

Disposition of Remains Report: Tokyo

May 31, 2023

Part I. Name of Country: Japan

Part II. U.S. Embassy Information

U.S. Embassy Address: 1-10-5 Akasaka, Minato-ku, Tokyo 107-8420, Japan

Phone: Country Code 81 Area Code 3 3224-5000 (24 hr Switchboard)

Fax: Country Code 81 Area Code 3 3224-5014 (American Citizen Services)

[Japan Information Travel Advisory](#)

[Register With the U.S. Embassy](#)

Part III. Profile of Religions of the Host Country and Religious Services Available to Visitors

Country Profile: Visit the State Department's website "[Background Note: Japan](#)"

Religions: Shintoism and Buddhism are Japan's two principal religions. Religious Activities for Visitors: English-language services are available in the Tokyo and Yokohama areas for members of most denominations. Religions represented include Roman Catholic, Baptist, Seventh-day Adventist, Episcopal, Mormon, Christian Scientist, Lutheran, Interdenominational, Jewish, and Interdenominational Charismatic. The churches offer a variety of fellowship for all age groups and combined programs to provide services for the benefit of the foreign community in the area.

PART IV. Funeral Directors, Mortician and Related Services Available in Tokyo and its vicinity:

DISCLAIMER: The U.S. Embassy, Tokyo, 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.](#)^[OBJ]
305A-1, No. 1 International Cargo Bldg.
2-6-3 Haneda Airport, 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
Email: 1ahiops@airhearse.com
Chief Operating Officer/President: Rie Kimura
- [Funeral Support Services Co. Ltd.](#)
1620-56-101 Okazu-cho, Izumi-ku
Yokohama-shi, Kanagawa-ken 245-0003
Tel from the U.S.: 011-81-45-392-7316
Fax from the U.S.: 011-81-45-345-4571
Email: info@funeralsupport.co.jp President: Robert Hoey

- GSI Co., Ltd.
Koike Bldg. 4F
1-21-1 Shinkawa, Kayabacho Tower Residences #1806
Chuo-ku, Tokyo 104-0033
Tel from the U.S.: 011-81-3- 6280-3468
Fax from the U.S.: 011-81-3- 6280-3469
Email: gsi-info@griefsupport.co.jp
- International Mortuary Systems Inc. (IMS)
5-17-3 3F Shiba Kawaguchi-shi, Saitama-ken 333-0866
Tel from the U.S.: 011-81-48-261-3302
Fax from the U.S.: 011-81-48-262-2120
Email: imsj01@alphaclub.co.jp Admin: Megumi Tsukamoto
Service Areas: Tokyo and its vicinity
- [International Transportation Service Your Loved One Corp. \(ITSYOURLOVEDONE CORP.\)](#)
1753-1373 Hirai, Kannami-cho, Tagata-gun, Shizuoka-ken 419-0107
Tel from the U.S: 011-81-55-919-5859, Cell: 011-81-90-3372-5564
Email: info@daijinahitoe.com President Shoji Konishi
- Ohata Shoji Co., Ltd.
3-15-2 Minamishinozakimachi
Edogawa-ku, Tokyo 133-0065
Tel from the U.S: 011-81-3-6638-6717
Fax from the U.S: 011-81-3-6638-6727
Email: info@oohata-shoji.co.jp
- Santoku Funeral Parlor Co., Ltd.
7-1 Irifune 2-chome, Chuo-ku, Tokyo 104-0042
Tel from the U.S.: 011-81-3-3551-2047 / 3019
Fax from the U.S.: 011-81-3-3555-1966
Email: 2NB4A@toccata.plala.or.jp Director: Mr. Tetsuya Koizumi
Service Areas: Tokyo
- [SOU-CEREMONY Inc.](#)
Embalming Office
32-1 Shinminato, Mihama-ku, Chiba-shi, Chiba-ken 261-0002
Tel from the U.S.: 011-81-43-244-7761
Fax from the U.S.: 011-81-43-244-7792
Email: emba-office@sou-ceremony.co.jp
Interpreter: Noriko Mitsutake
Service Areas: Chiba including Narita, Tokyo, part of Ibaraki and Tochigi
- Suncelmo Co., Ltd.
1-1-35 Shibadaimon, Minato-ku, Tokyo 105-0012
Tel from the U.S: 011-81-3-5746-0211
Fax from the U.S: 011-81-3-3436-1005

- [Teitotenrei Funeral Services Co., Ltd.](#)
5F Shinjuku East Square Bldg., 2-16-6 Shinjuku, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo 160-0022
Tel from the U.S: 011-81-3-3353-6311
Fax from the U.S: 011-81-3-3353-5242
Email: shougaibu-1@teitotenrei.co.jp
Service Areas: Tokyo, Chiba, Kanagawa, Saitama (Airports: Narita and Haneda).
Please contact Teitotenrei Funeral Services about the services in other areas.
- [Todaisha Co. Ltd.](#)
1-3-6-28 Kamisuna-cho, Tachikawa-shi, Tokyo 190-0032
Tel from the U.S.: 011-81-42-537-8994
Email: info@todaisha.net
President: Shuhei Matsuki

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 body 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 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, particularly in the summer months. Lack of immediate access to funds to pay for transportation and cold storage could lead to the unilateral disposition of the decomposing remains as a public health hazard by the local authorities. 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 of October 2, 1998 " Act Concerning Prevention of Infection of Infectious Diseases and Patients with Infectious Diseases

2. Embalming

Cremation is the norm in Japan. Embalming is uncommon and has never been subjected to government regulation. Therefore, there are no standards or licensing procedures for embalming. There are several U.S.-standard commercial embalming facilities in Tokyo's consular district. These companies have been operating with Canadian and American embalmers since the 1990's, and report a growing interest among Japanese in the cosmetic aspects of embalming prior to cremation. Currently, there are Japanese embalmers who are trained in Japan.

3. Cremation

There are crematoria in most localities in Japan, and arrangements for cremation are handled by local undertakers. The only legal requirement is to obtain a Permission-for-Cremation document, which is issued by a village, town, ward, or city office upon presentation of the Report of Death. 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

There are no Japanese laws, national or local, governing the exportation of human remains. A casket containing a body or human ashes is treated as ordinary freight. Shipping companies, however, require that the body be placed in a metal lined casket. Suitable caskets or transfer cases are readily available and meet the requirements of the U.S. Public Health Service and U.S. port authorities. Containers for human ashes are also available.

5. Exportation of Remains

Procedures and documents for the exportation of human remains are as follows. Except as noted, all are shipping company or U.S. requirements:

Embalmed Body:

1. Embalming of the remains
2. Enclosure of the remains in a metal lined casket
3. Consular Report of Death
4. Death certificate from the local government authority (required by Japanese customs)
5. Consular Mortuary Certificate
6. Mortician's embalming certificate
7. Mortician's statement of placement of remains in the coffin
8. Copy of the deceased' passport
9. Regular customs declaration (required by Japanese Customs)

Human Ashes: (air freight)

1. Cremation certificate
2. Consular Report of Death
3. Death certificate from local government authority (required by Japanese Customs)
4. Consular Mortuary Certificate

5. Affidavit from local funeral director concerning contents of urn

6. Copy of the deceased' passport

Human Ashes: (mail)

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

6. Costs

All dollar costs have been converted from the cost in local currency at the rate of exchange as of May 31, 2023, which is 140.00 yen to one dollar.

Service	Yen	Dollars
(a) Local interment of cremated remains including cremation, local transportation, urn, permanent grave plot, and gravestone The average price for permanent grave plot and the gravestone in Tokyo is approx. 2,200,000 yen (\$15,714.29).	2,650,000	\$18,928.57
(b) Embalming fee:	200,000	\$1,428.57
(c) Cremation fee:	80,000	\$571.42
Bone processing fee (to make fine bones)	33,000	\$235.71
(d) Preparation for shipment:		
1) Including Embalming, documentation, casket, storage, Local transportation	900,000	\$6,428.57
2) Including cremation, documentation, coffin, local transportation and urn	660,000	\$4,714.29

(e) When death occurs outside of the Metropolitan Tokyo area, the remains may be transferred to Tokyo and its vicinity such as Chiba and Saitama for preparation. Under these circumstances, the following additional transportation fees may be charged by Tokyo's undertakers for the round trip from Tokyo to the location of the remains:

Location	Yen	Dollars
Tokyo Metropolitan Tokyo area	42,000	\$300.00
Narita, Chiba Pref.	60,000	\$428.57

Yokohama, Kanagawa Pref.	70,000	\$500.00
Tokorozawa, Saitama Pref.	60,000	\$428.57
Maebashi, Gunma Pref.	125,000	\$892.86
Mito, Ibaraki Pref.	11,5000	\$821.43
Nagano, Nagano Pref.	230,000	\$1,642.86
Utsunomiya, Tochigi Pref.	115,000	\$821.43
Shizuoka, Shizuoka Pref.	210,000	\$1,500.00
Kofu, Yamanashi Pref.	170,000	\$1,214.29
Fukushima, Fukushima Pref.	270,000	\$1,928.57
Niigata, Niigata Pref.	270,000	\$1,928.57
Yamagata, Yamagata Pref.	370,000	\$1,928.57

(f) Air Freight: Airline freight charge per kilogram is uniform - 1,590 yen (\$11.36) to the U.S. West Coast and 1,900 yen (\$13.57) to the U.S. East Coast.

Human Remains: Average weight of an export type casket with human remains is 200 kilograms. Costs for air freight shipment from Tokyo to various points in the United States are as follows:

Tokyo to:	Rate/Kg	Total Yen	Total Dollars
New York	1,900 (\$13.57)	380,000	\$2,714.29
Honolulu	1,410 (\$10.07)	282,000	\$2,014.29
Dallas	1,860 (\$13.28)	372,000	\$2,657.14
San Francisco	1,590 (\$11.36)	318,000	\$2,271.43
Chicago	1,860 (\$13.29)	372,000	\$2,657.14

In addition to the above, there are security and fuel surcharges, as well as handling and airway bill charges totaling approx. 110,000 yen (\$785.71).

Please note also that some families have experienced additional complications resulting in delays and additional costs depending on which airline and shipper the funeral home employs, and whether a connecting flight is required.

Human Ashes: Ashes in an urn are shipped at the same rates as bodies. Average weight of an export type urn with human ashes including packing material is 9 kilograms. Costs for air freight shipment from Tokyo to various points in the United States are as follows:

Tokyo to:	Rate/Kg	Total Yen	Total Dollars
New York	1,900 (\$13.57)	17,100	\$122.14
Honolulu	1,410 (\$10.07)	12,690	\$90.64
Dallas	1,860 (\$13.29)	16,740	\$119.57
San Francisco	1,590 (\$11.36)	14,310	\$102.21
Chicago	1,860 (\$13.29)	16,740	\$119.57

In addition to the above, there are security surcharge, fuel surcharge, and pickup, handling and airway bill charges totaling approx. 85,000 yen (\$607.14).

(g) Total Cost:

Below are prices for preparation and freight of air shipment of remains from Tokyo to several U.S. cities.

Embalmed Remains:

Tokyo to:	Dollars
New York	\$9,748.57
Honolulu	\$9,048.57
Dallas	\$9,691.42
San Francisco	\$9,305.71
Chicago	\$9,691.42

Cremated Remains:

Tokyo to:	Dollars
New York	\$5,443.57
Honolulu	\$5,412.07
Dallas	\$5,441.00
San Francisco	\$5,423.64
Chicago	\$5,441.00

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 requirements for transfer of the urn are the approval of the municipality of the location of the temple or church which has jurisdiction over the locality of the family vault and the permission from the location of reburial.

8. Autopsies

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

Autopsies are not common in Japan when someone died of a medical or natural cause. It is, therefore, very difficult to make an arrangement when the family wishes to have one. Only when a death occurred under unusual circumstances, for example, if someone died in a house/apartment/hotel, are the police involved in determining whether there was foul play involved or not. If foul play was involved, the police obtain a court order for a judicial autopsy. Once the police determine that a criminal act was not the cause of death, an administrative autopsy will be performed when the cause of death is not immediately known. There is no cost for a judicial autopsy and an administrative autopsy. However, the family may have to pay for the transportation from the facility where autopsies are performed to a funeral home. For consent autopsy, the family has to bear the cost, which will be approximately \$3,000, and the process could be complicated.

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

Japanese funeral includes a wake, a funeral ceremony, the cremation of the deceased, a burial in a family grave, and a periodic memorial service. More than 99% of deceased Japanese are cremated, and buried in a family grave. At a wake, while the Buddhist priest reads a sutra, the family members, relatives and close friends offer incense in front of the deceased.

The funeral is usually on the day after the wake. The procedure is similar to the wake, and incense is offered while a priest chants a sutra. The funeral ceremony differs slightly as the deceased receives a new Buddhist name. A cremation usually takes about two hours, and the family members, relatives and close friends wait for the completion of the cremation at the crematorium. Japanese cremation procedures do not result in the same sized fine ash as it does in the United States and rather larger-sized pieces of bone. When the cremation is completed, the family and relatives pick the bones out of the ashes and transfer them to the urn using chopsticks.

Mourners traditionally bring condolence money in a special black and silver decorated envelope. Depending on the relation to the deceased, this may be of a value equivalent to between 5,000 (\$35.71) and 30,000 yen (\$214.29).

10. Remarks

The cost for a death certificate varies depending on where the death occurred, and whether the police are involved or not. The hospital death certificate usually costs approx. 3,000 yen (\$21.43) to 10,000 yen (\$71.43). If the death occurs within the Tokyo Metropolitan area and Tokyo's police are involved, the Tokyo Medical Examiner's Office issues a Medical Examiner's report (death certificate) free of charge. If the death occurs outside of the Tokyo Metropolitan area, a post-mortem report issued by a police doctor or other designated doctor can cost up to 100,000 yen (\$714.29) because the fee for the examination of the body by a doctor, storage and transportation of the body will be charged.