



# Kavod Hameis: Upholding the Sacred Mitzvah of Jewish Burial

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Dear Members of the Dallas Jewish Community,

The Dallas Rabbinical Council (DRC) writes to address an issue of profound importance to every Jewish family: the sacred obligation of honoring the deceased through timely burial in accordance with halacha and our mesorah.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF TIMELY BURIAL IN JEWISH TRADITION

For thousands of years, Jewish tradition has emphasized the importance of burial taking place as promptly as reasonably possible after death. The Torah teaches, “You shall surely bury him on that day,” and our Sages understood this as an expression of kavod hameis, honoring the dignity of the departed soul. Delaying burial unnecessarily causes pain to the soul and deprives the deceased of the respect and care that Jewish tradition demands.

In recent years, many families have become accustomed to delays in funeral arrangements due to logistical constraints, scheduling practices, or the assumption that lengthy waiting periods are unavoidable. We wish to reaffirm that, whenever possible, Jewish law strongly encourages burial within 24 hours or as soon thereafter as practical.

## THE JEWISH PROHIBITION AGAINST CREMATION

We also feel compelled to address the growing issue of cremation. Judaism has consistently rejected cremation throughout our history. Our bodies are entrusted to us by Hashem and are to be returned to the earth with dignity and reverence. Traditional burial affirms our belief in the sanctity of the human body, the eternal nature of the soul, and the foundational Jewish belief in techiyas hameisim — the eventual resurrection of the dead. Cremation stands in opposition to these deeply held Torah values and deprives the deceased of the sacred rites that generations of Jews have cherished.

## A POSITIVE COMMITMENT FROM LOCAL FUNERAL HOMES

To this end, the Dallas Rabbinical Council (DRC) is grateful to share encouraging news with the community. Following constructive meetings with leadership from Restland Funeral Home and Sparkman/Hillcrest Funeral Home, both institutions have expressed their commitment to working with the Jewish community to facilitate next-day interments whenever reasonably possible.



מועצת הרבנים דדאללאס

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Importantly, they have also agreed that expedited fees will not be charged for next-day burials conducted during the regular work week. (Weekend and extraordinary staffing situations may still require additional costs.) This represents a meaningful and compassionate step toward helping Jewish families fulfill this vital mitzvah without unnecessary financial burden.

We express our sincere appreciation to the leadership and staff of these funeral homes for their understanding, cooperation, and sensitivity to the needs of the Jewish community.

### **PLANNING AHEAD WITH FAMILY AND COMMUNITY**

We encourage every member of the community to discuss these matters with their families in advance, to make burial wishes known, and to consult with their rabbi when questions arise. Planning ahead can help ensure that, at a difficult and emotional time, families are able to make decisions that reflect Jewish values and traditions.

May we continue to strengthen our community's commitment to honoring every Jewish life — and every Jewish soul — with the dignity, compassion, and sacred respect that our Torah demands.

Sincerely,

The Dallas Rabbinical Council