



Foreign & Commonwealth Office

Bereavement information pack Brunei Darussalam

CONSULAR SECTION
British High Commission
Unit 2.01, 2nd Floor, Block D
Kompleks Bangunan Yayasan Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah
Jalan Pretty
Bandar Seri Begawan BS8811

Tel: +673 2222231 (option 2 on the menu)

Fax: +673 2234315

Email: bsbconsularenquiries@fco.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/world/brunei

Last updated – January 2019

Disclaimer: This information is provided by the British Government for the convenience of enquirers, but neither Her Majesty's Government nor any official of the High Commission take any responsibility for the accuracy of the information, not accept liability for any loss, costs, damage or expense which you might suffer as a result of relying on the information supplied. It is not a substitute for obtaining your own legal advice.

Bereavement Information Pack

Consular guidance & local information

The death of a relative or friend can be a traumatic experience. When the death occurs overseas, family and friends in the UK can feel additional distress as they are unfamiliar with the foreign procedures and perhaps are unable to communicate in the language of the country where the death occurred. Consular Directorate of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and our High Commission in Brunei are ready to assist and provide advice as far as they can. You may be uncertain about what to do next or who to contact for advice. These notes are designed to help you through the practical arrangements you will need to make.

You should be aware that Brunei procedures differ from those in the United Kingdom. The police are always notified when the death of a foreign national occurs. They in turn will notify the relevant High Commission. While we understand your need to make arrangements as quickly as possible, this may not always be possible due to the Brunei Government requirements before repatriation of the remains. Forwarding companies also act as undertaker and do all the necessary preparations. We have included some companies below on a list.

Whilst care has been taken in compiling this document, the contents are not meant to be definitive statement of the law, nor are they to be taken as a substitute for independent legal advice.

The use of the terms body, body parts, remains, deceased etc are not meant to offend you in any way. We realise that we are referring to your loved one and we mean no disrespect to the person you have lost.

Autopsies (Post Mortems)

In the event of a death in Brunei, an autopsy must be carried out before repatriation or cremation. Autopsies are carried out by appointed doctors with forensic qualifications. There is normally no organ retention without the next of kin's consent. The report is usually made available to the family. For a more detailed report the family would have to apply to the Chief Executive Officer of the hospital or direct to the pathologist.

Mortuary Facilities

Bodies are kept at the cold storage facilities to be found in Bandar Seri Begawan (RIPAS hospital) or Kuala Belait. Most bodies are stored at RIPAS.

Repatriation

Following the death of a British national in Brunei, the next of kin, or a formally appointed representative, must decide whether to:

- i) repatriate the deceased to the UK
- ii) have a local cremation and the ashes repatriated to the UK or
- iii) have a local cremation and the ashes scattered in Brunei
- iv) have a local burial

Consular staff in London can pass on to the British High Commission in Brunei the wishes of the next of kin concerning the deceased, and details of who accepts/is taking responsibility for all the costs involved in this. We will do our best to ensure these wishes are carried out.

The next of kin should also be aware that all hospital bills must be paid before the body can be released.

If the deceased was insured you should contact the insurance company who will be able to make the necessary arrangements. If there is no insurance cover, funds for repatriation will be met by the family. Neither the Foreign and Commonwealth Office nor our High Commission have budgets to meet these costs.

If the deceased is to be repatriated the next of kin should appoint either an international funeral director or a local undertaker in Brunei and a UK undertaker in the UK who will make arrangements for the collection of the body on arrival from the port of entry in the UK. The British High Commission can assist with the appointment of a local undertaker in Brunei. When the deceased is to be repatriated, the remains must be embalmed and placed in a zinc-lined coffin. Local undertakers in Brunei are equipped to carry out these repatriation procedures and will provide the special caskets required for the international carriage of human remains. A local civil registry death certificate, plus the doctor's post mortem report (indicating cause of death), a certificate of embalming, and a certificate giving permission to transfer the remains to the UK is required to ship the body. Repatriation to the UK generally costs £10,000.00 to £12,000.00 and takes 5 –7 days to complete.

Repatriation of ashes to UK

In order to repatriate ashes, you should travel with the cremation certificate and the death certificate in order to present these to the airline and/or HMRC (Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs). The urn must have been sealed by the Brunei Ministry of Health.

Local burial and cremation

The next of kin will need to give burial or cremation instructions to the local undertaker in Brunei, which can be done via the British High Commission. Although the next of kin's decision is final, local cremation is advised against on the grounds that facilities are inadequate and the likely result could be distressing if next of kin or close family and friends attend the cremation. It is advisable for the family or next of kin to liaise with the forwarding agents to get the current cost and to know exactly what they are providing.

An inquest will not take place in the UK if a local burial or local cremation takes place.

Registration of the death

Brunei will issue a death certificate in English. This takes about a week once the cause of death has been identified.

Brunei's death certificates give details of the cause of death, as would be the case in the UK.

Although not obligatory, it is possible to register the death of a British national who has died in Brunei with UK authorities. To register, please submit an application to the Overseas Resident Unit. For full information on how to apply, please visit: <https://www.gov.uk/register-a-death>

A fee is charged for this service.

Return of Personal Effects

Normally returned to the family by the police or hospital depending on the circumstances surrounding the death.

Police/Judicial Inquiries

In the event of a suspicious death or road traffic accident the police will lead the investigation. They will normally make a copy of their report available to the family.

The local magistrates' courts try most cases. More serious cases go before the High Court, which sits for about 2 weeks every few months. Brunei has an arrangement with the United Kingdom whereby United Kingdom judges are appointed as the judges for Brunei's High Court and Court of Appeal.

The judicial system consists of five levels of courts, with final recourse in civil cases available through the Privy Council in London. Procedural safeguards include the right to a speedy trial and the right to confront accusers.

Legal Aid

There is no legal provision to provide affordable legal counsel.

Compensation

There is currently no government compensation scheme available in murder/manslaughter/terrorism cases which are applicable to foreign nationals.

Victim Support

Victim Support is a national charity in the United Kingdom, who provides free and confidential help to bereaved families and friends.

Victim Support can be contacted at any time:

England and Wales: 0808 16 89 11 www.victimsupport.org.uk

Scotland: 0345 603 9213 www.victimsupportsco.org.uk

Northern Island: 0289 024 3133 www.victimsupportni.co.uk

Miscellaneous:

Dr P U Telesinghe

Head Pathologist
RIPAS Hospital
Tel: 2242424 Ext. 6506

Dr Hajah Rahmah binti Haji Mohd. Said

Director
Environmental Sanitation Health Section
Jalan Menteri Besar
Bandar Seri Begawan
Tel: 2382023
PA: Nita

Firdaus

Technician at Mortuary
RIPAS Hospital
8220682

Amir Rafie

Mortuary RIPAS
888 5651

Saimay

Mortuary RIPAS
8884986

**Huar Enterprise
Undertaker**

Mr Lee
877 4414

Daily Express Forwarding Company

Unit 6, Bock K, 1st Floor
Pg. Haji Menudin dan Anak Anak Shopping complex
Tungku Link- Jalan Batu Bersurat
Gadong BE3519
Contact person: Gilbert Nagamo
Tel:2421997
Fax: 2421996

Phang ah Ming Enterprise

Phang Foong Ling (Managing Director)
No. 420, Kampong Penabai
Kuala Tutong
Tutong TA3541
Tel: 4260132
Mdm Phang: 897 8122
Mr Khoo: 816 8872 (A Guan)