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சுகாதார அமைச்சு
MINISTRY OF HEALTH

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எனது இல) PA/DDG (PHS)/10/2019
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திகதி) 2023.02.15
Date)

- Deputy Director Generals
- Provincial Directors of Health Services
- Regional Directors of Health Services
- Heads of Healthcare Institutions
- Regional Epidemiologists
- Medial Officers of Health
- Medial Officers, Airport Health Office

Health measure to be followed in repatriation of human remains to Sri Lanka

1. Effective date
1.1. This circular is effective from 15.02.2023 and all previous circulars/letters issued by me on this subject are hereby canceled
2. Eligibility
2.1. Only the human remains of Sri Lankan Nationals, Native Sri Lankans who are holding Foreign Passports and foreigners who are married to Sri Lankans will be allowed to repatriate.
3. Designated Airport
3.1. Repatriation can be done only through Bandaranayake International Airport (BIA)
4. Prior approval and required documents
4.1. Prior approval for repatriation of human remains shall be obtained from the Airport Health Officer by submitting the following documents
4.1.1. Proof of identification of the deceased person (canceled passport)
4.1.2. Death Certificate issued with the clear cause of death
4.1.3. Infectious disease-free certificate
4.1.4. Embalming certificate
4.1.5. Police Certificate or Coroner's Certificate or Forensic report (for all death due to accidents, homicides, and suicides or in any suspicious circumstances that the Airport Health Officer (APHO) decided to have such a report.

- 4.1.6. No objection letter for repatriation obtained from the foreign mission to Sri Lanka of the relevant country.
- 4.2. Once all required documents are submitted by the airline, APHO will take one working day (24 hours) to grant approval. No human remains are allowed to be repatriated without prior approval.
- 4.3. Human remains which carries 'Infectious disease-free certificate' need to follow the sections 5 and 6 below to release to the consignee.
- 4.4. Repatriation of human remains of which cannot provide 'Infectious disease-free certificate', i.e. if the person has had an infectious disease of a public health concern including COVID-19 is generally discouraged.
- 4.5. However, in an instance where the repatriation of such (4.4) human remains is essential and cannot be avoided, section 7 should be followed in addition to the general requirements described in this circular.
5. Preparation of the human remains for repatriation
- 5.1. All orifices of the human remains should be closed with a gauze plug impregnated with Sodium Hypochlorite
- 5.2. All lacerations and cut injuries should be covered with waterproof dressings.
- 5.3. The remains should be sealed in a non-permeable body bag
- 5.4. The sealed body bag should be kept in a coffin disinfected with Sodium Hypochlorite and the bottom of the coffin should contain a layer of sodium hypochlorite powder.
- 5.5. The coffin also should be sealed.
6. Releasing the human remains at the airport
- 6.1. The human remains will be released only to the consignee. If the consignee is not appearing, an affidavit from the consignee must be attached for handing over to a nominated person.
- 6.2. The human remains of the cause of death is a homicide, suicide, accident, or any other instance as per the APHO discretion needs an inquest before release.
- 6.3. In such instances the Human remains should be transferred to the District General Hospital Negombo and be released to the consignee after the inquest with or without a postmortem as decided by the Inquirer into Sudden Deaths (Coroner).
- 6.4. The human remains which do not warrant an inquest will be released to the consignee at the BIA.
7. Additional conditions to be followed for the human remains with infection risk
- 7.1. Special approval of the Director- Quarantine is required for the repatriation of human remains with evidence of infection which has public health concern (without the infectious diseases free certificate).
- 7.2. Repatriation of such human remains will be allowed to repatriate only 14 days after the expiry of the person. The duration may be increased according to the disease and the prevailing epidemiological situation.
- 7.3. In addition to section 6 special preparation of the human remains may be prescribed by the APHO according to the disease and its epidemiology.
- 7.4. APHO may prescribe the method of disposal and conditions for the funeral rituals according to the disease and its epidemiology.
- 7.5. If the repatriation of such human remains poses a considerable risk to the general population, Proper authority may refuse the repatriation.

8. Proper authority

8.1. Director General of Health Services as the proper authority for whole of Sri Lanka and Director of Quarantine as Proper Authority under the Quarantine and Prevention of Disease Ordinance No.03 of 1897, have the discretionary authority to refuse the repatriation if the infection risk to the general population posed by the repatriation is apparently high.



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Secretary, Ministry of Justice
Additional Secretary, Public Health Services/Medical Services
Chairman, AASL
Director Quarantine
Chief Epidemiologist