

Disposition of Remains Report

Nogales Consular District (Northern Sonora)

Part I. Name of Country: Mexico

Part II. U.S. Consulate Information

U.S. Consulate General Nogales

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The Mexico Consular Information Sheet online:

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/International-Travel-Country-Information-Pages/Mexico.html>

How to register with the Consulate online (Smart Travel Enrollment Program):

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/before-you-go/step.html>

Part III. Profile of Religions of the Host Country and Religious Services available to visitors

Mexico has a predominantly Roman Catholic population. Due in part to its proximity to the U.S., the northern border region of Mexico enjoys a larger group of religions than is typically found in the interior of the country. The burial and funeral customs in the Nogales consular district are not vastly different from mainstream practices of the United States. There are a number of Roman Catholic churches in the area. However, there are also churches from a wide range of denominations such as Jehovah's Witnesses, Seventh Day Adventist, Baptists, Methodists, Mormons, Evangelical Christians, Pentecostals, and Presbyterians. The nearest Jewish Synagogues to Nogales Consular District are located in Arizona.

Part IV. Disposition of Remains

The following general information is provided to assist families with their initial decisions following the death of a loved one.

A. Maximum Period before Interment

(1) There is no fixed period if the body is embalmed and refrigeration is available. Both services are generally available in the local funeral homes.

(2) Within 24 hours after death, if body is not embalmed.

B. Embalming

Embalming is common in Northern Sonora. Most, if not all, of the Funeral Services establishments will provide embalming services. SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED

C. Cremation

Most funeral homes have cremation services and the arrangements are handled by them. Local laws permit cremation if requested by the next of kin, who must be present to sign the cremation paperwork. However, Mexican law does not permit for the remains of a body that passed away as a result of criminal action, suspicious circumstances, or is part of an official investigation to be cremated.

D. Caskets and Containers

Caskets and containers are available at the funeral homes. Prices vary depending on the design, material and size.

E. Exportation of Remains

The funeral homes can export the remains but in order to do so, they need to obtain original copies of the following documents: Mexican death certificate and the permit from the health department. These original documents are requested by the funeral home because they need to present them at the port of entry into the United States.

CDC requirements for importing human remains depend upon if the body has been embalmed, cremated, or if the person died from a quarantinable communicable disease.

At this time, COVID-19 is a quarantinable communicable disease in the United States and the remains must meet the standards for importation found in 42 Code of Federal Regulations Part 71.55 and may be cleared, released, and authorized for entry into the United States only under the following conditions:

- The remains are cremated; OR
- The remains are properly embalmed and placed in a hermetically sealed casket; OR
- The remains are accompanied by a permit issued by the CDC Director. The CDC permit (if applicable) must accompany the human remains at all times during shipment. ○ Permits for the importation of the remains of a person known or suspected to have died from a quarantinable communicable disease may be obtained through the CDC Division of Global Migration and Quarantine by calling the CDC Emergency Operations Center at 770-488-7100 or emailing dgmqpolicyoffice@cdc.gov.

Please see CDC's guidance for additional information."

F. Costs

Cost varies from one funeral home to another and also depends on the services requested. The consulate recommends calling different funeral homes to obtain the best price.

G. Autopsies

An autopsy is routinely performed unless the individual died of medical or natural cause. Exceptions for religious reasons are extremely rare. In Nogales' Consular district, autopsies are performed in the funeral homes by roving medical examiners. When death occurred under suspicious circumstances, for example, the police are involved to determine whether there was foul play involved. If foul play was involved, or if the cause of death is not immediately known, the State Police will conduct a judicial autopsy. When the police determine that a criminal act was not the cause of death, an autopsy is usually not performed. There is no cost for a judicial autopsy.