

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 If something here is wrong or out of date where you live, please tell us at hello@lifeistemporary.com.

WHAT THE LAW SAYS IN NORWAY

Death certificate and registration	A doctor gives a declaration of the death and reports it to the National Population Register, so the family does not need to register anything. If no doctor has reported it, the death must be reported at once to the district court (tingrett) that deals with the estate. Skatteetaten, Registration of deaths; Helsepersonelloven § 36; Arveloven § 89
Police and forensic autopsy	If a crime is suspected or a forensic autopsy is likely, the body may not be buried or taken out of Norway without the police's permission, and the burial time limit does not run while the police examination is ordered. Everyone killed in road traffic is autopsied. A medical (hospital) autopsy cannot go ahead if one of the closest relatives refuses, unless the county governor allows it for special reasons. Obduksjonslova §§ 7, 7 a and 14; Gravplassloven § 13
Timing and burial abroad	Burial must take place at the latest 10 working days after the death, and Saturday is not a working day. The law sets no earliest time; the municipality's burial authority fixes the time of each burial and can extend the limit for weighty reasons. Gravplassloven §§ 12–13; Gravplassforskriften § 12
Timing and burial abroad	For burial abroad, ask the funeral company which paperwork it will handle; the destination country's embassy or consulate sets its own conditions. Nav's grant for moving a body does not cover transport from Norway abroad. In a police case, the body may not leave Norway without the police's permission. Nav, Stønad ved båretransport; Obduksjonslova § 14
Burial, coffin and graves	A coffin is the rule, but where there are special reasons the burial authority must allow burial without a coffin, on conditions it can set; its decision cannot be appealed. Everyone resident in the municipality when they died has a right to a free grave there for at least 20 years, and if the municipality has no graves for religious minorities it pays for one elsewhere. Oslo has fields facing Mecca suitable for Muslim burial at Alfaset and Klemetsrud.

	Gravplassforskriften § 28; Gravplassloven §§ 1, 6, 8 and 14; Oslo kommune, Gravtyper
Skifte at the district court	The district court deals with the estate. For a private settlement (privat skifte), at least one adult heir must take on the deceased's debts before the court, normally within 60 days of the death or by the deadline the court sets; the court then issues a probate certificate (skifteattest) naming the heirs. Two thirds of the estate is reserved for the children, up to 15 times the National Insurance basic amount each, after the spouse's minimum share, so ask a lawyer how the heirs can agree to follow the Islamic shares. Arveloven §§ 4, 8, 50 and 116-118
Small estates	If the estate's assets are worth less than three times the National Insurance basic amount, heirs who take on the debts in a private settlement are liable only up to the assets left after the funeral has been paid. Arveloven § 116
Funeral grant from Nav	Nav pays a means-tested funeral grant (gravferdsstønad) of up to 30,898 kroner for deaths from 1 January 2026 to whoever paid for the funeral, if the deceased was a member of the National Insurance scheme. Apply within 6 months of the funeral. If the death happened in Norway, Nav can also help with transporting the body more than 20 km inside Norway, minus 3,090 kroner; Nav decides eligibility. Nav, Gravferdsstønad; Nav, Stønad ved båretransport

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

WHERE YOU ARE

Norway has one national law for burial and estates, and this guide describes that national framework. Each municipality has a burial authority (gravplassmyndigheten) that sets local rules, assigns graves and decides on burial without a coffin, so ask it about Muslim fields where you live.

1

Have the death confirmed

In the first hour

A doctor confirms the death and writes the medical declaration of death. If there is reason to think the death was not natural, the doctor must tell the police.

- [ ] In a hospital or care home, ask the staff to confirm the death
- [ ] At home, call your doctor, or 113 in an emergency
- [ ] If the death was violent, such as an accident, call the police
- [ ] Tell the staff early that the family needs a quick burial for religious reasons

WHO SIGNS

Doctors must give a declaration of every death they learn of in their work, and report an unnatural death to the police. Helsepersonelloven (LOV-1999-07-02-64), § 36

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 Muslim associations help with the washing, the shroud, the prayer and the burial, and know which funeral company (begravelsesbyrå) to use.

NO NUMBER?

Call the nearest large mosque. They will know who to call.

- [ ] 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

3

Ask whether the police are involved PAPERWORK

If the death was sudden or violent

If a crime may have caused the death, or a forensic autopsy is likely, the body may not be buried or taken out of Norway without the police's permission. The 10-working-day time limit for burial does not run while the body is held for a forensic autopsy.

- [ ] Ask the doctor or the police whether the death has been reported to the police
- [ ] Ask the police, early, to release the body as soon as possible for religious reasons
- [ ] Ask when the police expect to give permission before fixing the funeral

POLICE PERMISSION
Where a crime is suspected or a forensic autopsy is likely, the body may not be buried or taken abroad without the police's permission.
Obduksjonslova (LOV-2015-05-07-26), § 14

ROAD DEATHS
Everyone killed in road traffic is autopsied.
Obduksjonslova (LOV-2015-05-07-26), § 7 a

THE TIME LIMIT
The 10 working days do not apply while an expert examination of the body has been ordered by the police.
Gravplassloven (LOV-1996-06-07-32), §§ 12 og 13

A HOSPITAL AUTOPSY
A medical autopsy, outside any police case, cannot go ahead if there is reason to think the deceased would have objected, or if one of the closest relatives refuses. Only the county governor (statsforvalteren) can override this, for special reasons. Tell the doctor straight away if the family refuses. Obduksjonslova (LOV-2015-05-07-26), § 7

4

The death is registered by the doctor PAPERWORK

In the first days

Normally the doctor reports the death to the National Population Register (Folkeregisteret), and you do not need to register it yourself. If no doctor has reported it, contact the district court (tingrett) straight away. The district court deals with the estate.

- [ ] Ask the doctor or hospital to confirm they have reported the death
- [ ] Tell the district court about any will you know of
- [ ] Tell the funeral company who will arrange the funeral

WHO REPORTS
Doctors report deaths in Norway to the National Population Register. If a doctor has not, the death must be reported at once to the district court by the doctor, the spouse, partner or closest relatives. Skatteetaten, Registration of deaths (read 10 October 2026) ; Arveloven (LOV-2019-06-14-21), §§ 89 og 90

WHO ARRANGES THE FUNERAL
A person aged 18 or over can name in writing who will arrange their funeral. Otherwise the right goes to the closest relatives aged 18 or over, in this order: spouse, children, parents, grandchildren, grandparents, siblings. If they disagree, the municipality decides. Gravplassloven (LOV-1996-06-07-32), § 9

5

Choose the funeral company and the grave PAPERWORK

Within the first day

A funeral company (begravelsesbyrå) collects the body and handles most of the paperwork. Each municipality has a burial authority (gravplassmyndigheten) that runs the cemeteries and assigns graves. Burial must respect the deceased's religion.

- [ ] Ask the funeral company in advance whether the mosque's team or the family may wash the body
- [ ] Ask the burial authority for a grave in a Muslim or direction-oriented field
- [ ] If the family wants burial without a coffin, ask the burial authority early for permission

A COFFIN, OR NOT

A coffin is the rule. But where there are special reasons, the burial authority must allow burial without a coffin, and it can set conditions. Its decision cannot be appealed. Gravplassforskriften (FOR-1997-01-10-16), § 28

MUSLIM GRAVES

Everyone who lived in the municipality when they died has a right to a free grave there. If the home municipality has no graves set aside for religious minorities, it pays for such a grave elsewhere. Oslo, for example, has fields facing Mecca suitable for Muslim burial; Alfaset and Klemetsrud are named, while two others take no new graves. Gravplassloven (LOV-1996-06-07-32), §§ 1 og 6 ; Oslo kommune, Gravtyper (read 10 October 2026)

HOW LONG A GRAVE LASTS

A grave is protected for at least 20 years after the last burial, or longer if the cemetery's rules say so. A lease (feste) runs for up to 20 years and may be renewed if the grave is kept up and renewal does not hinder the running of the cemetery. Ask the burial authority whether and when a lease is offered. Gravplassloven (LOV-1996-06-07-32), §§ 8 og 14

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 company 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.

- [ ] Tell family and community the time of the prayer
- [ ] Confirm the grave in a Muslim field or Muslim cemetery
- [ ] Ask the burial authority for the earliest burial time it can give

HASTE

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

How to pray the janazah prayer ›

THE LAW

Burial must take place at the latest 10 working days after the death; Saturday is not a working day. The law sets no earliest time. The burial authority fixes the exact time, and can extend the limit for weighty reasons. Gravplassloven (LOV-1996-06-07-32), §§ 12 og 13 ; Gravplassforskriften (FOR-1997-01-10-16), § 12

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 which paperwork it will handle. 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, and check any insurance.

- [ ] Tell the funeral company early that the burial will be abroad
- [ ] Call the embassy or consulate of the country early: it sets its own documents and conditions
- [ ] Ask the consulate whether it requires embalming or a sealed zinc coffin
- [ ] Check any insurance and any repatriation fund you belong to

NO HELP FROM NAV

Nav's grant for moving a body covers only transport inside Norway. It does not pay for transport from Norway abroad. Nav, Stønad ved båretransport (read 10 October 2026)

POLICE CASES

If a crime is suspected or a forensic autopsy is likely, the body may not leave Norway without the police's permission. Obduksjonslova (LOV-2015-05-07-26), § 14

THE CONSULATE

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

7

Get the probate certificate PAPERWORK

In the first weeks

Banks and others need proof of who may act for the estate. In a private settlement this is the probate certificate (skifteattest) from the district court. It names the heirs.

- [ ] Contact the district court dealing with the estate
- [ ] For a private settlement, an heir must take on the debts at the court, normally within 60 days of the death or by the deadline the court sets

WHEN IT IS ISSUED

The district court issues it once the time limit has passed, or earlier if all the heirs agree. It is issued to the heir or heirs who took responsibility for the debts. Arveloven (LOV-2019-06-14-21), §§ 116–118

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
- [ ] 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

TAKING ON THE DEBTS

For a private settlement, at least one adult heir must take on responsibility for the deceased's debts before the district court. Several heirs who do so are each fully liable to the creditors. If the assets are worth less than three times the National Insurance basic amount, the responsibility is limited to the assets left after the funeral is paid. Ask the district court or a lawyer before you sign. Arveloven (LOV-2019-06-14-21), §§ 116–118

FUNERAL GRANT

If the deceased was a member of the National Insurance scheme, Nav pays a funeral grant (gravferdsstønad) of up to 30,898 kroner for deaths from 1 January 2026, to whoever paid for the funeral. For an adult it is means-tested: Nav looks at wealth (for a married couple, or partners with children, the couple's), insurance paid because of the death and some other payments, and works out the amount. Apply within 6 months of the funeral. Nav, Gravferdsstønad (read 10 October 2026)

and

Find the will PAPERWORK

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

The district court checks whether a will was lodged with a court. Look at home too, and tell the court about any will you find.

- [ ] Check papers at home, email, and with any lawyer
- [ ] Ask the district court whether a will was lodged there
- [ ] Secure the house and car, and keep the phone line active for sign-in codes

LODGED WILLS

When the district court learns of the death, it checks whether the deceased lodged a will with a court. Arveloven (LOV-2019-06-14-21), §§ 89 og 90

A VALID WILL

A will must be in writing and signed, with two witnesses aged 18 or over who know it is a will and sign while the testator is present. If these rules are not followed, the will is invalid. Arveloven (LOV-2019-06-14-21), § 42

9

Settle and divide the estate PAPERWORK

In the months after

Norwegian law reserves part of the estate to the children, in equal shares for sons and daughters, after the spouse's minimum share. Dividing by the Islamic shares therefore often needs the heirs to agree. Ask a lawyer early how this can be done.

- [ ] Choose a private settlement (privat skifte) or ask the court for a public one (offentlig skifte)
- [ ] 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)

THE CHILDREN'S SHARE

Children inherit equally. Two thirds of the estate is reserved for them (pliktdelsarv), but never more than 15 times the National Insurance basic amount for each child. A will can change it only if the law allows or the children agree. In a small estate, the spouse's minimum share can leave little or nothing for the children. Arveloven (LOV-2019-06-14-21), §§ 4 og 8 ; Arveloven (LOV-2019-06-14-21), § 50

HUSBAND OR WIFE

With children, a spouse inherits a quarter, and always at least four times the National Insurance basic amount. Arveloven (LOV-2019-06-14-21), §§ 4 og 8

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

- [ ] Write it down and sign it in front of two witnesses aged 18 or over
- [ ] Tell the witnesses it is a will
- [ ] Date it

VALID WILL
It must be in writing and signed. Two witnesses, aged 18 or over, sign while you are present and know it is a will. It should be dated. Arveloven (LOV-2019-06-14-21), § 42

THE RESERVED SHARE
Two thirds of the estate is reserved for the children, capped at 15 times the National Insurance basic amount for each child. Arveloven (LOV-2019-06-14-21), § 50

- [ ] Ask a lawyer how the children’s reserved share and the spouse’s minimum affect the Islamic shares

Work out the Islamic shares to take to a lawyer ›

General guidance, not a fatwa or legal advice. Norwegian law on burial and estates is national, but each municipality’s burial authority sets local rules and decides on burial without a coffin; your funeral company and a lawyer can confirm them.

Last reviewed October 2026. Something wrong? Tell us