

**GOVERNMENT OF MEGHALAYA
HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE DEPARTMENT**

No. Health.114/2020/44

Dated Shillong, the 28th April, 2021.

NOTIFICATION

The following protocol/guidelines is issued for the disposal of dead bodies of COVID-19 suspects or confirmed case of COVID-19 in accordance with the guidelines/protocol issued by the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of which is available in the website :

<https://covid19.india.gov.in/document/guidelines-on-dead-body-management/>

1. COVID-19 is mainly transmitted through droplets. Therefore, there is less likelihood for an increased risk of COVID infection from a dead body to health workers or family members or volunteers who follow standard precautions while handling body
2. The body after having been sealed as per the protocols/instructions and transferred to the coffin can be taken to the residence of the deceased person. However, the coffin is not to be taken inside the house but to be kept outside and such arrangements are to be made by the relatives of the deceased. In case there is space constraint then the coffin is to be taken directly to the burial or cremation ground. The coffin can be kept over ground for a maximum of 36 hours only.
3. All present at the cremation/burial ground site will practice standard precautions of hand hygiene, use of surgical masks and gloves.
4. Large gathering at the crematorium/ burial ground should be avoided as a social distancing measure as it is possible that close family contacts may be symptomatic and/or shedding the virus.
5. Viewing of the dead body by unzipping the face end of the body bag (by those performing the burial/cremation using standard precautions) maybe allowed, for the relatives to see the body for one last time.
6. Religious rituals such as reading from religious scripts, sprinkling holy water and any other last rites that does not require touching of the body can be allowed.
7. Bathing, kissing, hugging, etc. of the dead body should not be allowed.
8. The funeral/ burial staff or volunteers and family members should perform hand hygiene after cremation/ burial.
9. The depth of the burial grave should be about 6 ft
10. If cremated, the ashes do not pose any risk and can be collected to perform the last rites.
11. The vehicle, after the transfer of the body to cremation/ burial staff, will need to be decontaminated with 1% Sodium Hypochlorite (available in Pharmacies). This can also be safely done by those who carry the dead body.

Sd/-
(Sampath Kumar, IAS)
Commissioner & Secretary to the Government of Meghalaya,
Health & Family Welfare Department