

AUM

SHREE PRETORIA HINDU SEVA SAMAJ

(Established in 1932)

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PBO Ref. No.: 930004205

SAMAJ FUNERAL POLICY

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to regulate the provision of cremation services by the Shree Pretoria Hindu Seva Samaj to its community members.

2. RATIONALE FOR THIS POLICY

The Shree Pretoria Hindu Seva Samaj has an established Crematorium Committee that forms part of the Facilities Management Portfolio. The Samaj has been providing a cremation service to the Gujarati community of Pretoria/Tshwane for many decades. Despite this, community members are not always sure of what the service entails, what the bereaved families responsibilities are and the process to follow when death occurs. This policy intends providing clarity on these issues.

3. PROCESS FOR FAMILY TO FOLLOW WHEN DEATH OCCURS

In the event death occurs at home

3.1 Upon suspicion that a family member has passed on, the family members are advised to immediately call their family doctor to verify that death has occurred. It is preferable that the doctor contacted should be the one who has treated the deceased before as he would know the health history of the person concerned.

3.2 Upon confirmation of death by the doctor, a family member should immediately inform the relevant Samaj official. Currently, Mr. Bharatbhai Kooverjee, cell-phone number 082 490 3646 or 012 323 4270/1 (W) or 012 3744 754 (H) should be contacted or if he is not contactable then Mr. Kishorbhai Dajee Naran, at cell-phone number 082 573 0132 or 012 374 7816 (W) or 012 374 2442 (H)

In the event death occurs at a hospital

- 3.3 Inform the relevant medical attendant that the family intends cremating the deceased.
- 3.4 The attending doctor completes the confirmatory medical death certificate as well as cremation form no. BI 1663. Most hospitals are in possession of these cremation forms. It is preferable that the family ask the medical attendant to complete the relevant forms as speedily as possible as failure to do so will result in a delay of the cremation.
- 3.5 Immediately contact the Samaj official as indicated in 3.2 if any further assistance is needed.

In the event of an Unnatural Death

An unnatural death is a death by drowning, shooting, motor-vehicle accident, or any other form of death that is not due to natural causes. In the event of an unnatural death, a post-mortem and police investigation is required. This is quite a lengthy procedure and the Samaj official will assist in getting a post-mortem conducted as quickly as possible. It is therefore very important that upon news of the death, the Samaj official as indicated in 3.2 is contacted immediately.

In the event of a Death occurring outside Pretoria / Tshwane area

The same procedure as listed under bullet 3 above should be followed. As listed under 4.2.1, the undertaker can also assist with the transportation of the body to the undertaker's facility.

4. SAMAJ RESPONSIBILITY

Upon request of the family, the Crematorium Committee of the Samaj is willing to assist the family of the deceased with certain arrangements for the cremation. This is a voluntary service and family members are free to make their own arrangements should they so desire. ***It is important to note that the SAMAJ charges no fees whatsoever for their role in any of the services rendered below.*** The Crematorium Committee will facilitate the following:

- 4.1 Provide the family with names of at least two funeral undertakers with whom they have negotiated set rates for cremations. The two funeral undertakers will be chosen after having followed a transparent procurement process. Families should note that cremation rates over week-ends and after-hours tend to be higher.
- 4.2 The Samaj will contact the preferred service provider and facilitate the provision of the following services:

- 4.2.1 Transporting the deceased from place of death to the undertaker's facility for cold storage
- 4.2.2 Ensuring all legal documentation (referees, death certificates, etc) required for cremation is processed
- 4.2.3 Negotiating cremation time with the relevant crematorium authorities
- 4.2.4 Transporting the body of the deceased to residence for final rites
- 4.2.5 Transporting the deceased to the Rebecca Street Crematorium
- 4.2.6 Registering the death at Home Affairs
- 4.2.7 Sending of funeral notice to the community via SMS messaging system, mass emails, siren and Samaj notice-board. The funeral notice will only be sent out once the Samaj official in charge has confirmed that all arrangements have been finalised.
- 4.2.8 Placing the Samaj OM sign at the Crematorium
- 4.2.9 Providing prayer cards at the crematorium
- 4.2.10 Prayer cards will also be provided at funeral homes upon request by the family
- 4.2.11 Deliver a eulogy for the deceased on behalf of the Samaj, but only upon request and availability of officials
- 4.2.12 In the event of an unnatural death, the Samaj official will facilitate the liaising with the relevant authorities (SAPS, government mortuary) to have a post-mortem conducted as speedily as possible
- 4.2.13 Provide advice on places in Pretoria where the ashes may be disposed of.

5. **FAMILY RESPONSIBILITY**

The family of the deceased is required to do the following:

- 5.1 Provide Samaj official with identity document of the deceased.
- 5.2 Appoint a family member to liaise with the Samaj official with regards to funeral arrangements. A dedicated family person for this role is needed to avoid confusion and misunderstandings.
- 5.3 Inform the Samaj official of the family's preferred date and time for the funeral to take place. This requirement is subject to the availability of the crematorium.
- 5.4 Make own arrangements to procure tent(s), chairs and any other equipment that will be needed at the funeral home
- 5.5 Arrange for the services of a priest. This could either be the Samaj resident priest (Mukeshbhai Joshi – 012 374 5438 or 076 501 8204) or with any priest of the family's choice. The resident priest will only be able to conduct the service if he has not already been booked for another function. Other local priests who can conduct the service are: Sunilbhai Bhatt (072 634 0292) and Rajubhai Pandiya ((079 666 0494).
- 5.6 Buy the "samagri" and flowers required for the funeral both at home and the crematorium. The priest or local spice shops will advise on what is needed.

- 5.7 Arrange with the undertaker to prepare the body for cremation i.e. washing & dressing at the funeral undertaker's premises.
- 5.8 Perform the last preparation rites for the cremation at the Crematorium.
- 5.9 Collect ashes from the crematorium after cremation has taken place. The officials at the crematorium will confirm the time that collection should take place.
- 5.10 Arrange to pay the undertaker within 7 days after the funeral upon presentation of an invoice.
- 5.11 Should the family have a funeral policy, the undertakers must be informed of its provisions and the necessary payment arrangements made accordingly.

6. DEATH OF NON-MEMBER RELATIVES

In the event of the death of a non-member relative (i.e. a parent, child or sibling that does not reside in the greater Pretoria / Tshwane area), the Samaj undertakes to inform the general public of such death, only under the following circumstances:

- 6.1 The Secretary has been informed of the death by a family member;
- 6.2 A family member specifically requests that the public be informed;
- 6.3 The deceased person is an immediate relative i.e. parent, child or sibling;
- 6.4 The family member agrees to pay the prevailing costs for bulk SMS messages as laid out in the Samaj Communication Policy;
- 6.5 No charges will be levied for bulk email messages

7. USE OF SAMAJ FACILITIES

Should they so wish, the bereaved family may apply to use the auditorium or dining-hall to conduct the last funeral rites before the body departs for the crematorium. The premises will be made available at a nominal fee, subject to availability.

This policy was adopted at an Executive Committee meeting of the Shree Pretoria Hindu Seva Samaj held on 22 February 2010 at the Seva Samaj Boardroom.

Rameshbhai Chhagan
Secretary-General

Prakashbhai Hira
President