

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 If something here is wrong or out of date where you live, please tell us at hello@lifeistemporary.com.

WHAT THE LAW SAYS IN SWEDEN

Death certificate and Skatteverket	A doctor confirms the death and writes the death certificate (dödsbevis). A hospital or care home sends it to the Swedish Tax Agency (Skatteverket); otherwise the doctor does. The family does not declare the death. Skatteverket normally registers it within a day or so, and many agencies, banks and insurers are told automatically. Begravningslag (1990:1144), 4 kap. 2–3 §§; Skatteverket, SKV 459 (2025); 1177, När någon dör
Police and forensic autopsy	If a forensic examination may be needed, the doctor reports the death to the police, who decide whether to order a forensic autopsy. It can go ahead even against the wishes of the deceased or the family. There is no burial until the police give permission. A hospital autopsy for medical knowledge cannot go ahead, when the deceased's view is unclear, if someone close to them objects. Lag (1995:832) om obduktion m.m., 7-10, 13, 17 and 18 §§; Begravningslag (1990:1144), 4 kap. 4 och 7 §§
Burial permit, timing and burial abroad	The body must be buried or cremated as soon as possible and at the latest one month after the death; the law sets no earliest time. Burial needs Skatteverket's certificate, which the funeral company or cemetery office orders. Skatteverket can allow more time for special reasons. Begravningslag (1990:1144), 4 kap. 7 § and 5 kap. 10 §; Skatteverket, SKV 459 (2025)
Burial permit, timing and burial abroad	To take a body out of Sweden, Skatteverket issues a pass (passersedel) that travels with the coffin. The coffin must be moisture-proof, lined with zinc or another self-destroying material or with an inner coffin of such a material; for the Nordic countries this applies only if the carrier asks or the death was from an infectious disease. The destination country's embassy or consulate sets its own conditions: call it early. Begravningsförordning (1990:1147), 36–40 §§; Stockholms stad, Ordna begravning
Burial and graves	Cemeteries are run by the local Church of Sweden parish, or in a few places such as Stockholm by the municipality.

	They must provide special graves for people who are not Christian, in their area or a nearby one, so ask the cemetery office about its Muslim section. The burial fee everyone pays covers the grave for 25 years. The City of Stockholm says burial is in a coffin; we found no official page allowing burial in the shroud alone. Begravningslag (1990:1144), 2 kap. 1–2 §§, 7 kap. 5–6 §§, 9 kap. 6 §; Stockholms stad, Ordna begravning; Göteborgs begravningssamfällighet, Kvibergs kyrkogård
The bouppteckning and the estate	Within 3 months the estate holds an inventory meeting (bouppteckningsförrättning), and the inventory must reach Skatteverket within 4 months of the death. A spouse usually inherits before the couple's shared children, and half of each child's legal share is reserved, so ask a lawyer how the heirs can agree to follow the Islamic shares. Skatteverket, SKV 459 (2025); Ärvdabalk (1958:637), 2 kap. 1 §, 3 kap. 1–2 §§, 7 kap. 1 och 3 §§
Small estates (dödsboanmälan)	When the assets cover no more than the funeral and costs caused by the death, the municipality's social services can in some cases make a simpler estate notice (dödsboanmälan) instead of an inventory. It is not possible if the deceased owned a property or a tenant-owned flat. Ask the social services office where the deceased lived. Skatteverket, SKV 459 (2025)
Help with funeral costs	If the deceased did not leave enough money for the funeral, the home municipality can pay all or part of it: apply for financial assistance at its social services office. The burial fee already covers the grave, the burial itself and some transport for someone registered in the area. 1177, När någon dör; Stockholms stad, Ordna begravning; Begravningslag (1990:1144), 9 kap. 6 §

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

WHERE YOU ARE

Sweden has one national law for death certificates, burial and estates, and this guide describes that national framework. Cemeteries are run locally, in most places by the Church of Sweden parish and in a few, such as Stockholm, by the municipality, so Muslim sections, grave types and residence rules differ from place to place.

1

Have the death confirmed

In the first hour

A doctor has to examine the body and confirm the death. The doctor writes the death certificate (dödsbevis) and a certificate of the cause of death, and sends the death certificate to the Swedish Tax Agency (Skatteverket).

- [ ] In a hospital or care home, ask the staff to confirm the death
- [ ] At home, if the death was expected, call the care team that looked after them, for example home health care
- [ ] If the death may have been an accident or a crime, call the police
- [ ] In an emergency, call 112
- [ ] Tell the staff early that the family needs a quick burial for religious reasons

WHO SIGNS

A doctor, who may not be a close relative of the deceased. The certificate must be written without delay. Begravningslag (1990:1144), 4 kap. 2–4 §§ ; 1177 (Sveriges regioner), När någon dör (läst 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
- [ ] 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 (begravningsbyrå) 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

If there may be reason for a forensic examination, for example after an accident or a possible crime, the doctor reports the death to the police. The police decide whether a forensic examination or autopsy (rättsmedicinsk undersökning) is needed. There can be no burial until the police give permission.

A FORENSIC AUTOPSY

The police decide. It can go ahead even if it goes against the wishes of the deceased or the family. Lag (1995:832) om obduktion m.m., 13, 17 och 18 §§

- [ ] 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 for burial before fixing the funeral

RELEASE
After their inquiries the police send the death certificate to Skatteverket with permission for burial. Only then can Skatteverket issue the burial certificate. Begravningslag (1990:1144), 4 kap. 2–4 §§ ; Begravningslag (1990:1144), 4 kap. 7 §

A HOSPITAL AUTOPSY
An autopsy only to learn more about an illness (klinisk obduktion) is different. A close relative must be told first and given reasonable time to respond. If the deceased's view is unclear, it cannot go ahead for this purpose if someone close to them objects. Tell the doctor straight away that the family objects. Lag (1995:832) om obduktion m.m., 7, 8 och 10 §§ (klinisk obduktion)

4 The death is registered by Skatteverket PAPERWORK

Usually within a day or two

You do not declare the death yourself. A hospital or care home sends the death certificate to Skatteverket; otherwise the doctor who wrote it does. Skatteverket then records the death in the population register (folkbokföringen), and many agencies and banks are told automatically.

- [ ] If the death was in a hospital or care home, ask the staff to confirm they have sent the death certificate
- [ ] If you have questions about the certificate, ask the doctor or the hospital

HOW LONG
It normally takes a day or so for Skatteverket to register the death. Skatteverket, När en anhörig dör (SKV 459, utgåva 2, 2025)

- [ ] Ask the funeral company to get the burial certificate from Skatteverket

THE BURIAL CERTIFICATE
A burial cannot take place without Skatteverket's certificate for burial or cremation. You do not need to order it: the funeral company or the cemetery office does. Skatteverket, När en anhörig dör (SKV 459, utgåva 2, 2025) ; Begravningslag (1990:1144), 4 kap. 7 §

5 Choose the funeral company and the grave PAPERWORK

Within the first day

Most families use a funeral company (begravningsbyrå) to buy the coffin, move the body and arrange the burial. You decide how much they do. The cemetery is run by the local Church of Sweden parish or, in a few places such as Stockholm, by the municipality. A coffin is used for burial.

- [ ] Ask the funeral company in advance whether the mosque's team or the family may wash the body
- [ ] Ask the cemetery office whether it has a Muslim section and graves facing Mecca
- [ ] Ask whether the grave is only for people registered as living in that municipality

A COFFIN
The City of Stockholm says that by law the deceased must be buried in a coffin or cremated. Burial in the shroud alone is not described on any official page we read. Ask the cemetery office. Stockholms stad, Ordna begravning (begravning.stockholm, läst den 10 oktober 2026)

THE WASHING
The regional health service says relatives can help wash and dress the deceased and help lay them in the coffin if they wish. The doctor can also decide that the body may stay at home for a limited time. 1177 (Sveriges regioner), När någon dör (läst den 10 oktober 2026)

MUSLIM SECTIONS

The body that runs the cemeteries must provide special graves for people who do not belong to a Christian denomination, in its own area or a nearby one. In Gothenburg, for example, the Kviberg cemetery has two Muslim sections, half of the newest graves face Mecca, and there is a washing place.
Begravningslag (1990:1144), 2 kap. 1–2 §§ ; Göteborgs begravningssamfällighet (Svenska kyrkan), Kvibergs kyrkogård (läst den 10 oktober 2026)

PAID BY THE BURIAL FEE

Everyone registered in Sweden pays a burial fee (begravningsavgift) with their tax. For someone registered in the area, it covers the grave for 25 years, opening and closing the grave, transport from when the cemetery takes over until the burial (except for burial outside its area), and a room to keep the body. The coffin, dressing the body and the funeral company's costs are paid by the estate (dödsboet). Ask the funeral company what it costs and who signs before you agree.
Begravningslag (1990:1144), 9 kap. 1 och 6 §§ (begravningsavgift) ; Stockholms stad, Ordna begravning (begravning.stockholm, läst den 10 oktober 2026)

HOW LONG A GRAVE LASTS

A grave right (gravrätt) is granted for 15 to 50 years, or for ever; if no time is set, it lasts 25 years. When it ends, the holder has a right to renew it if the grave is well kept, renewal does not seriously hinder the running of the cemetery, and they asked to renew in time. Begravningslag (1990:1144), 7 kap. 5, 6 och 9 §§ (gravrätt)

IF RELATIVES DISAGREE

The deceased's wishes should be followed as far as possible. If relatives cannot agree, the body that runs the cemeteries where the deceased was registered can mediate. Begravningslag (1990:1144), 5 kap. 1 och 3 §§

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 cemetery or Muslim section
- [ ] Make sure the funeral company has Skatteverket's burial certificate
- [ ] Ask the cemetery office for the earliest burial time

How to pray the janazah prayer ›

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

THE LAW
The body must be buried or cremated as soon as possible and at the latest one month after the death. The law sets no earliest time. Skatteverket can allow more time for special reasons. Begravningslag (1990:1144), 5 kap. 10 § ; Skatteverket, När en anhörig dör (SKV 459, utgåva 2, 2025)

SAME DAY OR WEEKEND
We found no official rule on burial on the same day or at weekends. Ask the cemetery office.

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
- [ ] Check any insurance and any repatriation fund you belong to

THE PASS
A body can leave Sweden only with a pass (passersedel) from Skatteverket, which travels with the coffin. It is issued only if Skatteverket could issue a burial certificate, and the funeral company certifies the coffin. Begravningsförordning (1990:1147), 36–42 §§

THE COFFIN

The coffin must be moisture-proof, with absorbent material inside: a wooden coffin with an inner coffin of zinc or another self-destroying material, or a wooden coffin lined with such a material. For Denmark, Finland, Iceland and Norway these rules apply only if the carrier asks or the death was from an infectious disease, but the coffin must still be tight and solid. Ask the funeral company what the destination and the airline require.

Begravningsförordning (1990:1147), 36–42 §§

THE CONSULATE

Each country sets its own rules. The City of Stockholm advises contacting that country's embassy or consulate and Skatteverket.

Stockholms stad, Ordna begravning (begravning.stockholm, läst den 10 oktober 2026)

7 Get a death certificate for the estate PAPERWORK

In the first week

A death certificate with family details (dödsfallsintyg med släktutredning) shows when the person died and who the surviving relatives are. An insurer, for example, may ask for it; ask each bank or insurer what it needs.

- [ ] Wait until Skatteverket has registered the death
- [ ] Call Skatteverket's information line, 0771-567 567, and say "Dödsfallsintyg"

WHO NEEDS IT

An insurer may ask for it, and the regional health service says you need it to look after the deceased's finances. Ask each organisation which documents it wants. Skatteverket, När en anhörig dör (SKV 459, utgåva 2, 2025) ; 1177 (Sveriges regioner), När någon dör (läst 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 estate inventory
- [ ] 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

IF THE FAMILY CANNOT PAY

The home municipality can pay all or part of the funeral if the deceased did not leave enough money. Apply for financial assistance (ekonomiskt bistånd) at the social services office of the municipality where they were registered. 1177 (Sveriges regioner), När någon dör: Du kan få bidrag för begravningen (läst den 10 oktober 2026) ; Stockholms stad, Ordna begravning (begravning.stockholm, läst den 10 oktober 2026)

and

Find the will PAPERWORK

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

Look for a will early. A child's time to claim their reserved share runs from when they are formally told of the will.

- [ ] Check papers at home, email, and with any lawyer or bank
- [ ] Secure the house and car, and keep the phone line active for sign-in codes
- [ ] See efterlevandeguiden.se, the joint site of Skatteverket, Försäkringskassan and Pensionsmyndigheten, for pensions and other support

A VALID WILL

A Swedish will is made in writing. The testator signs it, or confirms their signature, while both witnesses are present together, and the witnesses sign it knowing it is a will. Ärvdabalk (1958:637), 10 kap. 1 §

9

Settle and divide the estate PAPERWORK

In the months after

Swedish law decides who inherits, not the fixed shares. A spouse usually inherits before the couple's shared children, and each child has a reserved share. Dividing by the Islamic shares therefore needs the heirs to agree. Ask a lawyer early how this can be done.

- [ ] Hold the estate inventory meeting (bouppteckningsförrättning) within 3 months
- [ ] Send the inventory to Skatteverket within one month of it
- [ ] 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 ESTATE INVENTORY

It must reach Skatteverket at the latest 4 months after the death. It must be registered before the estate can be closed and anyone can receive an inheritance. Skatteverket does not answer questions on how to divide it. Ask Skatteverket within 3 months if you need more time. Skatteverket, När en anhörig dör (SKV 459, utgåva 2, 2025): Bouppteckning

HUSBAND OR WIFE

If the deceased was married, the spouse inherits the estate. Children they had together usually inherit later, when the surviving parent dies. A child from another relationship can claim their share at once. Ärvdabalk (1958:637), 2 kap. 1 § och 3 kap. 1–2 §§

THE CHILDREN'S SHARE

Children inherit equally, sons and daughters alike. Half of a child's legal share is reserved (laglott). A child who receives less under a will must claim within six months of being told of the will. Ärvdabalk (1958:637), 2 kap. 1 § och 3 kap. 1–2 §§ ; Ärvdabalk (1958:637), 7 kap. 1 och 3 §§ (laglott)

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, Swedish law decides who inherits, not the fixed shares, and sons and daughters inherit equally. An Islamic will in Sweden is an ordinary Swedish will that directs the estate by the shares, as far as the children's reserved share allows.

- [ ] Write it down and sign it in front of two witnesses who are present together
- [ ] Tell the witnesses it is a will; they need not read it
- [ ] Keep it where your family will find it
- [ ] Ask a lawyer how the reserved share and the spouse's rights affect the Islamic shares

Work out the Islamic shares to take to a lawyer ›

VALID WILL
It must be in writing. You sign it, or confirm your signature, while both witnesses are present, and they sign it knowing it is a will. Ärvdabalk (1958:637), 10 kap. 1 §

THE RESERVED SHARE
Half of each child's legal share is reserved for them. A child can claim it within six months of being told of the will. Ärvdabalk (1958:637), 7 kap. 1 och 3 §§ (laglott)

General guidance, not a fatwa or legal advice. Swedish law on death certificates, burial and estates is national, but cemeteries are run locally, so Muslim sections and grave rules differ from place to place; your funeral company and a lawyer can confirm them.

Last reviewed October 2026. Something wrong? Tell us