24 hours to the civil registrar (ufficiale dello stato civile) of the comune where it happened. A relative, someone who lived with the deceased, or their delegate declares it; in practice the funeral company does it for you. A hospital or care home sends notice itself.

- [ ] Let the funeral company declare the death with your authority, or do it yourself
- [ ] If the death was in a hospital or care home, ask the staff to confirm they have sent the notice
- [ ] The registrar then gives the burial permit, free of charge

WHO AND WHEN
Within 24 hours of the death, to the registrar of the place of death, by a relative, a person who lived with the deceased, or their delegate. A hospital, clinic or care home must send notice within the same time. D.P.R. 3 novembre 2000, n. 396 (ordinamento dello stato civile), artt. 72, 74 e 77 (Normattiva, testo vigente, consultato il 10 ottobre 2026)

THE PERMIT
No burial without the registrar's authorisation. It is free, and cannot be given before 24 hours have passed. D.P.R. 3 novembre 2000, n. 396 (ordinamento dello stato civile), artt. 72, 74 e 77 (Normattiva, testo vigente, consultato il 10 ottobre 2026)

5

Choose the funeral company and the grave PAPERWORK

Within the first day

The funeral company collects the body, provides the coffin and handles most of the paperwork. The national rule requires a wooden coffin for burial in the ground, but some comuni allow burial in the shroud in their Muslim section.

- [ ] Ask the funeral company for a written quote before you agree
- [ ] Ask in advance whether the mosque's team or the family may wash the body at the funeral home
- [ ] Ask the comune which cemetery has a Muslim section, and whether burial in the shroud is allowed there

A COFFIN

Every body buried in the ground must be in a wooden coffin, in its own grave. Metal or other non-biodegradable coffins are not allowed for burial in the ground. D.P.R. 10 settembre 1990, n. 285, artt. 74 e 75 (Normattiva, testo vigente)

IN THE SHROUD

Some comuni allow it. In Modena, for example, burial wrapped only in a cotton sheet is allowed in the special sections for religions that require it, citing a 1998 Ministry of Health circular; the body still travels in a wooden coffin. Ask your comune. Comune di Modena, Regolamento comunale di polizia mortuaria (modificato il 9 settembre 2002), artt. 8 e 10

THE WASHING

We have not confirmed the legal rules on the family or a mosque team washing the body in a funeral home. Ask the funeral company in advance who may do the ghusl there.

HOW LONG A GRAVE LASTS
An ordinary grave in the ground is reopened after ten years. A grave on a concession lasts up to 99 years and can be renewed. Ask the comune which it offers in the Muslim section. D.P.R. 10 settembre 1990, n. 285, artt. 50, 82, 92 e 100 (Normattiva, testo vigente)

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.

- [ ] Tell family and community the time of the prayer
- [ ] Confirm the grave in a Muslim section or Muslim cemetery

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

- [ ] Plan the burial for at least 24 hours after the death
- [ ] Ask the comune whether its Muslim section needs a letter from the imam or the community

How to pray the janazah prayer ›

THE LAW

Normally the coffin may not be closed, and the body may not be buried, until 24 hours after the death; after a sudden death, normally 48 hours. The medico necroscopo can confirm whether an exception applies, for example when death is confirmed by a heart trace (ECG) of at least 20 minutes. The mayor can shorten the wait only for infection or decay. We found no national latest time for burial. D.P.R. 10 settembre 1990, n. 285, artt. 4, 8, 9 e 10 (Normattiva, testo vigente)

MUSLIM SECTIONS

Cemetery plans may include separate sections for religions other than Catholicism, and the mayor may grant a foreign community its own area. Not every comune has one. D.P.R. 10 settembre 1990, n. 285, artt. 50, 82, 92 e 100 (Normattiva, testo vigente)

WHICH CEMETERY

A comune's cemetery must accept those who died there, those who were resident there when they died, and those with a right to a private family grave there. Ask about any other cemetery in advance. D.P.R. 10 settembre 1990, n. 285, artt. 50, 82, 92 e 100 (Normattiva, testo vigente)

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 company to handle the paperwork with the prefecture (prefettura). The estate usually pays, or the family if there is no money in it. Ask the funeral company what it costs and who signs before you agree.

- [ ] Tell the funeral company early that the burial will be abroad
- [ ] Call the consulate of the country early: outside the Berlin agreement it must give its consent first
- [ ] Check any repatriation insurance or funeral plan

AUTHORISATION

For a country outside the 1937 Berlin agreement, the prefect of the province authorises the transfer, on the destination country's consular consent (nulla osta) and a local health service certificate. For a country in it, the prefect issues a mortuary passport (passaporto mortuario). Ask the funeral company which procedure applies to your destination. D.P.R. 10 settembre 1990, n. 285, artt. 27, 29 e 30 (Normattiva, testo vigente)

THE COFFIN

Outside the Berlin agreement, the body travels in a double coffin: one of metal, sealed by welding, and one of solid wood. D.P.R. 10 settembre 1990, n. 285, artt. 27, 29 e 30 (Normattiva, testo vigente)

THE CONSULATE

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

7

Get death certificates PAPERWORK

In the first week

Banks, insurers, the pension office and the notary may ask for a death certificate (certificato di morte) or an extract of the death record. Ask each what proof it needs.

- [ ] Ask the civil registry office (ufficio di stato civile) of the comune where the death happened
- [ ] Or ask the funeral company to obtain copies

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
- [ ] Pay by bank transfer or card and keep the invoice
- [ ] 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

TAX RELIEF

Whoever pays for a funeral can deduct 19% of up to €1,550 of costs, for each death, from their income tax, related or not. The payment must be traceable, such as a bank transfer. Agenzia delle Entrate, Altre detrazioni e deduzioni: Spese funebri (Tutte le agevolazioni della dichiarazione 2026)

and

Find the will PAPERWORK

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

A will may be handwritten and kept at home, or made before a notary (notaio). Find out early whether there is one.

- [ ] Check papers at home, email, and with any notary
- [ ] Secure the house and car, and keep the phone line active for sign-in codes

TWO COMMON FORMS

A handwritten will must be entirely in the person's own hand, dated and signed. A public will is received by a notary before two witnesses. Codice civile, artt. 602 e 603 (Normattiva, testo vigente)

Settle and divide the estate PAPERWORK

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In the months after

Italian law reserves a share of the estate to the husband or wife and the children. Ask a notary early whether and how the estate can be divided by the Islamic shares.

- [ ] File the succession return (dichiarazione di successione) with the tax agency, unless exempt
- [ ] Close accounts and cancel subscriptions
- [ ] 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)

SUCCESSION RETURN

Due within 12 months of the death. None is needed if everything goes to the husband or wife and relatives in the direct line (such as children, grandchildren and parents), is worth no more than €100,000, and includes no buildings or land and no rights over them; the heirs then tell the bank they are exempt. If in doubt, ask the tax agency or a notary. Agenzia delle Entrate, Dichiarazione di successione: Chi deve presentarla; Come e quando (consultate il 10 ottobre 2026)

THE RESERVED SHARES

With a husband or wife and one child, each is reserved a third; with two or more children, the children share half and the spouse a quarter. With children and no spouse, the children share half (one child) or two thirds (more). The spouse also keeps the right to live in the family home. Codice civile, artt. 536, 537, 540, 542 e 566 (Normattiva, testo vigente)

ANOTHER NATIONALITY

If the deceased held another nationality, they could choose in their will the law of that country to govern their estate. Ask a notary what this means for you. Regulation (EU) No 650/2012 (Succession Regulation), arts 20–23, 35, 83 — EUR-Lex, Wayback capture of 5 Mar 2026

TAX

A husband or wife, children and parents pay 4% only on what each receives above €1 million. Agenzia delle Entrate, Dichiarazione di successione: Imposte (consultata il 10 ottobre 2026)

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, Italian law decides who inherits, not the fixed shares, and sons and daughters inherit equally. An Islamic will in Italy is an ordinary Italian will that directs the estate by the shares, within the part the law leaves free.

- [ ] Write it entirely by hand, date it with the day, month and year, and sign it at the end; or make it before a notary
- [ ] Each spouse makes their own will

VALID WILL

A handwritten will must be entirely in your own hand, dated with the day, month and year, and signed at the end. A public will is made before a notary and two witnesses. Codice civile, artt. 602 e 603 (Normattiva, testo vigente)

- [ ] Leave it with a notary or tell your family where it is
- [ ] Ask a notary how the reserved shares affect the Islamic shares

Work out the Islamic shares to take to a notary ›

THE FREE PART

With a husband or wife and one child, one third is free; with a spouse and two or more children, one quarter. With children only, half (one child) or one third (more). Codice civile, artt. 536, 537, 540, 542 e 566 (Normattiva, testo vigente)

WITHOUT A WILL

Children inherit from their father and mother in equal parts. Codice civile, artt. 536, 537, 540, 542 e 566 (Normattiva, testo vigente)

General guidance, not a fatwa or legal advice. Italy has a national mortuary regulation, but regions and comuni add their own funeral and cemetery rules, so Muslim sections and burial in a shroud differ from one comune to another; your funeral company and a notary can confirm them.

Last reviewed October 2026. Something wrong? Tell us