

## Religious Requirements at the time of death

*This document has been produced by Rev'd Dom Jones, Hampshire Constabulary Force Chaplain & LRF Faith Communities Link*

<u>Religion</u>	<u>Main Points</u>	<u>Cremation / Burial</u>	<u>Funeral Requirements</u>	<u>PM's</u>	<u>Organ Donation</u>	<u>Ritual</u>	<u>Noteworthy Points</u>	<u>COVID-19 Links</u>
<b>Christianity</b>	Christianity is an Abrahamic monotheistic religion based on the life and teachings of Jesus of Nazareth. Its adherents, known as Christians, believe that Jesus is the Christ, whose coming as the messiah was prophesied in the Hebrew Bible, called the Old Testament in Christianity, and chronicled in the New Testament	Either	Nothing specific	Y	Y	Nothing specific	May request a priest for 'Last Rites'	<a href="#">Church of England</a> <a href="#">Methodist Church</a> <a href="#">Roman Catholic Church</a> <a href="#">The Baptist Union</a> <a href="#">United Reform Church</a>
<b>Islam</b>	The word Islam means submission to the will of God and its followers are Muslims. They believe in one God (Allah) and regard the religion's founder Mohammed as the prophet of Allah. The Koran (Quran), is Allah's word consists of the teachings of Islam. This, along with recorded sayings of Prophet Mohammed and his acts, constitute the Islamic legal system (Sharia)	Burial	Within 24hr of death	N	N	Face Makkah (the Qibla)  It is an important religious duty to visit the sick and dying, so a large number of visitors may arrive at all hours. It is customary among Pakistanis and Arabs to express their emotion freely when a relative dies. Whenever possible you should give them privacy to do so; and explain gently but firmly the need to avoid disturbing other's by their mourning.	Ideally only male Muslims should handle a male body, and female Muslims a female body.	<a href="#">National Muslim Burial Council</a>



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<p><b>Judaism</b></p>	<p>Judaism is based on the belief in one God. The love of God and the wish to carry out the Ten Commandments as given in the 'Torah (the first five books of the Old Testament). Religion and culture are inextricably mixed. The Jewish Sabbath begins before nightfall on Friday and ends with the first sighting of three stars on Saturday night (i.e. sunset' to sunset).</p>	<p>Burial</p>	<p>Within 24hr of death but not on Shabbat (Saturday)</p> <p>Immediately after death, close relatives may make a tear in one of their garments.</p> <p>It is Jewish tradition that when a Jewish person dies, a Wach'a (Watcher) may stay with the body from the time of death until the burial.</p>	<p>N</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>When a Jewish person dies, the following guidelines apply:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Do not touch the body until 20 minutes after death.</li> <li>2. Do not wash the body (clean crevices if required to preserve the dignity of the deceased).</li> <li>3. Do not remove false teeth or other prostheses.</li> <li>4. Close the eyes.</li> <li>5. Straighten the body out, laying it flat with the feet together and arms by the side. Fingers should be straight.</li> <li>6. Cover the body with a plain white sheet without emblems.</li> <li>7. The body should be placed with the feet towards the doorway.</li> </ol>	<p>Identification of the dead is particularly important for the position of a widow in Jewish law.</p>	<p><a href="#">United Synagogue</a></p>
<p><b>Hinduism</b></p>	<p>Hinduism embraces a way of life and a social system which involves the worship of numerous gods, all of them manifestations of the one Supreme Being. In Hinduism, there is no supreme church authority and no hierarchy.</p>	<p>Cremation</p>	<p>Ideally, Hindus are cremated on the day of death but the formalities required in Britain make this impractical.</p>	<p>N</p>		<p>The dead body should be placed with the head facing north and the feet facing south. The arms should be placed to the sides and the legs should be straightened. The face should be pointed upwards with the eyes closed and the whole body must always be covered with a white cloth. Any detached body parts must be treated</p>	<p>Gloves should be worn by non-Hindus when touching the body. The family normally wish to perform Last Offices themselves</p>	<p><a href="#">Hindu Council UK</a></p>



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						with respect as if they were a complete body. Sacred objects should not be removed.		
<b>Sikhism</b>	The word Sikh means disciple or follower, and they believe in one God whose message is revealed by Guru Nanak, the 16th Century founder of the religion.	Cremation	As soon as possible after death, and friends and relatives will prepare the body the night before the cremation at the funeral parlour.	N	Y	It is vital for staff to ensure that none of the five symbols of Sikhism are disturbed. It is also important not to trim the hair or beard, and the hair on the head should be kept covered. These symbols are: KESH – uncut hair (and beard) KANGHA – a semi-circular comb fixing the hair in a bun. KARA – a steel or gold bangle worn on the right wrist. KIRPAN – a symbolic dagger. KACHI – shorts/underpants. The five Ks should be left on the dead body, which should if possible be cleaned and clothed in clean garments before being placed in a coffin or on a bier.	After death and identification, the body or parts of the body should be covered with a plain white sheet or shroud. If the condition of the body permits, the eyes and mouth should be closed and limbs straightened with arms placed straight beside the body.  According to Sikh etiquette comforting a member of the opposite sex by physical contact should be avoided unless those involved are closely related	<a href="#">City Sikhs</a>
<b>Baha'i</b>	The Bahá'í faith is one of the youngest of the world's major religions. It was founded by Bahá'u'lláh in Iran in 1863.	Burial - no embalming	At some point before interment a special prayer for the dead is said.	Y		A special ring may be placed on the deceased's finger –do not remove. Body wrapped in plain cloth or silk.	Baha'i Law prescribes that burial should take place at a distance of not more than one hour's journey from the place of death.	



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	Iran was then mainly a Muslim country, and the faith was proclaimed by a young Iranian, who called himself The Báb. He said that a messenger would soon arrive from God, who would be the latest in a line of prophets including Moses, Muhammad and Jesus Christ		The only specific requirement of a Baha'i funeral service is recited for Baha'i deceased aged 15 or over.					
<b>Buddhism</b>	The Buddhist faith centres on the Buddha who is revered as an example to his followers of a way of life. Buddhahood is realised within the person through prayers, purifications, retreats and virtuous conduct.	Either (though cremation is more usual in the country of origin of many Buddhist families	When a Buddhist dies special prayers usually take place for a period of time before burial. This period depends on the lunar calendar and varies between three to seven days in most schools of Buddhism	?	Y		After death, the main Buddhist tradition is for the family to request prayers from the sangha (usually a monk, lama, nun, priest or order member) of the appropriate school of Buddhism and to perform certain actions and dedicate them to the dead person. Particularly for practitioners of Vajrayana Buddhism – most commonly in Britain, Tibetan Buddhism – an experienced Buddhist practitioner may perform the special Buddhist practice of Powa or ejection of consciousness. In some cases a monk may perform chanting, however this is not a universal	<a href="#">The Buddhist Society</a>



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							practise. They may wish for a Buddha figure close by and may use a candle or incense stick	
<b>Paganism</b>	Paganism describes a group of contemporary religions based on a reverence for nature. These faiths draw on the traditional religions of indigenous peoples throughout the world	Either	Most Pagan funerals will take place outdoors, either in an established memorial site or a location of significance to the deceased, such as a natural place which the individual shared an affinity with or where they regularly held or took part in ceremonies.	Y	Y	Most Pagan funerary rituals will involve some sort of singing, chanting and/or the reading of text; this may be accompanied by the partaking of wine or mead and the consumption of food such as bread. It is common for Pagans to cast a ritual circle and call on the four directions of the compass or the four elements during a ceremony. The ritual may consist of periods of meditation and reflection and will sometimes involve the burning of incense or oils and a ritual fire. Given the British climate and the comparative rarity of the practice, it is unlikely that Pagans will be naked at funerary rituals. Pagans do not carry out animal sacrifice or unlawful harm on others at any ritual. Pagans are inclusive in all aspects of their faith, so it will not be uncommon for non-	Pagans believe in reincarnation. Most pagans believe in some form of reincarnation, viewing death as a transition within a continuing process of existence. Pagans accept death as a natural part of life and will wish to know when they are dying so that they may consciously prepare for it.	



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						Pagans and those of other faiths to be present at Pagan funerals.		
<b>Humanism</b>	Humanism is a philosophical and ethical stance that emphasizes the value and agency of human beings, individually and collectively, and generally prefers critical thinking and evidence (rationalism and empiricism) over acceptance of dogma or superstition.	Either	Nothing specific	Y	Y	Nothing specific		<a href="#">Humanism UK</a>
<b>Jehovah Witness</b>	Jehovah's Witnesses are members of a religious organisation that originated in the U.S.A. in 1872. They attach great importance to Christ's second coming with the ensuing Armageddon and Last Judgement entailing the destruction of all but the faithful.	Either	Nothing specific	No	No	Nothing specific	They refer to death as "passing over" and having led a blameless life, have nothing to fear from it. This means they may not demonstrate the emotions our society usually expects	<a href="#">JW Website</a>