

Disposition of Remains Report: Fukuoka

January 27, 2012

Name of Country: Japan

U.S. Consulate Information

U.S. Consulate Fukuoka

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(Exchange rate used: \$1.00 = 77 Japanese Yen)

(1) Maximum Period Before Burial

There is no Japanese law limiting the time in which a body must be interred, but the scarcity and expense of refrigerated storage facilities dictate that the disposition of remains be completed as quickly as possible. Bodily interment is not customary in Japan.

According to local custom, the remains are usually cremated a few days after death and buried. The only Japanese law governing the disposition of remains in Law No. 48 of 1948 (“Law Regarding Graveyards, Burials and Others”). This law states that “a corpse or stillborn fetus shall not be buried or cremated earlier than 24 hours after its death or birth, except as otherwise provided by ordinance.”

When death results from an infectious or epidemic disease, however, interment within 24 hours is permitted under Law No. 114, “Law Concerning Prevention of Infectious Diseases and Patients with Infectious Diseases” of October 2, 1998. The law states that the remains infected with infectious disease or possibly exposed to infectious disease may be cremated or buried within 24 hours upon recommendation of a physician or a medical examiner and with the approval of the competent officials.

(2) Embalming

Cremation is the norm and embalming is not common in Japan. There are very few commercial embalming facilities in Japan. The practice is so rare that it has never been subjected to Japanese government regulation. Therefore there are no Japanese standards or licensing procedures.

There is no U.S. standard commercial embalming facility in Fukuoka's consular district so that post transfers the remains to either Tokyo or Osaka for embalming if such a request is made.

(3) Cremation

Cremation is the customary practice in Japan, and crematoria are located throughout the country. The arrangements for cremation are handled by local undertakers. Japanese law forbids cremation or burial of the remains earlier than 24 hours after death, except as otherwise provided by ordinance. By local custom, the remains are cremated on the second or third day after death. The only legal requirement for cremation is to obtain Permission for Cremation, which is issued by the village, town, ward or city office, upon presentation of the Report of Death. Each local governing body sets the cost for cremation according to its local ordinance. The city of Fukuoka charges 20,000 Japanese Yen (\$260.00) to cremate the remains of a resident of the city, and 70,000 Yen (\$910.00) for non-resident.

(4) Caskets and Containers

There are no Japanese laws or regulations, national or local, prescribing the kinds of containers which can be used for burial of uncremated bodies. Japanese usually have the deceased cremated and the ashes stored in simple urns. Remains are usually placed in simple unpainted, wooden boxes for cremation. There is little demand for burial coffins, and elaborate coffins of the kind used in the United States are not readily available in Japan and must be specially ordered. When the remains of a deceased person are to be shipped to the United States, the embalmed remains are placed in a wooden casket, which is lined with metal to meet the requirements of the U.S. Public Health Service and U.S. port authorities. Since there is little demand for burial caskets, those normally used for burying the dead are of the same simple type as wooden containers used for cremation.

(5) Exportation of Human Remains

There are no Japanese laws, national or local, forbidding or otherwise govern the exportation of human remains. A casket or urn, containing the remains or ashes, is treated as ordinary freight or baggage and a regular customs declaration. Individual shipping companies and airlines have their own rules and regulations concerning shipments of remains to the United States. In general, they are based on rules established by the U.S. Public Health Service. Procedures and documents for the exportation of human remains are as follows; except as noted, all are shipping company or U.S. requirement.

Embalmed Body:

1. Embalming of the remains;

2. Enclosure of the remains in a metal lined casket;
3. Consular Report of Death of an American Citizen Abroad;
4. Japanese Death Certificate from the local government authority (required by Japanese customs);
5. Mortuary Certificate, Mortician's embalming certificate;
6. Affidavit by local funeral director;
7. A copy of the deceased's passport;
8. Regular customs declaration (required by Japanese customs).

Human Ashes (Air freight):

1. Consular Report of Death of an American Citizen Abroad;
2. Japanese Death Certificate from local government authority;
3. Japanese Cremation Certificate with an endorsement on date of the cremation took place;
4. Certificate of the Contents of Urn - A certificate from the crematory stating that the container holds only the cremated remains ("cremains") of the deceased;
5. A copy of the deceased's passport.

Human Ashes (mail):

Although ashes cannot be shipped by mail within Japan, they may be mailed abroad as ordinary parcels through Japanese postal facilities if packed in a solid, tightly-closed container. There are no special regulations covering such shipments.

(6) Costs:

All dollar cost have been converted from the cost in local currency at the rate of exchange of **77 yen to one dollar**, which prevailed on January 20, 2012. We used the information reported by the following website for Tokyo and Osaka's cost.

<http://japan.usembassy.gov/e/acs/tacs-7125e.html> - U.S. Embassy Tokyo

<http://japan.usembassy.gov/e/acs/tacs-7125f.html> - U.S. Consulate-General Osaka-Kobe

a. Cremation

The following are uniform prices for residents and non-residents charged in Fukuoka.

| <u>Resident of Fukuoka</u> | <u>Yen</u> | <u>Dollars</u> (est.) |
|----------------------------|------------|-----------------------|
| Adult | 20,000 | \$260.00 |
| Child under 10 years old | 10,000 | 130.00 |
| <u>Non-resident</u> | | |
| Adult | 70,000 | \$909.00 |
| Child under 10 years old | 35,000 | 454.50 |

b. Local interment of cremated remains (including urn, local transportation, and permanent grave plot)

| | | |
|--|------------------|------------------|
| Coffin | 120,000 | \$1,558.00 |
| Urn | 30,000 | 390.00 |
| Others (Undertaker's fee including care of the remains, storage, documents, funeral, dry ice, flowers, etc.) | 500,000 | 6,493.00 |
| Local transportation | 20,000 | 260.00 |
| <u>Grave plot</u> | <u>1,000,000</u> | <u>12,987.00</u> |
| Total | 1,670,000 | \$21,688.00 |

c. Embalming: Not available in Fukuoka's consular district

When death occurs in Fukuoka's consular district, the remains may be transported to either Tokyo or Osaka for embalming and forward shipment.

| | <u>Yen</u> | <u>Dollars</u> (est.) |
|----------------------------------|------------|-----------------------|
| By commercial embalmers in Tokyo | 157,500 | \$2,045.00 |
| By commercial embalmers in Osaka | 300,000 | 3,896.00 |

The above estimate cost is prepared by Tokyo and Osaka and does not include air transportation of remains to Osaka or Tokyo mortuary from Fukuoka; for full estimate add costs from note e.-ii below.

d. Preparation for shipment:

| | | |
|---|---------|-------------|
| i. including embalming, documentation, casket, and cold storage in Tokyo: | 930,000 | \$12,077.00 |
| in Osaka: | 730,000 | 9,480.00 |

- ii, including cremation, coffin, cold storage
dry ice, and urn in Fukuoka 400,000 \$5,194.00

e.g.: coffin 120,000 Yen ; cold storage 10,000 Yen per day,
dry ice 6,000 Yen per 10kgs; urn 30,000 Yen;
Undertaker’s fee including care of the remains 100,000 yen; cremation fee 70,000
yen for a non-resident of Fukuoka.

e. Domestic transportation

The following additional transportation fee will be added for the flight from the local funeral home to the Osaka or Tokyo mortuary facility if the remains must be transferred to Osaka or Tokyo for preparation.

- i. Local transportation from a funeral home to airport

| | | |
|------------|------------|------------|
| Up to 10km | 13,640 Yen | (\$177.14) |
| ~ 20km | 16,034 Yen | (\$208.23) |
| ~ 30km | 19,446 Yen | (\$252.54) |
| ~ 110km | 42,702 Yen | (\$554.57) |
| ~ 210km | 71,432 Yen | (\$927.68) |

- ii. Air Freight (Average weight of human remains in a casket – 250 kg)

| From | To Osaka | | To Tokyo | |
|-----------------------------|----------|----------------|----------|----------------|
| | Yen | Dollars (est.) | Yen | Dollars (est.) |
| Fukuoka/Nagasaki/Oita/Saga | 43,303 | \$562.00 | 84,053 | \$1,091.00 |
| Kumamoto/Kagoshima/Miyazaki | 68,053 | 884.00 | 100,303 | 1,303.00 |
| Yamaguchi (Ube) | 41,053 | 533.00 | 69,553 | 903.00 |

Note: In summer, approximately 15 to 20 kilograms of dry ice is used when a body is transported, at a cost of 6,000 Yen (est. \$78) per 10 kg.

f. Shipment of Human Remains:

Average weight of an export type casket with human remains is 250 kilograms (550 pounds).

- 1) There is no direct flight from Fukuoka to the continental United States.
Below is the air freight fee from Fukuoka via All Nippon Airways or Cathy Pacific Airways transiting through an airport(s) in Asian country(ies).

| <u>From FUKUOKA to:</u> | <u>Rate/Kg</u> | <u>Yen</u> | <u>Dollars</u> (est.) |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|------------------------------|
| New York | 2,400 (\$31) | 600,000 | \$7,792 |
| Honolulu | 1,860 (\$24) | 465,000 | 6,039 |
| Dallas | 2,360 (\$30) | 590,000 | 7,662 |
| San Francisco | 2,070 (\$27) | 517,500 | 6,721 |
| Chicago | 2,360 (\$31) | 590,000 | 7,662 |

Fuel surcharge as of January 20, 2012: All Nippon Airways: Yen 134/kg,
Cathay Pacific Airways: Yen 135/kg

- 2) If the remains is transported to either Tokyo or Osaka for embalming and shipment domestic air transportation fee (see above e.ii) should be added to the following cost.

Airline freight charge from Tokyo per kilogram is uniform –1,590 Yen (est. \$21) to the West Coast and 1,900 Yen (est. \$25) to the U.S. East Coast.

| <u>From TOKYO to:</u> | <u>Rate/Kg</u> | <u>Yen</u> | <u>Dollars</u> (est.) |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|------------------------------|
| New York | 1,900 (\$25) | 475,000 | \$6,169 |
| Honolulu | 1,410 (\$18) | 352,500 | 4,578 |
| Dallas | 1,860 (\$24) | 465,000 | 6,039 |
| San Francisco | 1,590 (\$21) | 397,500 | 5,162 |
| Chicago | 1,860 (\$24) | 465,000 | 6,039 |

Airline freight charge from Osaka per kilogram is uniform –1,710 Yen (est. \$22) to the West Coast and 2,010 Yen (est. \$26) to the U.S. East Coast.

| <u>From OSAKA to:</u> | <u>Rate/Kg</u> | <u>Yen</u> | <u>Dollars</u> (est.) |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|------------------------------|
| New York | 2,010 (\$26) | 502,500 | \$6,526 |
| Honolulu | 1,520 (\$20) | 380,000 | 4,935 |
| Dallas | 1,970 (\$26) | 492,500 | 6,396 |
| San Francisco | 1,710 (\$22) | 427,500 | 5,552 |
| Chicago | 1,970 (\$26) | 492,500 | 6,396 |

In addition to the above, there are handling and airway bill charges totaling 50,000 yen (est. \$649) and fuel surcharges (United Airlines: Yen 120/kg, Cathay Pacific Airways: Yen 135/kg, All Nippon Airways: Yen 134/kg, Japan Airlines: Yen 129/kg).

g. Shipment of Human Ashes:

Ashes in an urn are shipped at the same rates as human remains. The average weight of an export type urn with human ashes including packing material is 10 kilograms (22 pounds). Based on this estimate, costs of air freight shipment from Fukuoka to various points in the United States are as follows:

| <u>FUKUOKA to:</u> | <u>Rate/Kg</u> | <u>Yen</u> | <u>Dollars</u> (est.) |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|------------------------------|
| New York | 2,160 (\$28) | 21,600 | \$280 |
| Honolulu | 1,670 (\$21) | 16,700 | 217 |
| Dallas | 2,120 (\$27) | 21,200 | 275 |
| San Francisco | 1,860 (\$24) | 18,600 | 241 |
| Chicago | 2,120 (\$27) | 21,200 | 275 |

In addition to the above, there are surcharges, handling and airway bill charges totaling 45,000 yen (est. \$584).

Surface Mail:

The average weight of a shipment of ashes is 10 Kg (22 pounds). They may be shipped by sea mail if packed in tight containers. Average cost is 6,750 Yen (est. \$88) to the United States.

Air Mail:

Ashes packaged in sealed containers may also be shipped to the United States by airmail through Japanese postal facilities. The average cost is 17,650 yen (est. \$229) to the United States.

(g) Total Cost:

Below are prices for preparation and air shipment of embalmed and cremated remains from Fukuoka via Tokyo/Osaka to several U.S. cities.

- 1) Embalmed remains – Fuel surcharges must be added to the total cost – see f. 2) above

From Fukuoka to U.S. via Tokyo:

| To: | Local preparation & domestic air freight * | Commercial embalmmnt in Tokyo | Air Freight from Tokyo | Total |
|----------|--|-------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------|
| New York | \$4,884 | \$12,077 | \$6,169 | \$23,130 |

| | | | | |
|---------------|-------|--------|-------|---------------|
| Honolulu | 4,884 | 12,077 | 4,578 | 21,539 |
| Dallas | 4,884 | 12,077 | 6,039 | 23,000 |
| San Francisco | 4,884 | 12,077 | 5,162 | 22,123 |
| Chicago | 4,884 | 12,077 | 6,039 | 23,000 |

From Fukuoka to U.S. via Osaka:

| To: | Local preparation & domestic air freight * | Commercial embalmment in Osaka | Air Freight from Osaka | Total |
|---------------|--|--------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------|
| New York | \$4,316 | \$9,480 | \$6,526 | \$20,322 |
| Honolulu | 4,316 | 9,480 | 4,935 | 18,731 |
| Dallas | 4,316 | 9,480 | 6,396 | 20,192 |
| San Francisco | 4,316 | 9,480 | 5,552 | 19,348 |
| Chicago | 4,316 | 9,480 | 6,396 | 20,192 |

*Coffin: Yen 120,000
 Dry Ice 12,000
 Storage 20,000
 Land transportation to Fukuoka Airport 20,000
 Undertaker's fee & others 120,000
 Domestic Air Freight: Fukuoka to Osaka 40,303 Domestic Air Freight to Tokyo 84,053
 To Osaka: Total Yen 332, 303 (\$4,316) To Tokyo: Total Yen 376,053(\$4,884)

2) Cremains from Fukuoka

| To: | Local preparation * | Air Freight | Total |
|---------------|---------------------|-------------|---------|
| New York | \$2,416 | \$280 | \$2,696 |
| Honolulu | 2,416 | 217 | 2,633 |
| Dallas | 2,416 | 275 | 2,691 |
| San Francisco | 2,416 | 241 | 2,657 |
| Chicago | 2,416 | 275 | 2,691 |

* Coffin: Yen 100,000
 Dry Ice 6,000
 Storage 10,000
 Cremation Fee 70,000
 Cremation Permit 10,000
Undertaker's fee & others 90,000

186,000 (\$2,416)

(7) Exhumation and Shipment

Exhumation of remains is rare in Japan because cremation is the customary practice for disposing of remains. Ashes are normally placed in an urn in the family vault and not buried. The only requirement for transfer of the urn is the approval of the priest of the temple or church which has jurisdiction over the locality of the family vault. In a municipal cemetery this person would be city, town, or village officer in charge of the said cemetery.

(8) Autopsies

Autopsies are not common in Japan. Only when death occurred under suspicious circumstances, the police conduct an autopsy.

There are three types of autopsies: 1) Judicial autopsy for criminal purpose by court order; 2) Administrative autopsy (no crimes are involved, but the cause of death is unknown); 3) Pathological autopsy or consent autopsy at the request of family

(9) Local Custom Regarding Funerals, Disposition of Remains, Memorial Services

A Japanese funeral includes a wake, a funeral ceremony, the cremation of the deceased, placement of the cremated ashes in a family grave/ossuary, and a periodic memorial service. Most of the deceased Japanese are cremated, and buried in a family grave.

A wake (“tsuya”) is held the night before the deceased is cremated. Relatives and close friends spend the last night with the corpse, praying for the soul of the departed. Funerals are held at the home of the deceased or a funeral parlor.

Traditionally the mourners bring condolence money (“koden”) in a special black and white or silver decorated envelope to the dead person’s home.

(10) Remarks

Fukuoka Municipal Ordinance No. 125 of March 25, 1955 prohibits the burial of uncremated deceased human remains in Fukuoka City. Most major cities in the Fukuoka Consular District also prohibit the burial of uncremated human remains. According to major municipal offices, there are no cemeteries for uncremated human remains.