

COVID-19

HANDLE WITH CARE

MANAGING THE BODIES OF DECEASED COVID-19 PATIENTS

GUIDANCE FOR MORTUARIES AND FUNERAL HOMES



TRANSPORT

- Perform hand hygiene whenever in contact with the deceased or their surroundings
- Members of the transport team should wear personal protective equipment (PPE): gloves, surgical mask, long-sleeved gown and face shield or goggles
- No special vehicle is required for transporting the body
- Make sure the body is wrapped in cloth or other material; body bags are not necessary
- Minimize handling and movement of the body



MORTUARY CARE

- Advise mortuary staff and funeral directors of the biohazard risk
- Use standard precautions at all times: hand hygiene, environmental cleaning, management of medical waste
- Morticians should wear appropriate PPE according to the procedure*
- Embalming is not recommended
- Clean and disinfect mortuary environment according to local standards



VIEWING & BURIAL

- If family members wish to view the body, instruct them not to touch or kiss the body and to perform hand hygiene
- Decedents with COVID-19 may be buried or cremated**

*Long-sleeved gown, gloves and facial protection should be used if there is a risk of splashes from the decedent's body fluids or secretions onto the body or face of the staff member.

**Check local requirements for handling and disposition of the remains of individuals who have died of COVID-19.