



WHAT TO DO IN THE EVENT OF A DEATH

Keep this document in an easily accessible location.

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Rabbi Eliezer Poupko
Rabbi Aryeh Rodin
Rabbi Zecharia Sionit
Rabbi Howard Wolk

It is strongly recommended to make pre-arrangements with both a funeral home and a cemetery. Planning in advance can significantly ease the emotional and logistical burden on family members at the time of loss.

It is important to understand that funeral homes and cemeteries are entirely separate business entities. Cemeteries oversee the burial grounds and graveside operations, while funeral homes handle funeral arrangements and related services.

The two cemeteries serving the Dallas Jewish community are

- Hillcrest Mausoleum and Memorial Park (often mistakenly referred to as "Sparkman/Hillcrest") — (214) 363-5401 | dignitymemorial.com
- Restland Memorial Park — (469) 925-1436 | restlandfuneralhome.com

The four funeral homes serving the Dallas Jewish community are

- Dallas Jewish Funerals — (972) 424-1141 | dallasjewishfunerals.com
- North Dallas Funeral Home — (214) 674-0857 | northdallasfuneralhome.com
- Restland Funeral Home — (469) 925-1436 | restlandfuneralhome.com
- Sparkman/Hillcrest Funeral Home — (214) 363-5401 | dignitymemorial.com

Any licensed funeral home may work with any cemetery in the Dallas area. Families are not required to use the funeral home associated with the cemetery where the burial plot is located. The funeral home will contact the Chevra Kadisha.

Burial plots may be purchased through local Orthodox congregations or through Mount Zion United Jewish Cemetery, which maintains sections at both Hillcrest Mausoleum and Memorial Park and Restland Memorial Park. For information, contact Bill Finkelstein at (214) 228-5757 or (214) 417-1707, or in emergencies, Jeri Finkelstein at (214) 334-6554.

IMMEDIATE FIRST STEPS

1. Contact the Rabbi

Call your family rabbi or your synagogue rabbi immediately. The rabbi will guide the family through the Halachic and practical steps that follow.

Have ready:

- Full Hebrew and English name of the deceased
- Father's Hebrew name (and mother's if known)
- Exact time and place of passing
- Whether the deceased was a Kohen or Levi, or had any special circumstances

2. Pronouncement of Death

Before any arrangements and decisions can be made, a legal pronouncement of death must occur. The funeral home can not transport the deceased until after a legal pronouncement of death.



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- If your loved one dies inside a hospital, nursing, or hospice facility, ask the staff to get this declaration made.
- If your loved one dies at home, then one of the following:
 - In the event of an unexpected death, call 911 immediately. Inform the operator that a death has occurred and follow their instructions.
 - In the event of an expected death (Hospice/Terminal Illness), contact the hospice nurse or the person’s doctor immediately, as they can pronounce the death. Do Not Call 911. If the death was expected and the person was under medical care, an emergency responder (police/EMS) is usually not required.

3. Contact the Funeral Home

Choose a funeral home experienced with Orthodox Jewish practices.

- Dallas Jewish Funerals (972) 424-1141 | dallasjewishfunerals.com
- North Dallas Funeral Home (214) 674-0857 | northdallasfuneralhome.com
- Restland Funeral Home (469) 925-1436 | restlandfuneralhome.com
- Sparkman/Hillcrest Funeral Home (214) 363-5401 | dignitymemorial.com

4. Financial

Resources are available.

- The Federation maintains a fund to provide burials for indigent members of the community. Families are vetted through Jewish Family Service of Greater Dallas, while local funeral homes provide services at significantly reduced rates. (972) 437-9950 | jfsdallas.org
- Dallas Hebrew Free Loan Association has an expedited loan package for funeral needs. (469) 206-1639 | dhfla.org

IMPORTANT HALACHIC REMINDERS

- Jewish tradition strongly promotes burial and prohibits cremation.
- Autopsies should not be authorized without rabbinic guidance.
- Embalming is not part of traditional Jewish burial practice, even when transporting the body out of state or internationally.
- Burial should not be unnecessarily delayed.

5. Notify Immediate Family

Inform:

- Spouse
- Children
- Parents
- Siblings

Ask someone organized to help coordinate communications.



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PRACTICAL ARRANGEMENTS

6. Secure Important Information/Documents

Gather:

- ID or driver's license
- Social Security number
- Insurance information
- Cemetery plot information (if applicable)
- Military discharge papers (if applicable)

7. Arrange Funeral Time

Jewish law encourages burial as soon as reasonably possible, ideally within 24 hours.

Coordinate:

- Rabbi
- Funeral home
- Immediate family

8. Write/Prepare the Obituary and Funeral Announcement

Include:

- Hebrew name
- Funeral time/location
- Shiva details
- Donation information (if applicable)

BEFORE THE FUNERAL

9. Mourners traditionally include

- Parents
- Children
- Siblings
- Spouse

10. Arrange Logistics

- Driving
- Meals
- Airport pickups
- House setup
- Guest coordination

FOR AFTER SHIVA

Discuss with your rabbi:

- Shloshim observances
- 11 months of Kaddish
- Yahrzeit practices
- Matzeivah (gravestone)