

Autopsy, embalming and organ donation

Three questions families are asked in the first hours. Knowing your rights ahead of time keeps the burial simple and quick.

1

Routine embalming is not required by law

No state law requires routine embalming, though some states require embalming or refrigeration after a set number of hours, or for transport. Funeral homes may require it for a public viewing, which a Muslim funeral does not have. Tell the funeral home clearly: no embalming, no viewing.

Federal Trade Commission, The FTC Funeral Rule

2

An autopsy can sometimes be required

After a sudden, violent or unexplained death, the medical examiner or coroner may order an autopsy. Some states let families object on religious grounds; ask the medical examiner's office what applies in your state, and ask them to work quickly so burial is not delayed.

See your state's guide

3

Organ donation: scholars differ

The International Islamic Fiqh Academy permitted organ donation under conditions, including the donor's consent and no sale of organs. Other scholars do not permit it. If you have a view, write it in your wishes so your family does not have to decide for you.

International Islamic Fiqh Academy, Resolution 26 (1/4), 1988

4

Vaults and caskets

No state law requires an outer burial container, but many cemeteries do. Muslim cemeteries often allow burial in the shroud alone, or with a simple box. You may buy a casket elsewhere; the funeral home cannot charge you for doing so.

Federal Trade Commission, The FTC Funeral Rule

WRITE IT DOWN

Your answers to all three belong in your janazah wishes.