

DISPOSITION OF REMAINS AMERICAN EMBASSY ATHENS, GREECE

MAJOR RELIGIONS

Roughly 95% of the permanent population of Greece professes the Greek Orthodox faith, the remaining 5% is divided among Roman Catholics, Protestants, Moslems, Jews, and Gregorian Armenians. While customs pertaining to death and burial are dominated by Greek Orthodox practice, numerous mortuaries are well acquainted with and able to follow most practices of other religions and traditions.

REFRIGERATION

There are about 350 refrigerated units in the Attica area, including the Athens and Piraeus morgues, and facilities at cemeteries and funeral homes. The Athens Morgue is located at Mikras Asias 75, Athens, tel. 210-7462429, and the Piraeus Morgue is located at Gounari 31-33, Piraeus, tel. 210-4613904.

EMBALMING

Embalming is done in Greece when remains are to be transported long distances. Under Greek regulations, un-embalmed remains must be buried prior to the onset of decay, or within 48 hours of death. In remote areas without refrigeration, un-embalmed remains must be buried within 24 hours in the summer; during winter months the deadline can be extended to 36 hours. Embalming costs averages from 180/ Euros/\$230.47 to 350 Euros/\$448.14 in Athens and from 200 Euros/\$256.08 to 600 Euros/\$768.25 in outlying parts of the country and remote islands.

AUTOPSIES

An autopsy is mandatory when a violent or sudden death occurs or when the deceased was hospitalized less than 24 hours, unless there had been a clear prior diagnosis explaining cause of death. The deceased's attending physician or relatives may request an autopsy after any death. The Ministry of Justice employs approximately 25 coroners country-wide who are responsible for performing autopsies. District attorneys and police authorize the autopsies.

Please Note: Autopsies – In October 2012, the Embassy learned that during an autopsy, organs may be removed along with histological tissue for testing at the discretion of the Medical Examiner, **without** the knowledge or consent of next of-kin. Autopsies are carried out by local Medical Examiners who fall under the jurisdiction of the Greek Ministry of Justice. Tests are completed on removed organs and specimens, long after the deceased's body has been buried

locally or shipped to the U.S. The Greek Ministry of Justice has indicated that organs and specimens tested remain in the possession of the lab three months from the day that the autopsy was performed and destroyed afterwards.

Organs removed and histological specimens taken may be returned to the next-of-kin upon his/her request, provided that a power of attorney either to a lawyer or local funeral home is sent in order for them to apply for the return of the above with the appropriate department of the lab. There are costs involved and this is a lengthy administrative procedure. Costs can vary from 500 Euros/\$640.20 to 1,900 Euros/\$2,432.78 (rates are subject to exchange rate fluctuations)

For information of on local English- speaking attorneys, please see our list of [Attorneys](#) or the funeral homes below.

CREMATION

Cremation is now legally permitted in Greece when the deceased is not of the Greek Orthodox faith, but no cremation facilities are yet available. Some funeral homes ship embalmed remains to nearby countries where cremation is permitted, and make necessary arrangements to forward the ashes for final disposition.

LOCAL BURIAL/SHIPMENT TO THE U.S.:

BURIAL IN GREECE:

The cost of a simple burial in Greece, without embalming, averages from 1,450 Euros/\$1,856.59 to 3,200 Euros/\$4,097.31 (See “embalming” for additional costs).

SHIPMENT OF REMAINS TO THE US:

The basic cost for complete preparation of remains from Athens to the U.S., charged by the Greek funeral home, averages from 2,300 Euros/\$2,944.94 to 10,000 Euros/\$12,804.10. The shipping cost charged by the airline for shipping the remains from Athens to the U.S., is in addition to the fees of the funeral home and is calculated on weight. (Detailed charges may be found on page 5.) When the death occurs outside of Athens an additional cost is charged by the funeral home covering ferry charges, mileage, highway tolls, etc. The fee for storage varies from 30 Euros/\$38.41 to 150 Euros/\$192.06 per day.

EXHUMATION AND SHIPMENT

According to local law, in urban, public cemeteries, skeletal remains must be exhumed three years after interment and placed in an ossuary container. Un-embalmed remains may be disinterred before three years elapse only by permission of the local district attorney, and exhumation must occur in the presence of the coroner. The cost of shipment of such un-embalmed remains to the U.S. varies from 2,300 Euro/\$2,944.94 to 6,000 Euros/\$7,682.46. The shipping costs are in addition to the fees described above.

SHIPMENT OF SKELETAL REMAINS TO THE US:

The basic cost of complete exhumation and preparation for shipment of skeletal remains from Athens to the U.S., charged by the Greek funeral home, averages from 1,000 Euros/\$1,280.41 to 2,500 Euros/\$3,201.02. The shipping cost charged by the airline for shipping the skeletal remains from Athens to the U.S., is in addition to the fees of the funeral home and will depend on the weight of the remains. (Details may be found on page 5.) The cost for the preparation of shipment of skeletal remains from Athens, averages from 1,000 Euros/\$ 1,280.41 to 2,500 Euros/\$ 3,201.02. The shipping costs are in addition to the fees described above.

CASKETS AND CONTAINERS

Although hermetically sealed, metal caskets, such as those used in the U.S., are now available at a few Athens funeral homes, this type of casket is seldom used for shipment due to the cost and weight. Instead, a wooden casket is placed inside a metal container which is welded shut. The container is in turn encased in a wooden box for shipment.

The following list of Funeral Homes is provided for death cases involving U.S. citizens, with the disclaimer that the list does not constitute an endorsement, and that the fee and method of payment should be negotiated directly by those responsible for payment with the funeral home of his/her choice:

INFORMATION FOR FUNERAL HOMES

Dealing with the death of a family member or loved one can be a very stressful experience and this is often compounded when the death occurs overseas. We hope that the following information on what to expect from the process here in Greece is helpful to you if you are faced with such a situation.

The American Embassy in Athens prepares the consular "Report of an American Citizen Abroad" for all U.S. citizens who die in Greece. This document is for use in the U.S. and it is based on the Greek Death certificate, the deceased's U.S. passport and information given to us by the relatives. For that purpose the deceased's relatives should contact the American Citizen Services of the American Embassy in Athens, Monday through Friday from 8:30 – 17.00, tel. 210-720-2414, fax 210-724-5313.

The list of funeral homes which follows is provided for your assistance and does not constitute an endorsement by the Embassy. The fee and method of payment must be negotiated by you directly with the funeral home of your choice. The Embassy can assist with the transfer of funds from the U.S. or elsewhere, or you can have them directly sent to the funeral home of your choice through Western Union.

Should you wish the remains to be shipped to the U.S. please ascertain whether the funeral home you select is able to arrange this.

Our experience has shown the average cost of preparation for shipment to be from 2,700 Euros/\$3,457.11 to 10,000 Euros/\$12,804.10 (rate 0.781 euro to one dollar of November 23, 2012) plus

shipping costs. Please have in mind that costs vary depending on currency fluctuations, weight of shipment, destination, etc.

Although cremation is now permitted in Greece, no cremation facilities have yet been constructed. For the time being, cremations must be conducted elsewhere in Europe.

Information for persons of Jewish faith:

The Jewish community offers services requested by the faith in the course of preparation. The following contacts will be helpful: The Office of the Jewish Community of Athens, Rabbi Iakov Arar, 5 Melidoni Street, Athens, 210 325-2823, 210 325-2773, 210-325-2875.

ATHENS

GIANNAKOPOULOS Anargyros Funeral Home

Director: Mr. Anargyros Giannakopoulos
22 Aristipou Street, 106 76 Athens
Tel. 210 721-0173/721-0174, Fax.210 723-1650
Nikos Giannakopoulos: 6977326484
Dimitris Sotiropoulos: 6977329292
e-mail: gianakopoulos@otenet.gr

KALOUMENOS Minas Funeral Home

Director: Mr. Minas Kaloumenos
95 Ioanninon Street, 104 44 Athens
Tel. 210 515-4600 (office)
Fax. 210 513-1660, 210 252-7550 (home)
Cell phone: 6944304051
e-mail: mk@mkassist.gr

KYRIAKIDIS Nikolaos Funeral Home

Director: Nikolaos Kyriakidis
27 Anapafseos, 116 36 Athens
Tel. 210-923-7772, 210-9227900
Fax 210-9221607
Website: www.kyriakidisfunerals.gr
E-mail: infor@kyriakidisfunerals.gr

Successors of K. LYKOSKOUFIS & Co

Director: Mr. Vasilis Kokoris
20 Hippokratous Str. 106 79 Athens
Tel. 210 361-2007/ 362-3598 (office)
Tel. 210-610-6061 (home)
Fax. 210 361-6084, Cell phone: 6972885324
e-mail: kokoris@otenet.gr

CORFU

KOSTAS GRAMMENOS Funeral Home

Director: Mr. Kostas Grammenos
18 Alex. Panagouli, 491 00 Corfu
Tel.26610-20390/ 042141,Fax.26610-40560
Cell phone: 6948214734
e-mail: grammen@otenet.gr

IRAKLIO, CRETE

MARKOULAKIS M. Funeral Home

Director: Mr. Minas Markoulakis
1 Radamanthous Street
71201 Iraklio, Crete
Tel. 281-0-28450/282080, Fax. 289133
Cell phone: 6944471147
e-mail: info@funeral.gr

RHODES

THEMELIS ASTERIS Funeral Home

Director: Mrs. Stella Asteris
107 Kritika Street, 851 Rhodes
Tel. 2241-024107/034279,Fax.2241-037300
Cell phone: 6945791798

AMERIKANOS G. Funeral Home

Director: Mrs. Maria Amerikanos
56 Patriarchou Athinagora Street
851 00 Rhodes
Tel. 2241-033400/ 028901, Fax 028901
Cell phone: 6978338198

D.K. MYSTRAS Funeral Home

Director: Mr. Dimitris Mystras

50 Sari Street, 105 53 Athens

Tel. 210 321-8692/ 324-5562/ 324-2163

Fax 210 325-2356, Cell phone: 6944 506790

e-mail: mystrask@otenet.gr

AIRFRIGHT COSTS PER KILO

LOCAL COSTS HAVE BEEN CONVERTED FROM THE LOCAL CURRENCY (EURO) TO US DOLS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE EXCHANGE RATE OF 11/23/2012: 1.00 EURO EQUALS TO US DOLS 0,781

KLM & AIR FRANCE

ATHENS – CHICAGO	4.60 EURO	(US DOLS \$5.89)
ATHENS – HOUSTON	4.60 EURO	(US DOLS \$5.89)
ATHENS – LOS ANGELES	4.60 EURO	(US DOLS \$5.89)
ATHENS – NEW YORK	4.60 EURO	(US DOLS \$5.89)
ATHENS – MIAMI	4.60 EURO	(US DOLS \$5.89)

*PLUS AIRPORT FEES, HUMAN REMAINS FEES, TERMINAL HANDLING, AIRWAY BILL FEES:
125.68 Euros (US DOLS \$ 160.92)

DELTA

ATHENS - NEW YORK	3.70 EURO	(US DOLS \$4.74)
ATHENS - LOS ANGELES	5.17 EURO	(US DOLS \$6.62)

*PLUS AIRPORT FEES, HUMAN REMAINS, TERMINAL HANDLING AND AIRWAY BILL FEES:
141.45 EURO (US DOLS \$181.11)

CONTINENTAL

ATHENS-CHICAGO	5.58 EURO	(US DOLS \$ 7.14)
ATHENS – LOS ANGELES	6.41 EURO	(US DOLS \$ 8.21)
ATHENS – NEW YORK	6.14 EURO	(US DOLS \$ 7.86)
ATHENS – MIAMI	5.34 EURO	(US DOLS \$ 6.84)
ATHENS - HOUSTON	6.18 EURO	(US DOLS \$ 7.91)

*PLUS AIRPORT FEES, HUMAN REMAINS, TERMINAL HANDLING AND AIRWAY BILL FEES:
450.80 EURO (US DOLS \$577.21)

LUFTHANSA

ATHENS – CHICAGO	7.43 EURO	(US DOLS \$ 9.51)
ATHENS – LOS ANGELES	7.50 EURO	(US DOLS \$ 9.60)

ATHENS – NEW YORK	7.43 EURO	(US DOLS \$ 9.51)
ATHENS – MIAMI	7.88 EURO	(US DOLS \$10.09)
ATHENS – HOUSTON	7.50 EURO	(US DOLS \$ 9.60)
*PLUS AIRPORT FEES, HUMAN REMAINS, TERMINAL HANDLING THE AIRWAY BILL FEES:		
95.00 EURO		(US DOLS \$121.64)

The numerous airlines serving Athens usually make international shipment feasible on a daily basis. However, routings often cannot be direct due to freight limitations on certain flights and the need to secure onward connections and proper storage facilities at the U.S. port of entry. In-country transport from outlying areas to Athens is often done by truck or by hearse. Boat or domestic flights are also available. Trains are rarely used.

**Note: All costs above have been converted from local currency (Euros) to Dollars in accordance with the rate of 11/23/2012
1 Euro=0.781 US DOLS.**

American Citizen Services
American Embassy, Athens, Greece
November 2012