

UPDATE ON MUSLIM BURIAL PROSEDURES

Due to the COVID-19 virus, local hospitals have denied access to washing facilities to prepare our deceased community members. According to the latest instructions the deceased must be prepared on the hospital wards, right after the death. The use of water has been denied and only one person has been given the right to prepare the deceased for the burial. This person can be a relative or any other Muslim. Relatives of the deceased must see that alternative measures for preparing the body are done. If the deceased is not prepared on the ward, the funeral officers will place the body in the coffin without preparations.

In case the deceased have died to Korona virus, the preparations of the deceased are not allowed. The deceased will be placed in the coffin in the body bag given by the hospital. The bag itself will represent the shroud.

PREPARATION OF THE DECEASED IN EXCEPTIONAL SITUATION:

1. Make sure that the body of the deceased is fully covered throughout the procedure.
2. If there are any plasters, catheters or likes attached to the deceased, they must be removed before preparation for the body. All visual dirt (such as traces of blood, urine, faeces) can be cleaned with wet wipes or towels.
3. Then place a diaper or protective towel under the deceased private area and lift gently the upper body to sitting position while pressing lightly the stomach area. After that you may clean any possible dirt exiting the body and clean the private area with wet wipes or moist papers.
4. After cleaning the private area, Tayammum (dry ablution) should be done. This can be done with sand or any other sources of soil, even by touching a stone wall. Touch the soil with your hands first and then wipe over the face of the deceased and then his/her hands.
5. Then proceed to place the deceased to the shrouds. This can be rather difficult for one person, but it is possible, in sha Allaah.
6. For men, place all the three (3) garments on top of each other and roll them together lengthwise. Place the rolled shrouds on the side of the body and turn the body towards yourself and open the roll, by rolling the garments under the body towards yourself. Then return the body to their back and go around the bed and repeat by lifting the body towards yourself and catching the rolled garments under the body and roll the rest open towards the other side. Now you should have the shroud spread evenly to both sides and start lifting the edges over the deceased. If ropes (3-5) are used, they can be placed after the shroud is covering the body by same method used earlier.
7. As for women, three (3) shrouds can also be used as above or five (5) garments, when two of the largest ones and izar are rolled as above. After when the garments are spread evenly under the deceased, wrap the izar over the private parts. (Keep the body covered from neck to the knees at all times!) Then place the kamiis (open dress from the sides) by turning the body towards yourself from one side and then repeat the other side. Place hijab (scarf) on the head and wrap the rest of the shrouds around the body. For children three (3) garments are enough and they are placed as done for the above.
8. Ask for a supportive sheet (normally found around deceased, *kantoliina* in Finnish language) from the hospital staff. Place that under the deceased the same way as done with the shrouds. This prevents the funeral officers touching the body itself when they are lifting the body to the coffin. You can also ask permission to be present while they are doing it. The deceased should be turned to the right side if possible, also turning the head towards right. Pay attention that the coffin is not closed with any symbols of Christianity (such as crosses).

If you feel unable to take care of these procedures, ask beforehand for your community members who are professional burial personnel's.