

# Disposition of Remains Report: Osaka

April 30, 2021

## Part I - Name of Country: Japan

## Part II - U.S. Embassy or Consulate Information

U.S. Consulate General Osaka-Kobe

Address: 11-5 Nishitenma 2-chome, Kita-ku, Osaka 530-8543, Japan

Phone: 81-6-6315-5900

Fax: 81-6-6315-5914

After hours phone: 81-3-3224-5000

[State Department Country Specific Information](#)

[State Department Travel Information](#)

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

## Part III - Profile of Religions of the Host Country and Religious Services available to visitors

Country Profile: Visit the State Department's website: "[U.S. Relations with Japan](#)"

Religions: Shinto and Buddhist; Christian (about 2%)

Religious Activities for Visitors: English-language services for followers of the Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish faiths are held throughout the area. Catholic and Anglican/Episcopalian Churches, with Japanese-language services, are available.

## Part IV - Funeral Directors, Mortician and Related Services Available in Osaka and its vicinity:

**DISCLAIMER:** The U.S. Consulate General Osaka-Kobe, Japan 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.

[AIRHEARSE INTERNATIONAL INC.](#)

305A-1, No. 1 International Cargo Bldg., 2-6-3 Haneda-kuko, Ota-ku, Tokyo 144-0041

Tel (from the U.S.): 011-81-3-6459-9509

Fax (from the U.S.): 011-81-3-6459-9510

Operating with a contract embalmer.

Cremation/shipment can be also arranged.

Service Areas: throughout Japan

[JAPAN EMBALMING CORPORATION \(JEC\)](#)

(The company has a branch office in Hiroshima.)

1-16-3 Umagome, Ota-ku, Tokyo 143-0025

Tel (from the U.S.): 011-81-3-5743-1400

Fax (from the U.S.): 011-81-3-5743-1403

Email: [tokyo-sosaihonbu@suncelmo.co.jp](mailto:tokyo-sosaihonbu@suncelmo.co.jp)

Operating with 26 embalmers, including three embalmers licensed in Canada.

Cremation/shipment can be also arranged.

Service Areas: Hiroshima, Tokyo and its vicinity, and the Kyushu region (Kumamoto, Oita, Kagoshima)

[NOIRI Co., Ltd.](#)

Noiri Embalming Service

11 Aza Masakiyama, Asano, Ichinomiya, Aichi 491-0871

Tel (from the U.S.): 011-81-586-24-0948

Fax (from the U.S.): 011-81-586-24-0952

Email: [info@noiri.co.jp](mailto:info@noiri.co.jp)

Operating with 3 embalmers, including 1 trained in the U.S.

Cremation/shipment can be also arranged

Service Areas: Aichi, Gifu and Mie

**Part V - Profile of services available in Japan regarding preparation and shipment of remains:**

Cremation is the norm in Japan. Due to limited refrigerated storage facilities available at police stations and hospitals, prompt arrangements for transfer of the remains to a funeral home are required soon after a death. Police stations and hospitals usually have local funeral home contacts available for the family.

**1. Maximum Period Before Interment**

Japanese law does not require interment within a certain period. According to local custom, the remains are usually cremated on the 2nd or 3rd day after death. Burials of human bodies are very rare in Japan as graveyard suitable for burial is hard to find. The only Japanese law governing the disposition of remains is 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 with infectious diseases or possibly exposed to infectious disease must be cremated or buried with a special permission from a governor, and such cremation or burial may be conducted within 24 hours upon recommendation of a physician or a medical examiner.

Under Japanese law, the Report of Death has to be filed by a family member, a cohabiter, owner or superintendent of the house/apartment or land, director of a public institution, a legal guardian or a helper within seven days from when one learns of the death. Only the above specified individuals can be the informant of the death; i.e. friends or employers cannot act as an informant. The informant does not

necessarily have to file the Report of Death in person, as long as his/her signature and personal information is on the Report of Death form.

When a U.S. citizen dies without a next-of-kin in Japan, and there is no one who can act as an informant, the Japanese Report of Death form may need to be mailed to the next-of-kin in the United States for his/her signature and personal information such as the date of birth and residence address.

## **2. Embalming**

Because the custom in Japan is to dispose of remains by cremation, there are limited numbers of commercial embalming facilities in Japan. The practice is still rare that it has never been subjected to Japanese government regulation. Therefore, there are no Japanese government standards or licensing procedures. However, there are several companies that provide embalming services in Osaka's consular district. According to the local morticians, there is a growing interest among Japanese in the cosmetic aspects of embalming prior to cremation, and there are embalmers trained in Japan. Some companies listed in Part IV have embalmers trained in the United States or Canada.

## **3. Cremation**

Crematorium facilities are available in virtually all localities in Japan. The only legal requirement for cremation is to obtain a Permission for Cremation, which is issued by the Village, Town, Ward or City Office, upon presentation of the Report of Death. Obtaining the permit and the cremation itself are mostly handled by local undertakers on behalf of decedent's relatives. Japanese cremation procedures do not result in the same sized fine ash as it does in the United States, but in somewhat larger-sized pieces of bone. For an additional charge, bone can be processed into fine bone.

## **4. Caskets and Containers**

No Japanese laws forbid or otherwise govern the exportation of human remains. A casket or urn, containing the remains or ashes, is treated as ordinary freight or baggage. 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. Containers for human ashes are also very simple. Ornamental caskets and containers for human ashes may not be readily available but can be obtained by special order.

## 5. Exportation of Human Remains

Procedures and documents required for the exportation of human remains are as follows:

### **Embalmed Remains:**

1. Consular Report of Death of an American Citizen Abroad
2. Consular Mortuary Certificate
3. Local death certificate
4. Mortician's affidavits
5. A photocopy of the deceased's U.S. passport
6. Standard custom declaration documentation as required by Japanese Customs

### **Human Ashes (Air Freight):**

1. Consular Report of Death of an American Citizen Abroad
2. Consular Mortuary Certificate
3. Local death certificate
4. Cremation Certificate issued by the Japanese local authorities with an endorsement on date of the cremation
5. Affidavit signed by local funeral director concerning contents of urn
6. A photocopy of the deceased's U.S. passport

According to the Japanese postal office, ashes cannot be shipped to the United States by mail.

## 6. Costs

Charges are based on the exchange rate of March 2021: \$1.00 = Yen 108.

<b>Type of Service</b>	<b>JPN Yen Amount</b>	<b>Dollar Amount (est.)</b>
(a) Embalming and preparation for shipment (including embalming, casket, storage, paperwork, and local transportation cost)	From 697,000 to 1,094,000	From \$6,453.70 to \$10,129.63
(b) Cremation and preparation for shipment of urn (including cremation, coffin, storage, paperwork, and local transportation cost)	From 445,000 to 524,000	From \$4,259.26 to \$4,851.85
(c) Cremation and preparation for hand-over of ashes to the next-of-kin (including cremation, coffin, storage, urn, paperwork and local transportation cost)	From 379,000 to 500,000	From \$3,509.26 to \$4,629.63

(d) Local interment of cremated remains including cremation, urn, and permanent grave plot costing approximately from 1,000,000 to 2,500,000 Yen (est. from \$9,259 to \$23,148) , which varies from place to place.	From 1,379,000 to 3,000,000	From \$12,768.52 to \$27,777.78
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**(e) Additional Local Transportation Fees:**

In the event the remains must be transported from where the death occurred to the funeral home for cremation or embalming, there will be additional round-trip transportation cost. Following is approximate transportation cost between Osaka and some major cities.

<b>Prefecture</b>	<b>Yen</b>	<b>Dollars</b>
Nagoya, Aichi Pref.	250,000	\$2,314.81
Toyama, Toyama Pref.	400,000	\$3,703.70
Kyoto, Kyoto Pref.	50,000	\$462.96
Matsue, Shimane Pref.	120,000	\$1,111.11
Hiroshima, Hiroshima Pref.	300,000	\$2,777.78
Okayama, Okayama Pref.	250,000	\$2,314.81
Kochi, Kochi Pref.	350,000	\$3,240.74
Matsuyama, Ehime Pref.	350,000	\$3,240.74

**(f) International Shipment Costs**

Air Freight: Airline freight charge per kilogram is uniform - 1,710 yen (\$16) to the West Coast and 2,010 yen (\$19) to the U.S. East Coast.

**1) Human Remains:**

Average weight of an export type casket with human remains is 210 kilograms. Based on this estimate, costs for airfreight shipment from Osaka to various points in the United States are as follows:

<b>OSAKA to:</b>	<b>Rate/Kg</b>	<b>Yen</b>	<b>Dollars</b>
New York	2,010 (\$19)	422,100	\$3,908.33
Honolulu	1,520 (\$14)	319,200	\$2,955.56
Dallas	1,970 (\$18)	413,700	\$3,830.56
Los Angeles	1,710 (\$16)	359,100	\$3,325
Chicago	1,970 (\$18)	413,700	\$3,830.56

In addition to the above, there are surcharges, handling and airway bill charges totaling approximately 60,000 yen (\$545) and reservation fee of approximately 5% of the airfare.

**2) Human Ashes**

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

<b>OSAKA to:</b>	<b>Rate/Kg</b>	<b>Yen</b>	<b>Dollars</b>
New York	2,010 (\$18)	20,100	\$186.11
Honolulu	1,520 (\$14)	15,200	\$140.74
Dallas	1,970 (\$18)	19,700	\$182.41
Los Angeles	1,710 (\$16)	17,100	\$158.33
Chicago	1,970 (\$18)	19,700	\$182.41

In addition to the above, there are surcharges, handling and airway bill charges totaling approximately 38,000 yen (est. \$352) and reservation fee of approximately 5% of the airfare.

**(g) Total Cost:**

The approximate estimate prices for preparation and freight of air shipment of remains from Osaka and Hiroshima to the cities in the U.S. are as follows:

**Embalmed remains:**

<b>OSAKA to:</b>	<b>Dollars (est.)</b>
New York	\$11,100
Los Angeles	\$10,500

<b>HIROSHIMA to:</b>	<b>Dollars (est.)</b>
New York	\$13,900
Los Angeles	\$13,300

When death occurs outside of the immediate vicinity of Osaka, the remains must be transported to Osaka for embalming. Therefore, the additional cost for transportation referred to in paragraph 6 (e) should be added to the above estimate.

**Cremated Remains:**

<b>OSAKA to:</b>	<b>Dollars (est.)</b>
New York	\$5,180
Los Angeles	\$5,150

<b>HIROSHIMA to:</b>	<b>Dollars (est.)</b>
New York	\$5,640
Los Angeles	\$5,610

**7. Exhumation and Shipment**

Exhumation of remains is rare in Japan because the customary practice for disposing of remains is cremation. Japanese Law permits disinterment of remains or ashes if permission is granted by the mayor of the village, town, ward or city upon filing an application form "*Kaiso Kyoka Shinseisho*," if the remains or ashes are buried in the family cemetery run by the municipal government. When the remains or ashes are buried in a cemetery owned by a temple or church, the approval of the priest alone is sufficient. The Law also specifies that the remains of a person who died from infectious disease and buried in the ground without having been cremated shall not be removed for reburial before the

expiration of 3 years unless the Chief of the local Public Health Center grants permission for a special reason.

## **8. Local Customs Regarding Funerals, Disposition of Remains, Mourning, Memorial Services**

A Japanese funeral includes a wake, a funeral ceremony, the cremation of the deceased, a burial in a family grave, and a periodic memorial service. A wake (*tsuya*) is held the night before the deceased is buried. A Buddhist priest offers sutras at the wake and the funeral and the deceased is given a Buddhist name (*kaimyo*). Relatives and close friends spend the last night with the deceased, praying for the soul of the departed. Funerals are often held at the home of the deceased, but recently it has become more popular to have the funeral managed by a professional undertaker and held at a temple, shrine, church, community center, or ceremony hall.

At the crematorium, the relatives remove certain bones out of the ashes and transfer them to the urn using chopsticks. The ashes may be divided between more than one urn - one for the family grave and the other for the temple.

Traditionally the mourners bring condolence money (*koden*) in a special black and white or silver decorated envelope. Customarily Japanese avoid "*tomobiki*" (literally "friend pulling") day on the lunar calendar for funerals. The day is considered a great day for weddings but should be avoided for funerals.

## **9. Remarks**

Japanese undertakers charge a daily fee for storage of human remains. The sooner the next of kin contracts with the funeral home and gives instructions as to cremation or embalming and shipment of remains to the U.S., the better.

In addition, there is a fee for the police medical examination report in the event the police are involved in the death case. The police usually get involved when a person dies at a location other than a medical facility. The fee varies from 5,000 Yen (\$46) to 20,000 Yen (\$182) for two copies, depending on the issuing office.