

Management of Deceased Persons with Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19 Across All Settings (Institutional/Community)

[Can funeral wakes be held for those who passed away from COVID-19 infection? How long can these wakes be held for?](#)

Yes. MOH has assessed that funeral wakes can be held for those who passed away from COVID-19 infection.

Although measures have been put in place to ensure safe handling of the deceased infected with COVID-19, and physical contact with their bodies is not permissible, the duration of funeral wakes should be kept within three days. This is to minimise any potential risk of transmission between visitors during the funeral wake.

You may also consult your appointed funeral directors for options other than a three-day funeral wake, such as conducting prayers just before the cremation at the service hall at Mandai Crematorium.

[Is it safe to conduct funeral wakes for those who have passed away from COVID-19 infection?](#)

Healthcare workers and funeral services providers would prepare the bodies of the infectious COVID-19 deceased for cremation or burial. The bodies of the deceased will be enclosed in at least one leak-proof bag before being placed in a hermetically sealed coffin.

Collection, casketing and transport of the bodies for cremation or burial are limited to funeral services providers, whose staff have undergone the Basic Infection Control Course (BICC) conducted by the National Centre for Infectious Diseases (NCID). Staff of the funeral services providers also have to be suitably protected when carrying out their work. These funeral services providers have also received a circular on the management of deceased persons suspected of or were confirmed as COVID-19 patients from the Ministry of Health (MOH) forwarded by the National Environment Agency (NEA).

[Do all the bodies of deceased infected with COVID-19 have to be cremated?](#)

Deceased person with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 infection is permitted for cremation or burial service.

[Which funeral services providers \(FSPs\) are qualified to handle bodies of deceased infected with COVID-19?](#)

You may refer to a list of BICC-trained FSPs at [https://www.ncid.sg/For-General-Public/Pages/List-of-Funeral-Service-Companies-Trained-in-Basic-Infection-Control-Course-\(BICC\).aspx](https://www.ncid.sg/For-General-Public/Pages/List-of-Funeral-Service-Companies-Trained-in-Basic-Infection-Control-Course-(BICC).aspx). Healthcare workers and/or medical practitioners should inform household members of the deceased on how to access and use this list early, to facilitate handling of the deceased at the time of demise.

[Is embalming allowed for deceased with COVID-19 infection?](#)

Embalming **should not** be performed if:

- a) The deceased is deemed to be infectious; OR
- b) The deceased is deemed to be non-infectious, BUT the date of demise is within 28 days of first positive COVID-19 PCR or ART.

If the deceased had more than one episode of COVID-19 infection, the “first” COVID-19 PCR and/or ART result would be that of the current or latest infection episode. The dating of such PCR and/or ART results from demise, will therefore be in the context of the current or latest COVID-19 infection episode.

The deceased may otherwise be managed according to the standard measures (that is deceased can be washed, embalmed and dressed, body bag not required).

[What repatriation arrangements should the next-of-kin of a foreign deceased infected with COVID-19 make? How does NEA handle a foreign deceased case?](#)

Next-of-kin are strongly advised to cremate the bodies of the deceased before transporting the ashes back to their home countries. No special permit is required for the repatriation of cremated ashes.

To repatriate the body of a foreign deceased back to their home country, the next-of-kin may either seek the assistance of a funeral director or their Embassy to make the necessary arrangements. Approval from both their home country and NEA’s Port Health Office is required for import to their home country and export from Singapore, respectively. Besides the relevant documents required by NEA for the export, the next-of-kin have to ensure that the body of the deceased is double-bagged, sealed in a leak-proof coffin, and preserved for transportation.

Together with the relevant authorities, NEA will provide assistance on repatriation arrangements to the next-of-kin.