

Disposition of Remains Report: Bangkok

January 20, 2016

Part I. Name of Country

Thailand

Part II. U.S. Embassy Information

Address: U.S. Embassy Bangkok, American Citizen Services, 95 Wireless Road, Bangkok 10330, THAILAND

Phone: Country Code 66 Area Code 2 205-4000 (24-hour Switchboard)

Fax: Country Code 66 Area Code 2 205-4103 (American Citizen Services Unit)

[State Department Country Specific Information](#)

[State Department Travel Information \(Alerts and Warnings\)](#)

[Smart Traveler Enrollment Program \(STEP\)](#)

Part III. Profile of Religions in Thailand and Religious Services Available to Visitors

Country Profile: Visit the State Department website [Thailand Fact Sheet](#)

Religions: Thailand has no official state religion and guarantees religious freedom for all Thai citizens, although the King is required by law to be Theravada Buddhist. The primary religion practiced in Thailand is Buddhism. Other religions practiced in Thailand include Hinduism, Confucianism, Taoism, Islam and Christianity, which are generally practiced by those living in Bangkok, where a multi-cultural population includes citizens of Indian, Chinese, Japanese and European descent.

Religious Activities for Visitors: English-language services are available in Bangkok for members of most faiths and denominations. There are Buddhist, Roman Catholic, Baptist, Seventh-day Adventist, Anglican, Mormon, Lutheran, Interdenominational, Jewish, Hindu, and Muslim temples, churches, synagogues, and mosques offering a variety of services to the local and foreign community.

Part IV. Funeral Directors, Morticians and Related Services Available in Thailand

DISCLAIMER: The U.S. Embassy Bangkok assumes no responsibility or liability for the professional ability or reputation of, or the quality of services provided by, the following persons or firms. Names are listed alphabetically, and the order in which they appear has no other significance. Professional credentials and areas of expertise are provided directly by the funeral directors, morticians and other service providers.

AsiaOne International by Teck Hong Funeral (THF)

No.7, THF Building, Chan Road Soi 46
Wat Phrayakrai, Bangkholaem
Bangkok 10120 THAILAND
Phone: +66-2-675-0501 or 0502
Mobile:+ 66-81-854-3165 (Mr. Hiran)
Mobile:+ 66-81-845-7592 (Ms. Jessica)
Fax. +66-2-675-2227
info@thf.co.th
<http://www.asiaone-thf.com/>

John Allison Monkhouse (Thailand)

Suite 302, S16 Building, 256/9 Sukhumvit Soi 6
Klongtoey
Bangkok 10110 THAILAND
Phone: +66-2-261-7929; +66-2-382-5345
Mobile: +66-89-215-7799 (Ms. Pim Karnasuta)
Fax: +66-2-261-7939
pim@allisonmonkhouse.com
<http://www.funeralrepatriation.com/>

Siam Funeral & Repatriation Co., Ltd.

30/21 Village No. 6, Klongsi
Klongluang
Pathumthani 12120 THAILAND
Phone: +66-2-902-7907
Mobile +66-86-777-0214
Fax: +66-2-902-7906
siamfuneral@gmail.com
<http://www.siamfuneral.com/>

Part V. Profile of Services Available in Thailand Regarding Preparation and Shipment of Remains

When a U.S. citizen dies in Thailand, the body is usually preserved until the next-of-kin decides how to handle the remains.

In order to determine the cause of death, the medical examiner on the scene may recommend an autopsy when a U.S. citizen dies outside of a hospital setting. Autopsies are normally performed free of charge by the Forensic Institute at the Police General Hospital in Bangkok or by another forensic institute within 24 hours of receiving the remains. Thai autopsy reports take at least 45 business days to produce and may fall short of the standard expected in the United States.

Autopsies are not typically performed on U.S. citizens who die in hospitals, except at the request and expense of the next-of-kin. Hospitals are normally able to provide a cause of death, which is required for issuance of a Thai death certificate.

If remains are not immediately claimed by the next-of-kin, then hospitals and/or forensic institutes may be willing to store them for a period of time. Storage periods and morgue fees vary by institution. Unclaimed remains are buried in common graves.

1. Maximum Period Before Burial of Remains

Thailand does not require burial or cremation within a prescribed period of time.

2. Embalming

Most hospitals, forensic institutes, and funeral homes can embalm remains with authorization from the next-of-kin. Embalming is required for multi-day religious funerals and for repatriation of remains.

Embalming and mortuary services in Thailand may fall short of the standard expected in the United States. Open-casket funerals are not recommended without prior consultation with a funeral director in the United States.

3. Cremation

Cremation is a common practice in Thailand and normally takes place at Buddhist temples.

Typical Thai cremation procedures do not produce fine ash as is customary in the United States.

4. Casket and Containers:

Caskets and containers that meet the requirements of the U.S. Public Health Service and U.S. port authorities are readily available in Thailand.

5. Exportation of Human Remains:

A casket containing a body is treated as freight. Thai shipping and/or U.S. government regulations require remains to be embalmed and sealed in metal-lined caskets. Funeral homes can pack and ship remains by air to the United States. Costs vary depending on the place of death.

The following documentation is required to export human remains by air freight:

- Consular Report of Death Abroad (issued by a U.S. Embassy or U.S. Consulate)
- Thai death certificate (issued by a local government authority)
- Certified English translation of Thai death certificate (issued by a professional translator)
- Embalming certificate and statement of placement of remains in coffin (issued by a mortician)
- Thai Customs declaration
- Copy of deceased's passport
- Consular mortuary certificate

Funeral homes normally obtain the necessary documents as part of their services packages. Speed of service varies by airline, funeral home, and itinerary. It may take 10 days or longer from the time of death for human remains to arrive in the United States.

6. Exportation of Human Cremains/Ashes

Funeral homes can pack and ship cremains to the United States by air freight or by mail. The American Citizen Services unit at the U.S. Embassy Bangkok may be able to assist with mailing cremated remains to the United States upon request.

The following documentation is required to export human cremains by air freight:

- Consular Report of Death Abroad (issued by a U.S. Embassy or U.S. Consulate)
- Thai death certificate (issued by a local government authority)
- Certified English translation of Thai death certificate (issued by a professional translator)
- Cremation certificate and affidavit from local funeral director concerning contents of urn (issued by a funeral home)
- Thai Customs declaration
- Copy of the deceased's passport
- Consular mortuary certificate

Funeral homes normally obtain the necessary documents as part of their service packages. It may take 10 days or longer from the time of death for cremains to arrive in the United States.

7. Costs

The next-of-kin or legal representative of the deceased is responsible for paying all fees including outstanding hospital bills, mortuary costs, funeral home expenses and shipping fees. The U.S. Embassy Bangkok encourages next-of-kin or legal representatives to send payment directly to the funeral home of choice. When this is not possible, American Citizen Services at the U.S. Embassy Bangkok may be able to pay vendors from money deposited by the next-of-kin or legal representative into a Department of State Overseas Citizens Services Trust.

Costs below are illustrative only and represent the rounded average of three funeral homes at the current exchange rate. Actual costs may vary.

Service	Average Cost (USD)
Autopsy	\$80
Autopsy report	\$40
Cremation	\$1,000
Exportation of human remains	\$3,500
Exportation of human cremains (air freight)	\$300
Exportation of human cremains (by registered mail)	\$150
Morgue (first 30 days)	\$50
Morgue (per day after first 30 days)	\$20
Translation of autopsy report and death certificate (per document)	\$30

8. Exhumation and Shipment

If remains were buried in a common grave, either because the U.S. Embassy could not identify a next-of-kin or because the remains went unclaimed, it may still be possible to obtain a death certificate and exhume the remains after burial. The concerned party should: 1.) Contact the hospital or forensic institute that handled the remains prior to interment to obtain a record of the cause of death and to request the name of the charitable foundation or other entity that handled the burial; 2.) Contact the Thai Amphur (local registration office) to request an official Thai death certificate; 3.) Contact the charitable foundation or other entity that handled the burial to request the location of the cemetery and grave number.

Shipment: See Exportation of Human Remains and Exportation of Human Cremains, above.

9. Local Customs Regarding Funerals, Disposition of Remains, Mourning, Memorial Service

Some Thai hospitals require a letter of instruction from the U.S. Embassy in order to release remains into the custody of the next-of-kin or legal representative of the deceased. In such cases, the U.S. Embassy can issue a letter of instruction in accordance with a will or, in the absence of a will, upon receipt of notarized Affidavits of Next-of-Kin from all next-of-kin.

A typical Thai funeral involves transporting the remains from a hospital or forensic institute to a Thai temple, where the body is placed into a coffin and brought to the crematorium. Four Buddhist monks chant for about 30 minutes before the coffin is placed into the crematorium oven. Ashes are usually collected the next day and placed into an urn. Some families choose to have a Buddhist funeral ceremony before cremation. A Buddhist funeral ceremony involves a water ritual performed on the body, a display of the coffin in a funeral hall, and nightly chanting by monks from 7-8 PM for one, three or nine days. Mourners may present the family of the deceased with a wreath or money in an envelope.