

# A Guide to Muslim Funerals



*Every soul shall have a taste of death...*

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## About Funerals in Islam

In Islam the entire funeral process is the **duty and responsibility** of every local Muslim community.

It is an obligatory act for at least 1 member of the community to perform this duty (referred to as Fard-e-kifaya), an obligation which if performed by even a single member of any community, it absolves the entire community of the responsibility, and if not then the entire community is sinful & accountable for this omission.

In Queensland this role has been shared between the local mosque and a local Non-Muslim Funeral Director in the past.

**Muslim Funeral Services Ltd (MFS)** was established in 2010 to fulfil the role of a Muslim Funeral Director within the Brisbane and Gold Coast communities, and we are the only Muslim Funeral Director in Queensland.

Muslims bury the deceased as soon as possible, preferably within 24 hours.

The process involves **three** essential steps:

1. **Washing & Shrouding the body**
2. **The Funeral Prayer**
3. **The Burial Process**

All the deceased Muslims are buried and there is no cremation. There is also usually no need for embalming.

An important note for the Nursing Home, Hospital or Doctor regarding the "**Cause of Death Certificate**".

Kindly note that the Funeral for Muslims takes place as soon as possible, usually **within 24 hours** after death. Therefore, there is some urgency in ensuring that the "**Cause of Death Certificate**" be available as soon as possible.

Your assistance in fulfilling this important rite will be highly appreciated.

It is preferable not to have a postmortem performed unless absolutely essential for medico-legal purposes.

The information in this book is intended to provide an overview of the services available. There may be specific exceptions to the general principles contained herein.

We are happy to provide further detailed information to you, your committee, to Hospitals, Nursing Homes, Emergency Services, Ambulance, Police, or other Funeral Directors who may be required handle a dying or deceased Muslim or to perform a Muslim Burial.

We are happy to provide any advice & assistance even for deaths outside Brisbane or the Gold Coast.

## About Muslim Funeral Services

**Muslim Funeral Services Ltd (MFS)** was established in 2010 to fulfil the role of the Funeral Director to the Muslim Communities across all of the Brisbane and Gold Coast suburbs.

It is a result of joint efforts between Brisbane Muslim Burial Services Inc. (BMBS) and the Gold Coast Islamic Society burial committee. Both of these organisations have for years prior to 2010 provided the Ghusl and Kaffan facilities at their respective mosques, and the funeral director services have until now been outsourced.

The services we provide will include being the first point of contact for the family of the deceased, all the transport arrangements for the deceased which includes the pick-up of the Janaza (deceased) from the home, hospital or mortuary, transport to the local Mosque or Ghusl facility, where the Ghusl (washing) and shrouding will be performed, and then the final transport to the local cemetery.

We will liaise with the local council to book the grave site for burial and complete all the necessary paperwork and regulatory requirements including registration of the death with the appropriate government department.

Our Ghusl and mortuary facilities are based at the Kuraby Masjid, 1408 Beenleigh Road, Kuraby, in Brisbane Queensland, but you may choose to have the Ghusl performed at any other facility.

Although we are based at the Kuraby Masjid, we are

an **autonomous private company** formed for the benefit of the entire Queensland Muslim Community, and are not a part of any Masjid or Islamic society.

Alhamdulillah we have been able to provide our services and to over a 1000 families as of 2023 across Queensland, including Harvey Bay and Rockhampton and have repatriated Janazas to Saudi Arabia, Indonesia and India and have also received Janazas from the United Kingdom and other parts of the world.

MFS is a accredited member of the **Australian Funeral Directors Association** (AFDA).

MFS is a privately funded company and is managed entirely by volunteers, and operates as a **non-profit** business entity.

All proceeds from the business will be utilised to provide ongoing funeral services within the Muslim Community, and none of the directors or committee members benefit financially from MFS Ltd in any way.

All we request in return is that you remember us and our volunteers kindly in your Duas (prayers).

We also pray that Allah (SWT) guides us to provide this essential service to the best of our ability within the teachings of the Quran and the Sunnah for the benefit of the Muslim community.

Alhamdulillah, we now have three hearses in service.

The MFS Committee also acknowledges and deeply appreciates the time and effort of all the brothers & sisters who are volunteering their services to us on an ongoing basis. May Allah (SWT) reward you for your time and effort. This volunteer team has changed over the years based on personal and work circumstances.

In striving to provide the best service we can, we welcome any suggestions you may have to assist us in improving our services.

On a personal note, I wish to thank our dedicated team and acknowledge their unreserved passion for the work they do.

**MFS Directors:**

- Yussuf Chothia (Director)
- Dr. Mohammed Iqbal Sultan (Director)
- Hussin Goss (Director)
- Riaz Gutta (Secretary)

**Other team members:**

- Farida Lambat
- Ziyaad Chothia
- Arif Muhammad
- Ismail Bosthan
- Oum Youcef and her female ghusl team.

## Near Death

### **WHEN A MUSLIM IS AT THE POINT OF DEATH:**

Family members of the dying person and his/her closest friends should be informed and should be present at his side to help him turn his thoughts to Allah, encourage him very gently to repent, remind him about all the good deeds that he did, and about Allah's mercy and forgiveness. Those who are present near a dying Muslim should do the following:

- they should be kind and patient.
- they should never leave the person alone.
- they should give them hope and encouragement.

They should encourage the brother or sister very gently without insistence to recite the Shahada: "Ashadu anla ilaha il-lallahu, wa ashhadu anna Muhammadun abduhu wa Rasullullah", which means *'I bear witness that there is no God but Allah (SWT), and that the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) is his servant & messenger'* in a very kind and sincere manner as these may be their last words.

### **WHEN DEATH OCCURS:**

Many deaths occur in institutions like hospitals or nursing homes. There is occasionally a concern that a Muslim who dies in such an institution may not be treated in accordance with Islamic tradition especially when family members may not be present at the time of death.

If death is expected, the family may contact MFS at this



stage to facilitate arrangements. This reduces the stress at the time of death for the family.

There have been concerns relating to how the body of the deceased may be handled and this can be quite distressing to the family.

In order to alleviate these concerns and possible problems emerging, a number of guidelines are suggested, and initiatives set up to reduce this anxiety for all concerned.

Wherever possible, it is preferable that the body of the deceased be handled by staff of the same gender as the deceased.

Staff must always wear gloves and avoid unnecessary handling of the body of the deceased.

The body should **NOT** be washed in preparation for the funeral, except for any necessary cleansing which may be required for hygiene purposes.

The washing in preparation for burial is a very important duty which the deceased's family members or members of the community are obliged to perform.

When death comes the body should be handled with the utmost respect, gentleness and decency.

Kindly ensure that the following procedures have been carried out:

- Any tubes, false teeth, contact lenses or artificial limbs should be removed.

- Any incisions plugged so as to prevent a flow of blood or body fluid.
- Close the eyes of the deceased.
- Tie the lower jaw with a bandage or a strip of cloth tied on the top of the head in order that the mouth is held in a closed position.
- The ankles must be fastened together with a bandage or strip of cloth to avoid the lower limbs being left apart.
- Arms must be placed straight down the side of the body with the fingers straightened.
- The body, still fully clothed, should then be wrapped in a sheet.
- It is preferable that any person in the state of Janaabat (in need of compulsory bath), Haidh (menstruation) or Nifas (postnatal bleeding) should not be in the presence of or in close proximity to the body.
- Quranic recitations should not be performed near the body until after Ghusl (Bathing of the deceased) is completed.
- If death occurs in hospital, then the family should wait at the hospital until the MFS member arrives to uplift the Janaza or the body is transferred to the hospital mortuary before leaving.
- The staff should inform the doctor as soon as possible, to arrange for the Cause of Death Certificate (Form 9) at the earliest convenience.
- The nurse in the interim completes a Life Extinct Form.
- The funeral takes place as soon as possible so it is crucial that arrangements for this cause of death certificate be made as soon as possible.

- The body shall remain at the hospital ward or mortuary, until such time when the paperwork has been issued to release the body to the funeral director.
- Members of the family are encouraged to remain at the Hospital or Nursing home until appropriate arrangements for the Cause of Death Certificate have been made.

### **Important Note for the Nursing Home, Hospital or Doctor**

Kindly note that the Funeral takes place as soon as possible, usually ***within 24 hours***, but this may be as soon as 6 – 8 hours after death.

Therefore, there is usually some urgency in ensuring that the ***"Cause of Death"*** certificate be available as soon as possible please. Your understanding and assistance in this regard will be highly appreciated.

## STEPS TO FOLLOW WHEN A FAMILY MEMBER DIES

### DEATH AT HOME

CONTACT DECEASED'S DOCTOR  
(if NO family doctor -> contact Qld  
Ambulance / Queensland Police @ 10111)

CONTACT MFS

MFS WILL LIAISE WITH POLICE

### DEATH AT HOSPITAL OR NURSING HOME

CONTACT LOCAL MUSJID / MFS  
(will liaise with MFS)

GET DEATH CERTIFICATE  
FROM HOSPITAL DOCTOR

**MUSLIM FUNERAL SERVICES**  
WILL CONTACT FAMILY

Please **advise** the funeral director as soon as the **death certificate** is available

**MFS WILL ARRANGE TO PICK UP OF JANAZA**

PROCEED TO GHUSL FACILITY AT THE LOCAL MUSJID  
**MFS** will provide all paperwork for Burial

GHUSL AND JANAZA SALAH WILL BE PERFORMED

PROCEED TO THE CEMETERY FOR BURIAL

## Ghusl Procedure

When a Muslim dies, it is the responsibility of his family or other Muslims within the local community to wash and shroud the body according to the Islamic rites of washing the deceased. Usually at least three to five people will be involved with the actual Ghusl (washing and shrouding).

The persons who wash the deceased should:

1. Under NO circumstances ever discuss anything they see on the body of the deceased or become aware of as a result of being present during the Ghusl. This is an extremely important pre-requisite for being a Ghusl giver.
2. Be an adult Muslim, honest and trustworthy person.
3. Be of the same gender as the deceased i.e. if the deceased is male, then ONLY males should wash him.
4. For a child, either males or females may do the Ghusl.
5. Be familiar with the Islamic way of washing the deceased and be able to carry out the Ghusl.
6. It is recommended that those who performed the washing should make wudhu (ablution) first.

### **PLACE OF WASHING:**

The deceased's body should be washed in a clean, secluded, and private place where clean water and soap are available. Gloves must always be worn when handling and washing the deceased at ALL times.

The body of the deceased should be washed with water and, if available, camphor or lotus leaves to be used in the final wash.

The steps of the washing should be done at least three times any more odd number of times if necessary to cleanse appropriately.

Always be mindful of infection control and protecting the person performing the Ghusl.

Our Ghusl facility provides all the consumables including disposable gloves, aprons and face masks.

Bins for general rubbish as well as hazardous waste bins for any contaminated waste removed from the body are available. Only use the hazardous bins for contaminated waste as there is an additional fee incurred to dispose of this separately.

### **STEPS OF WASHING:**

**Privacy for the deceased** is a crucial and important requirement at all times during the Ghusl.

- the body of the deceased should be placed on a table or alike, the deceased's clothes should be removed, but the body should be covered with a separate sheet of cloth (satar) before removing clothing and at all times during the Ghusl.
- the *Auwra* (private parts) of the deceased should be covered with a sheet of cloth at all times (The aura of a male is from the belly button to the knee in the

- presence of males, for the female is from above the breast to the knee even in the presence of females)
- the head end and the upper body should be raised slightly to ensure the washing water with exudations from the body flows down and does not run back to the body.
  - remove any items or objects not already removed. These include watches, hospital or mortuary ID tags, wound dressings, IV lines, peg tubes, artificial limbs. If there is any active bleeding or wound discharge, then that may be padded and dressed.
  - the washer should start washing by saying: "Bismillah" (*In the name of Allah*)
  - the washer wears gloves and cleans away any impurities from the body using water. Then he or she should dispose of the gloves
  - the washer should take another pair of gloves, press lightly the stomach of the deceased so as to expel, if possible, any remnants from it, and then wash the body of all impurities using water. Then he should dispose of the gloves
  - the washer should take another pair of gloves, and wash the covered private parts, then dispose of the gloves.
  - with a clean pair of gloves, the washer should perform wudhu (ablution) for the deceased without inserting the water in the nose and in the mouth. May use a piece of wet cotton wool in a small roll to clean nose and front teeth.
  - the washer should clean the body with water and soap (if available), starting from the head (hair, face, and beard in men), then the upper right side of the body then the left side, after that the lower right side then the lower left

- In the case of a female, her hair should be loosened, washed, combed, and be either placed in front to cover the breasts if long enough or braided in three braids, and placed behind her back.
- the washing should be done three times, or five times, or seven times, as needed, providing that after washing the head, wash the right side before the left, and the upper parts before the lower ones.
- in the last wash, the washer may use camphor, lotus leaves or some perfume with the water.
- after that the body should be dried with clean towel
- then the body should be covered with the second white sheet (satar). The *Auwra* must be kept covered at all times.
- get ready to start the shrouding.

**SPECIAL NOTE:** In case the deceased is a female in her menstrual period or have childbirth bleeding, padding should be used to prevent blood from leaving the body.

**NOTE:**

It is recommended that those who performed the washing should take a bath after performing the Ghusl.

There is no Islamic teaching of reading of the Quran or of making any special Dhikr during the Ghusl



# The Kaffan



## **AL-KAFFAN (SHROUDING THE DECEASED MUSLIM)**

Shrouding should start immediately after washing the body of the deceased. It is recommended to use white sheets from inexpensive material. Extravagance is not recommended in the Kaffan (Shroud). All measurements may vary depending on the stature of the deceased. The material of the sheet should not have any stitching, not be silk, nor should any gold be used.

Our MFS Facility has pre-cut and packed male and female adult Kaffans. These are placed in the order of use and then folded and packed as shown above. When the pack is opened and unfolded it is already ready to be used in the correct layer order.

We also have a roll of fabric available should you need to cut a specific size.

## A) THE KAFAN OF A MALE

The Kaffan of a male should consist of three white wrapping sheets, and 3-5 tie strips

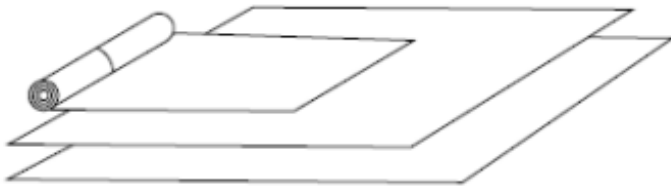
- Outer sheet - Lifafah
- Second sheet - Izaar
- Third sheet - Qamees (shirt)
- 3-5 ties
- 2 smaller sheets (satar) used cover the private parts (*Auwra*) one before and the other after the Ghusl.

### ORDER OF MALE KAFN:

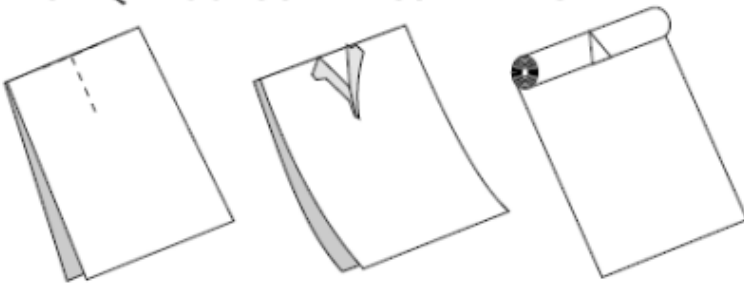
Qamis

Izar

Lifafah



### HOW QAMIS SHOULD BE CUT AND FOLDED



## STEPS OF SHROUDING:

- The wrapping sheets should be opened and spread out one on the top of the other (if using one of our pre-packed Kaffans, this is already done for you)
- Roll up the front half of the top sheet towards the head - Qamees (shirt)
- The deceased, covered with a sheet (satar), is lifted, and laid on his back on this top sheet (Qamees)
- The Qamees is then unrolled over the front of the body and once the body is covered then remove the satar (covering sheet)
- Some scent or perfume or sandal wood paste may be put on those parts of the body upon which one rests during prostration, that is the forehead, tip of the nose, hands, knees, and beneath the toes of the feet.
- If it is possible the deceased's left hand should be placed on his chest, then put his right hand on the left hand like the way in the Salah (Prayer). If not place the hands on the side of the body.
- The edge of the next sheet (Izaar) is then folded over the deceased right side, then the other edge over his left side.
- Then the last sheet (Lifafah) should be folded the same way.
- These sheets should be fastened with a piece of cloth (tie ropes), one above the head, another under the feet, and two around the body.
- This completes the shrouding for the male.

## B) THE KAFAN OF A FEMALE

The Kaffan of a female should consist of five white garments and 3-5 ties

- Outermost sheet - Lifafah
- Second sheet - Sinaband - to cover from under armpits to thighs.
- Third sheet - Izaar
- Fourth layer - Qamees
- Last piece - Orni - to cover head and hair.
- 3-5 ties
- 2 smaller sheets (satar) used cover the private parts one before and the other after the Ghusl.

### ORDER OF FEMALE KAFN:

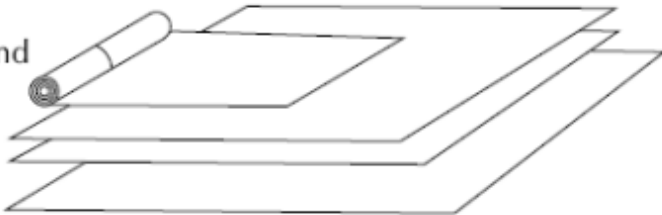
Orhni (not shown)

Qamis

Izar

Sinaband

Lifafah



### STEPS OF SHROUDING:

- All the sheets should be spread out in layers (if you are using our pre-packed Kaffans this is already done for you)
- Roll up the front half of the top sheet towards the head – Qamees (shirt)

- The deceased, covered with a sheet (satar), is lifted and laid on her back on this top sheet (Qamees)
- The Qamees is then unrolled over the front of the body and once the body is covered then remove the satar (covering sheet)
- some scent or perfume may be put on those parts of the body upon which one rests during prostration, that is the forehead, nose, hands, knees, and feet.
- the Sinaband (loin cloth) is bound round (acts like underwear).
- Put the head veil.
- the deceased's left hand should be placed on her chest, then put her right hand on the left hand like the way in the Salah (Prayer)
- the edge of the Izaar sheet is folded over the deceased right side, then the other edge over his left side.
- then the last (Lifafah) sheet should be folded the same way
- these sheets should be fastened with a piece of cloth (tie ropes), one above the head, another under the feet, and three around the body.

## **MALE KAFFAN MEASUREMENTS:**

### **No.1 SATAR (Cover during Ghusl)**

(Size 150cm\*120cm)

TO COVER PRIVATE PARTS WHILE PERFORMING GHUSL

MALES: from NAVEL to below KNEES

### **No.2 SATAR (Cover after Ghusl)**

(Size 150cm\*120cm)

TO COVER PRIVATE PARTS AFTER GHUSL AND REMOVE AFTER

QAMEES SHIRT IS PUT ON

### **No.3 LIFAFAH (CHADAR)**

(Size: Length 240cm \* 150-180cm wide – 15cm longer than Izaar)

TO COVER WHOLE BODY

(First Chadar to be laid after GHUSL – will form outermost cover)

### **No.4 IZAAR (CHADAR)**

(Size: Length 180cm \* 150-180cm wide )

TO COVER FROM HEAD TO TOE

(Second Chadar to be laid after GHUSL)

### **No.5 QAMEES - SHIRT**

(Size: Length 240 (fold in ½) \* 90cm wide with cut for head)

TO COVER SHOULDER TO KNEES

(Third layer to be laid after GHUSL)

## **FEMALE KAFFAN MEASUREMENTS:**

### **No.1 SATAR (Cover during Ghusl)**

(Size 150cm\*120cm)

TO COVER PRIVATE PARTS WHILE PERFORMING GHUSL

FEMALE: from above BREAST to ANKLES

### **No.2 SATAR (Cover after Ghusl)**

(Size 150cm\*120cm)

TO COVER PRIVATE PARTS AFTER GHUSL AND

REMOVE AFTER QAMEES SHIRT IS PUT ON

### **No.3 LIFAFAH (CHADAR)**

(Size: Length 240cm \* 150-180cm wide – 15cm longer than Izaar)

TO COVER WHOLE BODY

(First Chadar to be laid after GHUSL – will form outermost cover)

### **No.4 SINABAND**

Size Length 180-225cm \* 90cm wide

TO COVER FROM UNDER ARMPITS TO THIGHS

### **No.5 IZAAR (CHADAR)**

(Size: Length 180cm \* 150-180cm wide )

TO COVER FROM HEAD TO TOE

(Second Chadar to be laid after GHUSL)

### **No.6 QAMEES - SHIRT**

(Size: Length 240 (folded in ½) \* 90cm wide with cut for head)

TO COVER SHOULDER TO KNEES

(Third layer to be laid after GHUSL)

### **No.7 ORNI**

(Size Length 140 \* 90cm wide)

TO COVER HEAD AND HAIR OVER BREAST

## **SPECIAL CASES:**

### **1) Miscarried Foetus:**

The general principle regarding a stillborn is, if the foetus was dead in the uterus or was not alive at the time of birth then there is no Ghusl or Salatul Janaza. The foetus is wrapped in a white cloth and buried.

Other opinions:

- If the foetus is less than four months old (Mother was pregnant for less than four months), then the foetus may not be washed; the foetus should be wrapped in a piece of white cloth and buried. Then there is no Salatul Janaza for this foetus.
- If the foetus is more than four months old (Mother was pregnant for more than four months), then the foetus may be washed, shrouded (Using one or two winding sheets to cover the whole body), and then Muslims have the choice whether to perform Salatul Janaza or not.

### **2) Children:**

A) Before reaching the age of puberty, a child may be washed by males or females. Shrouding a child for females use a shirt and two winding sheets and for males two or three winding sheets may be used.

B) For those children who reached the age of puberty, they should be dealt with as an adult (Female child as for female adult, and male child as for male adult), and then



Salatul Janaza be performed.

### **3) Martyr:**

The body of a Martyr should not be washed, nor be shrouded but buried with the same clothes that people found him with.

The strongest opinion of Muslim scholars is not to offer Salatul Janaza for martyrs since Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H) did not offer it for the martyrs of the battle of Uhud.

## Salatul Janaza

A divine service is held over the dead body of every Muslim, young or old, even of infants who have lived only a few minutes. When the soul leaves the body, preparations are made for bidding him or her the last farewell.

It is highly recommended that, after washing and shrouding the body of the deceased, the body not to be kept long, but rather taken as soon as possible, prayed for, and then buried.

Salatul Janaza is required to be performed in congregation to request pardon for and pray for the deceased.

It is preferable that Salatul Janaza be performed outside the Mosque or the Musallah (Prayer room), like in the

Mosque activity rooms or courtyards.

Salatul Janaza is a collective obligation. A Muslim should not hesitate to participate in it, whether or not the deceased or his relatives are known to him.

Salatul Janaza is said silently, except the Takbeer and Tasleem. All conditions for regular Salah are required in Salatul Janaza such as Tahara, Wudhu, clean body and clothes, neeyah (intention), and facing the Qiblah.

There are specific times when it is prohibited to perform Salatul Janaza, unless it becomes necessary, due to the condition of the body, to perform it quickly and then bury the body.

These prohibited times are:

- From sunrise until the sun is fully risen
- At the zenith of the sun (the sun at meridian), until it passes the meridian.
- From when the sun pales before sunset until it has set.

### **STEPS OF SALATUL JANAZAH:**

Muslims should form a minimum of three lines facing the Qiblah. The one who leads the Salah is the leader or his deputy, or the deceased's father.

If there is only one Muslim with the Imam, he should stand behind the Imam.

The body or bodies if more than one deceased, should be placed in front of the person who leads the prayer.

In case there are more than one deceased (males and females), then the female should be placed in the first row in the direction of the Qiblah, then the male in the following row, then the Imam.

For example: If there are - a deceased Muslim male, a female, a young girl, and a young boy, then behind the Qiblah, first place the body of the young girl, then the adult female, then the young boy, then the adult male, so the bodies are arranged in a way that female bodies are first, then the males.

The Imam should stand by the middle of a female body, and by the head for a male body, this is due to the Hadith in which Anas related that Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) leading Salatul Janaza for a dead male, the Prophet (PBUH) stood in front of the deceased head, and for a dead female, the Prophet (PBUH) stood in front of the middle of her body. ( Authentic-Abu Dawood). In another Hadith Samura bin Jundub said when Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) made Salatul Janaza for a dead Muslim female, he stood in front of her waist (Muslim).

Behind the Imam, males stand in lines, then children, then females.

There are NO Rukuh, Sujud, Athan, or Iqama.

- Having the appropriate niyyah (Intention), raise your hands in the usual manner:
- Say "Allahu Akbar"

- Fold your right hand over the left hand in the usual manner.
- Recite the Thana silently (for Shafi'i madhab - recite Surah Fateha)
- Then say: "Allahu Akbar".
- Then recite the Durood-e-Ibrahim.
- Then say: "Allahu Akbar".
- Then make Dua' (Supplicate) for the deceased.
- Then say: "Allahu Akbar".
- The Imam will then make salam.
- Then make Dua (supplicate) for all dead Muslims.

The Tashahud is: *(Allahumma sallee ala-Muhammad wa'ala alee Muhammad kama sallayta ala Ibrahim wa ala alee Ibrahim, wa barik ala Muhammad wa'ala alee Muhammad kama barakta ala Ibrahim wa ala alee Ibrahim, innaka hamidun Majeed).*

This means: " O Allah! Grant peace to Muhammad and his family as you did to Ibrahim and his family. O Allah! Bless Muhammad and his family as you blessed Ibrahim and his family. Truly you are Most Glorious and Most Praiseworthy".

In the case of a dead baby or young child, make Dua (supplicate) for his or her parents.

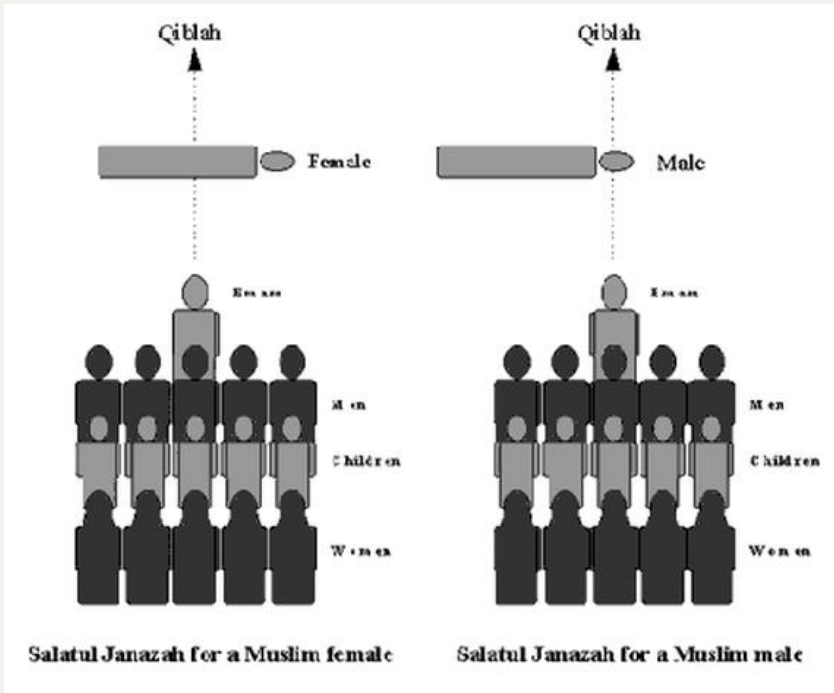
Then say: "Assalamu alaikum", like you say in any other Salah. Tasleem is said twice for the Hanafi madhab once for the others.

**NOTE:**

Salatul Janaza in absentia is permissible for a person who has died overseas or elsewhere.

To use a coffin (box) is usually not permissible, unless there is necessity to use it, such as the body of the deceased is damaged, or for health reasons, or when the grave is wet and cannot be dried.

The general principle is that the deceased be placed on the ground.



## Burial Process

Islam has a unique style of building graves and cemeteries that is characterized by humility, simplicity, and economy in costs and that avoids glorifying the dead with elaborate monuments.

It is of great importance that a special cemetery be devoted exclusively for the use of Muslims. Muslims should not be buried in the cemeteries of non-Muslims, nor should non-Muslims be buried in a Muslim cemetery.

The deceased should be buried in the locality in which he lived. It is undesirable to take the body to the person's own country or to another city.

In Muslim cemeteries, there are two types of graves with a few variations internally:

**Al-Shaqq:** is to make a deep horizontal hole in the ground.

**Al-Lahed:** is to make a deep horizontal hole in the ground, then in the bottom make a side horizontal hole big enough to slide the whole body in horizontally.

Both types are used, but it is preferable to use Al-Lahed if the land is solid.

However there may be some variation in different countries depending on local soil type and local conditions.

The burial should be done as soon as possible after death, but the following times should be avoided: Late at night, from sunrise until the sun is fully risen, at the zenith of the sun (the sun at the meridian), until it passes the meridian, when the sun pales before sunset until it has set.

During these times burying is prohibited unless there is an urgent necessity, according to the Hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) that was narrated by (Muslim).

### **STEPS OF BURIAL:**

It is important to observe workplace health and safety rules both for the family, friends and funeral directors.

Family members entering the grave to lower the body in, are advised to use a step ladder to enter and exit the grave.

Kindly note that carrying the Janaza and lowering into the ground is an Islamic requirement and that MFS Ltd is not responsible for any injuries sustained during this process by family, friends or volunteers.

A grave is dug deep enough to totally conceal the body of the deceased, in Brisbane about 1.7m deep

The grave should be always be perpendicular to the direction of Qiblah.

Only men are allowed to perform the burial.  
All Muslims who are present should remember death, the hereafter, and that some day he too will be buried.

They should keep quiet (No talking unless it is necessary). The deceased's male relatives are expected to put the body in the grave. The placing of the body in the grave should be carried out only by Muslim men.

A female is placed in her grave either by her sons, her father, her brothers, her uncle or by her husband.

The deceased's body should be interred into the grave from the direction where the feet will be (from the rear of the grave).

Those who inter / bury the body of the deceased in the grave should say - Bismillahi wa ala millati rasulil llah, which means: "*In the name of Allah and in the faith of the Messenger of Allah*".

The deceased's body should rest on his right side, and should be close to the wall and supported so that the body will not fall back, the deceased's face should be towards the Qiblah.

Those who put the deceased in the grave should not have had sexual intercourse with their wives the night before.

According to the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Anas Ibn Malik related that: " During the burial of the daughter of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was sitting, tears coming out from eyes, he asked us: " Who did not have sexual intercourse with his wife last night?" Abu Talha answered: " I, Prophet Muhammad ", then Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said to him: " You get down in the grave and lay her down" (Bukhari).



They should undo the tie on the head and the feet.

They should put above the body a layer of wood or big stones, so that earth will not be put directly on the body when they fill the grave with earth.

After the body is totally covered, it is desirable to throw three handfuls of soil into the grave.

Then the grave should be filled up with sand.

It is permissible to put a simple small headstone or grave marker to identify the grave.

It is also Sunnah to make the grave convex from sand, according to the Hadith that was reported by Sofyan who said: " That I saw the grave of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is made convex" (Bukhari), convex out of sand.

Just after the burial, the deceased's relatives may remain at the cemetery for a while and make Dua (supplicate) for the deceased, since he or she is being questioned by the Angels, soon after burial.

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in an authentic Hadith said: *"Make Dua' of Istighfar (supplicate for forgiveness) for your brother and request steadfastness for him because he is now being questioned "* (Authentic -Abu Dawood).

## **IMPORTANT RULES IN THE CEMETERY**

It is important to observe workplace health and safety

rules both for the family, friends and funeral directors. It is prohibited to step over, lean, or sit on a grave.

It is prohibited to build any form of construction on the grave, or decorate the grave.

From the authentic traditions, it is clear that to erect domes over graves or build mausoleums or Mosques on graves is strictly forbidden. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said: " Do not build Mosques in the graveyard " (Muslim).

It is prohibited to plaster the grave, whitewash the grave, or use baked stones.

It is prohibited to pray facing towards the graves.

Abu Martad al-Ghanawi reported that Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said: " Do not pray facing towards the graves " (Muslim).

Women should not be attending the burial, however in some cultures this is permitted.

This is according to the authentic Hadith of Um-Atiyah who reported that we were forbidden to accompany funeral processions. (Bukhari & Muslim).

It is prohibited to cremate the body of dead Muslim, even if the deceased requested it before his death.

Performing autopsy on a dead Muslim is totally prohibited, unless it is required for medico-legal reasons.

# Cemetery



There are a few cemeteries in South East Queensland with a designated Muslim section in the cemetery.

In Brisbane the Mt Gravatt and Hemmant Cemetery, in Logan Council at the Beenleigh Cemetery in Logan, on the Gold Coast at the Southport and Coomera Cemetery, and the Toowoomba Cemetery.

Whist we use either of these for adult funerals, we have used the Beenleigh Cemetery for stillborns in the past and now have a section in Mt Gravatt specifically for stillborn, infant and child burials.

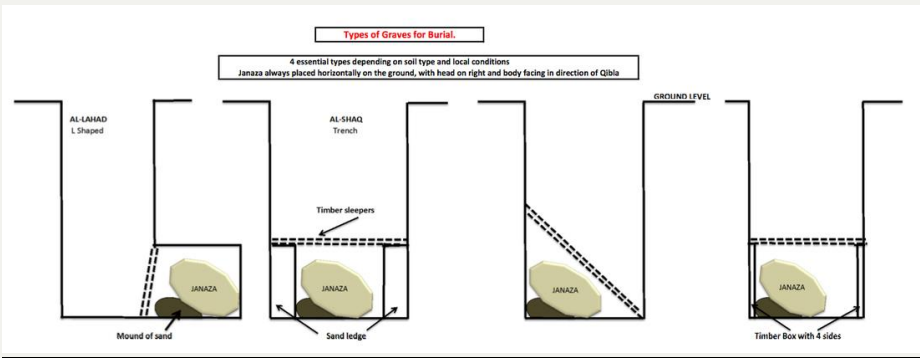
The internal grave design varies in different countries around the world, and also varies within the same country

in its different cemeteries, depending on the soil type in that locality.

There is no requirement Islamically to have any tomb, block or timber structure within the grave. The only requirement is that the body be buried directly on the ground (sand) and to avoid direct contact of the sand with the top of the Janaza at the time of burial.

The Sunnah method is Al-Lahad and is still used in some countries.

The types of graves vary depending on the soil type. There are 4 basic types and MFS uses the fourth option. Below is a diagram of the different internal layouts. MFS uses the fourth example.



This system is intended to be simple and practical and has been local council approved.

We have had discussions with several Imams, including a meeting with the Council of Imams Queensland, and have their full approval for the system we utilise.

## The Period of Iddah

Iddah is prescribed for widows in order to mourn the death of their husbands, observe their memory, fulfil any obligations toward them, and to see if the widow is pregnant or not.

*Um Atiyyah reported that the Messenger of Allah said; "A woman should not mourn for any deceased person for more than three days, except in the case of her husband's death, which she may mourn for a period of four months and ten days. Such a woman in mourning is not to wear any fancy, bright clothes, but only plain clothes, not use any adornment or make-up, nor use perfume, nor die her hands or feet with Henna " (Bukhari & Muslim).*

*If the widow is pregnant, then her waiting period ends when she delivers her baby, according to Allah's command in the Quran: "And for those who are pregnant, their Iddah is until they deliver" (Quran 65:4).*

### DURATION OF IDDA

- PREGNANT - Until Delivery
- NOT PREGNANT - Four Months and Ten Days

So, a widow during the Iddah should:

- Live and sleep in her home, and only leave when it is necessary.
- She should not wear fancy bright clothes, not wear jewellery, not use makeup including eyeliners (kohl), not use perfume.

This is not a time to deprive herself from lawful things or to suffer unduly. It is a time to remember the memories of her husband, make Dua for him, think about herself and plan for the future.

## Ghusl Room



*Ghusl room at our Kuraby facility*

MFS now has a new Ghusl facility adjacent to the Kuraby Masjid, which includes the Ghusl room, cold room, storeroom and hearse parking all under one roof. Our office is still located within the Masjid.

The page on our website details the essential

requirements for a GHUSL room at any facility.

The list provided below will assist a regional centre to establish a Ghusl room in your town Insha-Allah.

The Ghusl Room is usually a designated area at the local Islamic centre or mosque or if this is not available in a regional area then you may make arrangements with the local Funeral Director to use their facility. MFS is a member of AFDA, and we would be happy to establish this relationship with one of our funeral director colleagues in smaller regional towns on your organisation's behalf.

GHUSL ROOM Equipment and minimum accessories:

- The GHUSL room.
- Washing Table - usually stainless steel. These are available commercially or may be made to specification and it may be fixed or portable, with a water outlet which may be plumbed in or have a container to collect and dispose of the used water.
- Warm water supply
- Bucket and jug.
- Disposable latex gloves - S, M, L, XL
- Disposable Plastic aprons
- Cotton wool
- Cloth disposable wipes or towels
- Face Masks should be available.
- Soap (Liquid or bar)
- Camphor
- Scissors
- Attar
- Scissors

- Kaffan - this may be a roll of white calico or cotton fabric which may be cut as required or you may purchase ready cut and pre-packed Kaffan.

NB: if you are a regional Islamic centre, MFS will supply a set male and a female pre-packed Kaffans free of charge. You may then purchase further Kaffans as required for \$150 per set.

- The "Casket" or Janaza box:

The *Janaza box* or *casket* or *cartel*, is the box in which we transfer the deceased after the Ghusl (washing and shrouding) to the mosque for the Janaza Salah and then to the cemetery. This container is usually re-usable and is used for all the funerals.

This may also be a commercially available coffin with handles to lift and carry the deceased or as is the case with us and other organisations, where a custom-made aluminium tray with handles and a cage like lid is used. This is covered with a cloth or velvet cover.

## Funeral costs

The cost of a funeral in Australia usually comes as a surprise to members of our community, in particular for those who have migrated from countries where there is no charge for a funeral.

The bulk of the fee for a funeral conducted by MFS is related to the local council fees & charges (over 2/3), and these vary across the various local councils. The councils



always have additional fees for after hour and weekend burials.

### **ADULT FEES:**

All local council fees increase annually on the 1st July.

Office hour fees are based on funeral during normal office hours - Monday to Friday 8am till 4pm.

The fees vary depending the time and day of burial and the council involved.

MFS does NOT charge any additional fees and charges for after hour and weekend burials.

All fees are expected to be paid on the day of the funeral and appropriate arrangements must be confirmed with an MFS member.

MFS operates on a *not for profit* basis and none of its Directors benefit in anyway financially from any proceeds.

### **STILLBORN and INFANT FUNERAL FEES:**

Stillborn and infants are interred in a dedicated area in the Muslim section at Mt Gravatt Cemetery for a minimal fee. Previously stillborn fetuses were interred in a designated, non-denominational section at Beenleigh Cemetery

The fees quoted on our website cover the *complete funeral* including all MFS Fees, ghusl facility, kaffan, grave preparation and the council Fees.

Fees are updated annually based on Council fee changes. For our current fees please see our website <https://www.mfs.asn.au/costs.html>

## Forms

All forms are available on our website <https://www.mfs.asn.au/forms.html>

- Click on the links on the website.
  - The online forms must be completed and submitted online.
  - The Application and Consent form is mandatory before we can make any arrangements.
  - Click submit and the forms will be sent electronically to MFS.
  - All other forms should be printed, completed, signed, scanned emailed to [admin@mfs.asn.au](mailto:admin@mfs.asn.au)
  - Information requested on the forms are required for the grave purchase from the City Council and death certificate application from the Registry of Births, Deaths, and Marriages
- 
- Adult Funeral Application
  - Stillborn / Child Funeral Application
  - Authority to Release of Body Consent
  - Brisbane City Council Application Form
  - Logan City Council Beenleigh Cemetery
  - Gold Coast City Council

The official death certificate from the Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages application is submitted by MFS to the department. This is usually submitted after the burial, provided the next of kin has completed all of the required forms.

Some forms MUST be completed before we can make any of necessary arrangements.

Original must be handed in to MFS when we meet.

Please contact MFS at 1300 896 786 once submitted.

## Funeral Savings Plan:

We have had several requests over the years for a Funeral fund from members of our community, into which members may pre-pay for their funeral expenses or make regular contributions via a debit order into the fund.

Most of these requests were from the elderly or people living on their own who expressed the initial interest, but as younger members realise the costs of a funeral it becomes apparent that we all have to make appropriate plans for the inevitable.

After consultation it was decided to establish a Funeral Savings Fund, and Alhamdulillah our constitution was approved by ASIC to manage such a fund.

Alhamdu-lillah in addition to individuals we now have communities who have also come together to establish a "Community Savings Plan" through MFS.

One example of this is the Somalian community elders who have taken the initiative on behalf of their community to establish a communal fund. They have a group of 100 members who have contributed \$100 each to and have raised an initial amount to cover the cost of at least 2 funerals within their community.

As these funds are utilised, they re-contribute to top up the fund. This has reduced the burden on their individual members significantly and they have done excellent work in this regard. May Allah SWT reward their effort.

This is exclusively a saving fund and not an insurance plan of any sort.

The details are in the *pdf document* on our website.

Kindly contact us should you any more information or clarification of the fund.

Muslim Funeral Services Ltd (MFS) has established and manages a Funeral Savings Fund.

The fund has been established as a savings fund for members of the Muslim community. Anyone applying to join the Funeral Savings Fund will also become a member of MFS and will make a contribution in the form of a subscription into the fund, towards the payment of the cost of their funeral either in part or in full, depending on the amount contributed into the fund and the cost of the funeral at the time of death.

Members may make a lump sum contribution or quarterly contributions as arranged.

Under all circumstance the financial liability of the company and its directors will be limited to the total amount contributed into the fund by the member.

The cost of the funeral in South East Queensland will change periodically depending on the fees and charges from the local councils and those of the funeral director. These council fees also differ between the various local councils. Members may contact MFS from time to time to get an estimate of these fees and any changes periodically.

The average fees quoted will at all times be based on the Mt Gravatt Cemetery fees as levied by the Brisbane City council.

Any deficit between the cost of the funeral and contribution made into the fund at the time of death will have to be paid to MFS at the time of the funeral by the next of kin of the deceased.

The member may also nominate a family member as a beneficiary of the fund if the death of the nominated beneficiary precedes that of the principal member.

There will be no fees and charges for the management of the fund except in the case of any charges incurred for costs applied by your banking institution for establishing a debit order.

In the event of the death of the member occurring outside of the South East Queensland area, then the amount of

the subscription contributed into the fund will be paid to the nominated next of kin or into the estate of the deceased.

It is the responsibility of the member to advise MFS of any changes to the details provided. The member agrees to be contacted by MFS Ltd or its nominated representative using the details provided.

It is also the responsibility of the member to ensure that there adequate funds available in the nominated bank account, in the case of the quarterly debit orders.

The suggested lump sum in 2024 would be \$6500 - \$8000 for burials taking place at the Mt Gravatt cemetery.

The suggested quarterly contribution would be as follows at present based on your age:

AGE:	Quarterly Contribution:
20-30	\$ 75
30-40	\$ 100
40-50	\$ 125
50-60	\$ 150
60-70	\$ 175
Over 75	\$ 6500 - \$ 8000 once off payment

Quarterly payments will occur via a direct debit order

Any remaining funds in the members account after payment of funeral expenses incurred at death will be reimbursed to the nominated next of kin of the deceased.

The member may opt to donate these remaining funds to MFS to be used charitably to pay for the funeral of a Muslim who is financially disadvantaged and cannot afford to pay for their funeral.

At any point should the quarterly contributions made by the member into their account have significantly exceeded the estimate of the funeral at that point in time, then the member may if he/she so wishes discuss this with MFS and mutually agree to suspend contributions for a specified period of time, whilst at all times understanding that the liability of MFS or its directors will be limited to funds available in the members account when necessary.

MFS Ltd is a public company limited by guarantee, established to operate as a funeral director and to manage a Funeral Savings Fund.

Your next of kin will make decisions regarding the Ghush facility and Cemetery when necessary.

The Fund is a Savings Fund and it is not an Insurance plan of any sort.

Any changes to this agreement will only be effective if made in writing.

## Frequently Asked Questions:

Some of the questions we've been asked so far are listed below.

The circumstances around each family, and the death of a loved one is unique and different. If your question is not answered below or you need **any** information please [contact us](#), so that we can be more specific.

In Islam the entire funeral process is a community responsibility, so you will note significant close family and community assistance for the process and the family may do as much or as little as they prefer. The entire process is intended to be very simple, with plenty of support from family and friends.

GHUSL = washing and shrouding process

KAFFAN = white wrapping shroud

JANAZA = Body of the deceased

JANAZA SALAH = Funeral prayer for the deceased, takes place after Ghusl and before the burial process

DAFAN = Burial process

- **What do I do if death is expected?**

If there is a family member who is ill or is expected to die soon, it is recommended that you contact MFS to get adequate information in preparation for death and the funeral process. There is some information on the [near](#)



[death](#) page which will also be useful for the hospital, doctor or nursing home.

Discuss this information with the doctor or hospital, so that they are made aware of your beliefs and also so that they understand the **urgency** in making the ‘**cause of death certificate**’ available

- **Are there any forms I need to complete?**

You may complete the application and consent form before death so that we have adequate information to do the necessary grave bookings as soon as death occurs. There are additional forms which the next of kin is required to complete and sign, some of which may also be completed before death. See the [Forms](#) page.

- **What do I do when death occurs?**

Contact MFS as soon as possible even if this is out of office hours or on a weekend. Ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to get the cause of death certificate available as soon as possible. This is crucial because we cannot proceed to make all the arrangements without this document.

*In Australia we need to make the doctor and staff aware of this urgency. Non-Muslim funerals are usually delayed for several days, so the staff are not familiar with the urgency for Muslims and usually have the death certificate available even a day or two later for non-Muslims. They are almost always most accommodating if they are advised of this early.*

- **What if death occurs at home?**

Again, if death is expected follow the above process. If death is sudden or unexpected contact the regular GP or call QAS on 000. If the doctor is able to ascertain the cause of death and is willing to do the death certificate, then the Ambulance and police will usually allow MFS to pick up the body of the deceased.

If there is no regular GP or the cause of death could not be ascertained then the Police will arrange for the government approved funeral director to collect the Janaza and transfer to the state mortuary - the John Tonge Centre in Coopers Plains.

Please contact MFS and attempts to assist or expedite some processes may be possible.

- **What happens at the mortuary?**

The state coroner will assess the individual case and determine if a postmortem needs to be done. It is important that the Coroner's office is advised that in Islam it is preferred not to have a postmortem performed, unless it is absolutely necessary or under suspicious circumstances for medico-legal purposes. There are instances of non-suspicious death where the Coroner may accede to the family's request to do an external examination only, and not necessarily perform an open postmortem.

It is also important to advise the police and the Coroner's office of the Islamic custom of burying the deceased as soon as possible and that any assistance in expediting the process will be highly appreciated.

- **What is the next step?**

MFS will arrange to pick up the Janaza (deceased) and transfer to the Ghusl facility/mosque of your choice. We will also complete all the necessary forms and arrange for burial.

- **Where does the Ghusl take place?**

MFS operates the Ghusl facility at the Kuraby Mosque, 1408 Beenleigh Road, Kuraby. You may choose to have this done at any other mosque which has the necessary facilities. Some of these include Holland Park mosque, Darra mosque.

- **Who performs the Ghusl?**

It is always good to have the close family members perform or assist with the Ghusl, however if this is not possible most facilities do have a list of volunteers who will willingly perform this role.

- **Who provides the Kaffan?**

Most Ghusl facilities have a supply of the Kaffan available, so it is not usually necessary for the family to arrange this. MFS is happy to supply Kaffans at any time, should anyone prefer to pre-purchase the Kaffan. We have pre-cut pre-packed Kaffans for males and females available for \$150 each.

- **Can women attend the funeral?**

Most of the mosques do have a ladies section and the close family female members may come to the mosque, where they will congregate in the female section. It is not obligatory for females to perform the funeral prayer.

However, it is generally not customary for women to attend the cemetery or graveside burial, are encouraged

not to attend the cemetery. But in some customs, this may be acceptable.

- **Can a non-Muslim attend the funeral?**

Yes, a non-Muslim may attend the funeral. As in any other faith it is expected that anyone attending the mosque dress modestly and this applies to both men and women and the men may attend the cemetery to observe the burial.

- **How does the burial take place?**

In Islam the deceased are buried and there is no cremation at all. There is no requirement to bury in a coffin. However, depending on where in the world we bury the actual internal grave may vary slightly. In Brisbane once the grave is dug by the council, then the local burial committee arranges to prepare the grave internally with a four-sided box or now use Timber sleeper slats placed at 45 degrees along the length of the grave covering the deceased. The body is then lowered into the grave by the close family members and then covered by timber sleepers and eventually covered by soil. The initial filling is done by the family and mourners who wish to do this using shovels. The balance is filled by the local council machinery. The body of the deceased **MUST** always be buried directly on the ground.

The grave is usually designed / dug so that the deceased is usually laid in the ground and slightly tilted towards the right and the body faces towards the direction of the Qiblah (Mecca in Saudi Arabia) which is Australia is west of northwest. So, the direction of the grave in Australia is north -> south with the head of the deceased lying on the

northern end.

- **Do we use a lowering device?**

The body of the deceased is usually manually lowered into the grave

- **Who goes into the grave?**

Usually at least three (depending on the weight of the deceased may even be four) close family members go into the grave first and they assisted from above to lower the body gently into the grave. Once the body is properly placed then one member will remain into place the timbers sleeper board and come out once this is done.

- **Do you have a tombstone?**

It is not customary to have a tombstone, although a simple edge to the grave and a plaque at the head end is acceptable to identify the grave.

- **Do you have floral arrangement placed on the coffin or grave?**

- 

It is not customary to have the coffin draped / decorated with floral arrangements. However, some cultural practices do place flowers on the grave and the family may take this to the cemetery if they so choose.

- **Can any items be placed in the Grave?**

It is not permissible to bury the decease with any items of jewellery or personal items. Only the shrouded body goes into the grave. All other effects including rings, jewellery, false teeth etc are usually removed on death before the Ghusl.

## My Funeral Wish



Over recent years many sisters in mixed marriages in particular expressed their concerns about whether their burial wishes to be buried as Muslims will be fulfilled. Their requests for a document of some sort which records their wish has led to us adding this service.

To assist in addressing this MFS has designed this document to record their wish about their funeral and burial process.

This is of particular significance in the case of mixed marriages, where there is concern that the surviving partner may not fully understand your wish.

Kindly sign a statutory declaration confirming details of your wish and leave with close family, lawyer and send a copy to Muslim Funeral Services.

Please see our website for further information @ <https://www.mfs.asn.au/my-funeral-wish.html>

## The Islamic Will



We have had several requests for an Islamic Will.

Mr. Iqbal Lambat has been instrumental in developing an Islamic Will Kit compatible with Australian Law.

MFS has included details of the Will Kit with his permission.

Both MFS and Mr Lambat recommend that you should always seek legal advice regarding your individual circumstances.

PDF copy of the Islamic Will Kit is available on our website at <https://www.mfs.asn.au/islamic-will.html>

## Contact Us:

Muslim Funeral Services Ltd

T: 1300 896 786 (24 hours)

F: 07 3319 6750

E: [admin@mfs.asn.au](mailto:admin@mfs.asn.au)

W: [www.mfs.asn.au](http://www.mfs.asn.au)

The information in this booklet is provided for the benefit of the Ummah, in particular for those who may not have access to the web.

All of the information, with more links and forms are available on our website and are being constantly updated.

Please feel free to contact us at any time for any information you may require. For Funerals we are available 24/7 Insha-Allah.

Kindly remember our entire team including our many volunteers in your Duas.

### **Dr Mohammed Iqbal Sultan** (MBChB, FRACGP)

- ❖ Muslim Funeral Services Ltd - Director
- ❖ Brisbane Muslim Burial Services Inc. – President
- ❖ Crescents of Brisbane Inc – Co-Founder | Treasurer
- ❖ Brisbane Islamic Centre – Director | Vice-President
- ❖ LVIC Pty Ltd (Lockyer Valley Islamic Centre) – Director
- ❖ Lockyer Valley Islamic Association Inc – Treasurer

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