



Government of Samoa

Ministry of Health

Guide for Repatriation of Deceased Body/Human Bones/Deceased Cremated Ash

Repatriation of deceased bodies to Samoa is subject to requirements set forth in the **Human Remains Repatriation Policy 2016** administered by the Ministry of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (MPMC) Office in Apia. (Website link to PDF checklist - <https://www.health.gov.ws/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Repatriation-of-Human-Remains.pdf>)

Key Documents required by the Ministry of Health in accordance with the policy for health clearance;

1. Deceased Bodies:

- Copy of Passport *or* National ID *or* Birth Certificate
- Medical Cause of Death
- Embalming Certificate
- Death Registry Certificate
- Coroner's Report

2. Deceased Human Remains (Bones)

- The family or person(s) should submit a letter of request address to the DG/CEO/MOH a. The letter should clearly state the name of the deceased, date of burial, proposed date for disinterment and new place the human remains will be buried.
- The bones must be chemically sterilized by a registered funeral service provider before the human remains are hermetically sealed;
- The family or person(s) must obtain the report of the treatment process from the funeral services and attached with letter of request;
- The Principal Health Care Waste Officer under the Ministry of Health will then assess all requests before issuance of an approval.

3. Cremains

- Cremation certificate from mortuary or Funeral parlor

With the State of Emergency, extra precautionary measures will be imposed for repatriation of deceased bodies:

- All deceased bodies repatriated from countries with confirmed COVID19 community transmission must submit written confirmation from the attending/certifying physician that it the deceased body is COVID19 free.
- Mandatory embalming of all deceased bodies repatriated from countries with confirmed COVID19 community transmission.
- All deceased bodies repatriated from countries with confirmed COVID19 community transmission must be accompanied with a certificate detailing the date, time and manner of disinfection issued by the undertaker or funeral director from the morgue where the

deceased body was held of the disinfecting process carried out on the body and casket before transport.

- All deceased bodies are to travel unaccompanied by cargo flight to Samoa.
- The family is responsible for arranging and costs of transport from the airport to the morgue.
- Upon arrival at the Faleolo International Airport the Ministry of Health will carry out necessary process before transportation to identified morgue/funeral pallor where it will remain overnight.
- No family member is allowed access the casket at the morgue without prior clearance from the Ministry of Health.
- Funeral pallor's are not allowed to grant access of family members to the deceased body without approval.
- The Ministry of Health after having assessed and is satisfied that all conditions have been met, the body will be released to family for burial.
- Immediate Family and Relatives are advise to avoid as much as possible any direct contact with the deceased body
- Non-compliance with stipulated conditions will result in a penalty fee issued to immediate family of the deceased.
- If the Ministry of Health is not satisfied that all conditions are met, the Ministry of Health will invoke it's powers as per section 40 (Power to Burial) of the Health Ordinance 1959 and Burial Ordinance 1961.
- The Director General of the Ministry of Health may institute any changes to the conditions as stated in accordance with relevant sections of the Health Ordinance 1959 and Burial Ordinance 1961.