

INFORMATION FOR IDENTIFIERS

Identification of the Deceased

1. The death of your relative/friend is reportable to the Coroner under the Coroners Ordinance (Cap. 504). A police officer will make arrangement with you to attend the Public Mortuary for identification purpose.
2. The time for case registration is between 9 a.m. and 10 a.m. on any working day. Please attend the Public Mortuary according to the instruction given by the Police and register at the reception counter of the Public Mortuary with the police officer in charge of the case within that period of time. Please bring along the identification document and **any relevant medical records** of the Deceased (e.g. discharge summary from hospitals, letters from attending doctors, etc.).
3. At the reception counter, the mortuary staff will request you to complete a form providing the personal particulars of the Deceased for registration purpose. You will also be asked whether the body is to be buried or cremated. If you wish the body of the Deceased to be disposed of by the Government, please inform the mortuary staff.
4. After registration, please wait to be called for an interview with the Forensic Pathologist.
5. During the interview, the Forensic Pathologist will go through with you the medical history and the circumstances surrounding the death of the Deceased.
6. **If you wish to apply for waiver of the autopsy, you must inform the Forensic Pathologist during the interview.** The decision of whether an autopsy is to be done or not is with the Coroner. In general, the Coroner would not waive the autopsy if the medical cause of death or the circumstances surrounding the death are not clear. For deaths that appeared to be due to natural causes, please provide adequate medical documentation to assist the Forensic Pathologist in giving an opinion on the medical cause of death of the Deceased for the Coroner's consideration. If you want to raise your objection against the Coroner's decision of ordering an autopsy, please contact the Coroner's Court for arrangement. (Address: 10/F, Eastern Law Courts Building, 29 Tai On Street, Sai Wan Ho. Tel : 2886 6870)
7. For cases requiring autopsy, please inform the Mortuary Officer during the interview if you wish to retain the clothing worn by the Deceased; otherwise the clothing will be disposed of.
8. Please inform the Mortuary Officer if the body is to be exported.
9. For cases requiring autopsy, you are entitled to be represented by a registered medical practitioner at the autopsy as an observer. If you so wish, please inform the Forensic Pathologist during the interview.
10. After the interview, you will be required to formally identify the body. A "**Certificate of Collection of Document for Body Disposal**" for later collection of a document for body disposal (see para. 11) and a "**Certificate of Body Collection**" for claiming back of the body of the Deceased will be given to you. Please ensure safe custody of these certificates.

Collection of document for body disposal and other related documents

11. Proper disposal of body requires a "**Certificate of Order Authorizing Burial/Cremation of Body**" issued by the Coroner. Upon delivery from the Coroner's Court, this Certificate is normally available for collection at the reception counter of the Public Mortuary in the afternoon of the following working day after 3 p.m. You must come in person or authorize another person in writing to collect the Certificate.
12. Certified Copy of an Entry in a Register of Deaths ("**Death Certificate**") is issued by the Births and Deaths General Register Office of the Immigration Department. For deaths reported to the Coroner, this document will only be available after the Coroner has concluded his inquiry of the death. For all matters relating to the issue of

this certificate, please enquire directly at the Births and Deaths General Register Office at 3/F, Low Block, Queensway Government Offices. (Tel : 2867 2784) [Note: This document is not required for arranging burial/cremation of the body].

13. If for some special reasons you require a document to certify the fact of death of the Deceased, you may apply to the Coroner for a “**Certificate of the Fact of Death**”. (Address: 10/F, Eastern Law Courts Building, 29 Tai On Street, Sai Wan Ho. Tel : 2886 6870)
14. As stipulated in the Coroners Ordinance, **autopsy reports** prepared by Forensic Pathologists are to be submitted to the Coroner directly. The time taken to complete an autopsy report is dependent on the complexity of the case and the availability of information and analysis/investigation reports provided by other Government departments and organizations. If you wish to obtain a copy of the autopsy report, please apply directly to the Coroner.

Claiming of body

15. For cases not requiring autopsy, the body is ready for collection at the same time of collecting the Burial/Cremation Order. For cases requiring autopsy, the body is normally ready for collection in the afternoon of the following working day. **If you wish to collect the body earlier, you must inform the Forensic Pathologist during the interview.**
16. Prolonged storage of bodies in the Public Mortuary may adversely affect the appearance of the Deceased. Besides, the body storage capacity of this mortuary is limited. You are strongly advised to arrange collection of the body as soon as possible.
17. The time for collection of bodies is between 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily. You are required to come to the Public Mortuary in person to return the "**Certificate of Body Collection**" given to you during the formal identification and to sign for collection of the body of the Deceased.

Miscellaneous

18. All services provided by the Public Mortuary are free-of charge. All mortuary staff are Government employees and are prohibited from receiving any benefits in the form of money (including ‘lai-see’) or gifts. They are not allowed to advise on your selection of commercial funeral services. Any person offering benefits to the mortuary staff is liable to prosecution. Should you discover or notice any contravention of the Prevention of Bribery Ordinance, or encounter claim that money or gifts are required / can be offered in exchange for special treatment, favour or convenience in the Public Mortuary, please report directly to the Independent Commission Against Corruption. (Tel: 2526 6366)
19. The following non-governmental organizations provide bereavement support service to help family cope with issues of loss and grief :-

Society for the Promotion of Hospice Care Tel: 2868 1211 Website: www.hospicecare.org.hk Central Office:- G/F, 16 Ngoi Man Street, Shau Kei Wan, Hong Kong Jessie and Thomas Tam Centre:- Rm 316-318, Lai Lan House, Lai Kok Est, Cheung Sha Wan, Kowloon	The Comfort Care Concern Group Tel: 2361 6606 Website: www.cccg.org.hk Address: 303-305, Podium Floor, Lai Ho House, Lai Kok Est, Cheung Sha Wan, Kowloon
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20. If you have any enquires, suggestions or complaints about the services provided in the Public Mortuary, please make use of the suggestion box provided in the Public Mortuary or contact the respective Client Relations Officer.

Victoria Public Mortuary	Tel : 2817 2026	Fax : 2818 4859
Kwai Chung Public Mortuary	Tel : 2612 5810	Fax : 2419 0709
Fu Shan Public Mortuary	Tel : 2606 9333	Fax : 2691 1112

Forensic Pathology Service
Department of Health
The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region