



THE PARSİ ZOROASTRIAN ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH EAST ASIA

FOREWORD

The only thing certain in life is death. True also is the saying “In the midst of life we are in death”. One seldom knows when death, because of an unforeseen accident, a sudden heart attack or other ailment, may come knocking on one’s door but when it does, the distressed members of a bereaved family should be aware of the steps to be taken to ensure a timely and orderly funeral.

The committee of the Parsi Zoroastrian Association of South East Asia would like to thank Dr. Pesi Chacha for his efforts in putting together this booklet to serve as a guidance in such times.



GUIDELINES ON COMPLETION OF DEATH CERTIFICATES

1. Establish the cause of death

When someone dies, it is essential to establish the cause of death.

If your loved one passes away at home, the first person to call is a doctor. The doctor will be responsible for certifying and reporting the death. The doctor will issue a certificate of the cause of death.

If the doctor is satisfied that the death was due to natural causes, they will certify the death. If the death is sudden, the cause is unnatural, or the doctor cannot establish the cause of death, they will contact the police.

The police will investigate to ascertain the cause of death. If you cannot get hold of a doctor, you can also contact the police first.

If the deceased was in a hospital under medical care at the time of passing, the attending doctor will handle the process and report the death.

2. Register the death

To register the death, the doctor or the police will need the following:

- The deceased's full names.
- The birth gender of the deceased.
- The deceased's date of birth.
- Identity document number.

The doctor will note the date, time, location, and cause of the death.



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All deaths in Singapore must be registered within 24 hours.

In situations where the police see the body, they can have the body removed to the mortuary, where a pathologist can determine the cause of death, if necessary.

An autopsy is not compulsory in Singapore. If the police report the death to the coroner, the coroner can investigate to decide if an autopsy is required. The decision depends on the medical issues or any injuries on the deceased's body.

If the autopsy report reveals any unnatural cause of death, the police will investigate further.

Alternatively, the coroner can collect the body from the deceased's home or the hospital.

3. Obtain a death certificate

Once the doctor certifies the death online, it is registered, and you can download the death certificate via the MyLegacy portal.

To download the certificate, you need:

- The deceased's NRIC, FIN, or passport number.
- The death document number, which the doctor will provide.
- Date of death.

Obtaining a death certificate is critical since it is your legal proof of death.

Without the certificate, you cannot proceed with any steps necessary to arrange a funeral and settle the deceased's estate.



FUNERAL PARLOUR PROCEDURE AND ZOROASTRIAN AFTER DEATH RITUALS (SACHKAR)

Preparation of the body for the cleaning and draping of the body should be done at the funeral parlour. The facilities at the “Bangli” at the Parsi Cemetery are inadequate. As soon as a death has occurred, the Singapore Casket Company should be contacted even before the certificate either from the coroner in a coroner’s case or from the police in case of a certificate issued by a doctor is available. The casket company staff usually provide all the necessary guidance and make arrangements for the transport of the body to the parlour.

A brief account of the Zoroastrian Ritual of Sachkar have been provided below and are adequate as guidelines:

After the staff of the parlour has cleaned the body, the following steps need to be followed:

- (i) A white sheet is laid out and five long ribbons cut from a white sheet or a large “sudreh” are laid on the sheet at approximate levels of the deceased’s neck, arms, waist, thighs, and ankles. The body is then laid on this sheet with the ribbons now under the body.
- (ii) A white pyjama and a “Sudreh” should be draped first, and the head covered with a piece of torn white cloth or “sudreh” to act as a cap leaving the ears uncovered.
- (iii) With the help of a few persons, the body is lifted to a semi sitting position and one of the Zarathustis should tie a “Kushti” around the waist of the body while praying the “Kushti” prayers.
- (iv) If the deceased’s ‘Dagli’ is available, it can now be draped on the body.



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- (v) The arms are then folded over the chest and tied together lightly with a ribbon cut from a white sheet or a 'Sudreh'. Similarly, the two big toes of the feet are also tied together.
- (vi) After this, the five ribbons that were laid previously are lightly tied one by one around the neck, followed by the ones around the arms, waist, thighs, and the ankles praying an "Yatha Ahu Vairyo" each time.
- (vii) The white sheet is then folded over the body and the body is placed in the coffin. If possible, a steel nail is then passed around the coffin three times praying "Yatha Ahu Vairyo" each time. The nail is then left near the head of the body.
- (viii) An oil lamp is then lit and left at the head end of the coffin and kept alight until the final "Geh Sarna" prayers are recited. If possible, Zarathustis should recite prayers where the coffin is laid until the "Geh Sarna" prayers are done.



QUESTION OF BURIAL OR CREMATION

The decision to opt for burial or cremation must be made immediately after death by the relatives of the deceased, in cases where the deceased has not declared in a will or made known his/her wish in this regard prior to his/her demise. It is recommended that the relatives utilize the service of the Singapore Casket Company including the use of their funeral parlour and transportation of the body and the coffin. The relative should also inform,

- (i) The President or the Secretary of the Parsi Zoroastrian Association of South East Asia
- (ii) Any one or more persons designated hereunder, so that they can help arrange for the prayers/rituals and for any assistance required.
 - a. **Homiyar Vasanja** – HP 90307195
 - b. **Hormuz Avari** – HP 98207655
 - c. **Neville Dotivala** – HP 96259285
 - d. **Burzeen Driver** – HP 98359540
 - e. **Rumy Kanga** – HP 90678997

A letter which we normally provide to the NEA / Casket company, upon the death of a Parsi in Singapore is attached at the end of this document.

For enquiries relating to application for burial/cremation permit, you may contact **6225 5632, NEA 24-hour dedicated hotline.**

You may contact **6589 8707, a 24-hour dedicated hotline**, if you have any query relating to the death registration process and digital death certificate.

Alternatively, you may contact ICA at ICA_DPU_RBD@ica.gov.sg.



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USE OF PARSI CEMETERY FOR “GEH SARNA” PRAYERS

“Geh Sarna” prayers should be done at the Parsi Cemetery whether the decision is for burial or cremation. The Casket Company can organize the timing and transport from the parlour to the Parsi Cemetery and then to the crematorium if cremation is opted for.

Keys to the Parsi Cemetery are available with

Homiyar Vasania – 90307195

NO BURIAL OF ASHES AFTER CREMATION

The Ministry of Environment has recently indicated that the ashes from cremation CANNOT be buried at the Parsi Cemetery.



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WHO TO CONTACT FOR “GEH SARNA” PRAYERS

The following individuals in the community offer “Geh Sarna” prayers. The prayers require two Zarathustis.

At present

Ervad Percy Khambatta - 90114673,

Ervad Adil Antia - 90014009,

Kersi Aspar - 96365822

Ervad Ayaan Kanga - 98172761 (Minaz)

can recite the prayers.

If for some reason, none of the designated persons are available, any two Zarathustis can recite the prayers from the “Geh Sarna” book which is now available in Roman Script. The committee will make this book easily available when required.



CONTACT NUMBERS AT A GLANCE

- **Homiyar Vasania** – HP 90307195
- **Hormuz Avari** – HP 98207655
- **Neville Dotivala** – HP 96259285
- **Burzeen Driver** – HP 98359540
- **Rumy Kanga** – HP 90678997

For Prayers

- **Ervad Percy Khambatta** - 90114673,
- **Ervad Adil Antia** - 90014009,
- **Kersi Aspar** - 96365822
- **Ervad Ayaan Kanga** - 98172761 (Minaz)

Funeral Parlour Numbers

- **Singapore Casket** - 131 Lavender Street, SG 338737
24hr Hotline: +65 6293 4388
- **Direct Funeral Services** - 127 Lavender Street, SG 338735
24hr Hotline: +65 6555 1115
- **Woodlands Memorial** - 7 Woodlands Industrial Park E8, SG 758969
Hotline: +65 8833 7877



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Letter to NEA

Date

To whomsoever it may concern

We have been informed by the relatives of our member, Mr/Mrs.....
(NRIC:.....) of his / her death on and that they would like to
cremate the body.

Mr./Mrs..... Is of Parsi/Zoroastrian faith, and the Parsi Zoroastrian
Association of South East Asia, Singapore, has no objection to the cremation of
..... We request you to kindly offer any assistance that the family would
require at this trying time.

Thanks and regards,

(xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx)

Designation

Parsi Zoroastrian Association of South East Asia,

Singapore