

The background features a complex, abstract pattern of white lines on a blue gradient. The lines form a grid that is distorted and curved, creating a sense of depth and movement. The lines are thin and closely spaced, creating a mesh-like effect. The overall color palette is a range of blues, from light to dark, with the white lines providing a sharp contrast.

# **GUIDELINES FOR HEARSE OPERATORS AND TRANSPORTATION OF DECEASED**

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# Introduction

The Guidelines for Hearse Operators and Transportation of Deceased (herein referred to as “*Guidelines*”) provides useful information and industry best practices for hearse operators and funerary personnel who carry out the conveyance of deceased.

The National Environment Agency (NEA), in consultation with the Association of Funeral Directors Singapore (AFD), formulated these *Guidelines* which mainly cover the scope of work in relation to the conveyance of the deceased from point to point during the funerary preparations and/or proceedings. This will help ensure that the Funeral Directors, hearse and transfer vehicle operators/drivers and funerary workers meet high public health standards and accord dignity to the Deceased and bereaved family members.

# Chapter 1. Definitions

**Body** means the dead body of a human being but does not include the skeletal remains of the body or ashes thereof.

**Body preparation room** means any place for the washing and dressing or embalming of the deceased person.

**Burial** means the act of placing a body into the ground, or the ceremony connected with this.

**Casket** refers to a funerary box used in which the deceased is placed, either for burial or cremation.

**Cremation** is a method of final disposition of a dead body through burning (combustion).

**Deceased** refers to a person who has passed on and is no longer alive.

**Funeral service provider/personnel** refers to a person who, in the conduct of the person's business, engages, for the purpose of burial, cremation or transport, in the collection, transfer, storage, preparation or embalming of bodies or engages in the conduct of funeral wakes, cremation, burial services, etc.

**Funeral parlour** means any premises where bodies are received for the purpose of preparation for burial or cremation or for the carrying out of funeral rites or ceremonies prior to burial or cremation, and includes any premises used for such purpose by whichever name it is called.

**Hearse** refers to a vehicle for conveying the deceased in a casket.

**Holding room** refers to a room or an enclosed space used for temporary storage prior to and after the preparation of the Deceased.

**Mortuary** refers to a room or building in which dead bodies are kept, for hygiene storage or for examination, until burial or cremation.

**Transfer vehicle** refers to a vehicle used to transport a deceased without a casket and/or for transportation of an empty casket.

## **Chapter 2. Roles and Responsibilities of Hearse and Transfer Vehicle Operators/Drivers**

Hearse and transfer vehicle operators should ensure that:

- the vehicles undergo maintenance regularly to maintain high operable efficiency;
- only competent persons are appointed to carry out the task;
- all staff members are provided with the necessary information; instruction, training and supervision;
- all staff members are familiar with vehicle breakdown contingency plans.

Drivers should:

- undergo training (e.g. on-the-job training) before performing their duty;
- observe emergency procedures, instructions and arrangements as established and instructed;
- check that the vehicles and all ancillary equipment are fit for the operation and that they meet all requirements specified in the instructions given for the operation;
- take the necessary precautions to prevent the vehicle from moving during the loading/unloading process;
- ensure that the deceased or casket is properly loaded onto the vehicle;
- ensure that deceased or casket is secured in such a way that they cannot shift in any direction when the vehicle is moving;
- report all loading/discharge problems, unsafe situations or conditions, near misses and incidents as required by company procedures.

# Chapter 3. General Requirements

## 3.1 Basic Proficiency of Drivers

- 3.1.1 All drivers must possess a valid Singapore driving licence for the class of vehicle that he is required to drive. Only qualified and authorised drivers should be permitted to operate designated vehicles. Drivers should receive proper training in the operation of the vehicles before they are authorised to operate them.
- 3.1.2 Drivers shall always follow the specified speed limit of the vehicle and of the roads, refrain from tailgating and slow down when approaching a hump. Vehicles must always be operated at a safe following distance.
- 3.1.3 Drivers should ensure that their vehicles are properly parked with the brakes engaged, engines turned off, starter keys removed before unloading the deceased or casket. For parking or stopping the vehicles on slopes, drivers should follow the previous step with the gear engaged (if safe to do so) and hand brake applied.
- 3.1.4 Drivers should not use mobile phones while driving. Drivers who wish to use their mobile phones should ask their passengers to make or receive calls on their behalf. If driving alone, drivers are advised to stop at the nearest car park to make or answer a call.
- 3.1.5 A checklist of all essential equipment should be maintained within the transport vehicles for this purpose. The checklist may include the following items (not exhaustive)
- PPE (i.e. gloves, mask, gown, etc)
  - Body Identification Tags
  - Cloths
  - Non-Permeable Body Bag
  - Stretcher
  - Casket
  - Permanent Marker/ Pen
  - Checklists for Receipt of Deceased



## 3.2 Hearse and Transfer Vehicles

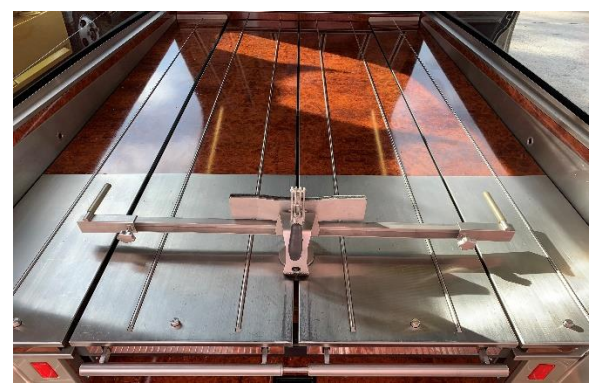
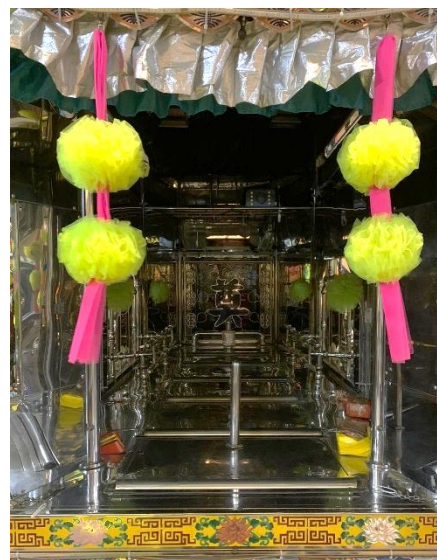
- 3.2.1 Vehicle operators shall ensure that vehicles are in a condition for safe operation by having the vehicles properly maintained at suitable intervals. Companies shall have a routine and system of daily checks in place to ensure that vehicles are in good working condition at the start of each working day. The driver shall also perform daily checks on the vehicle before operating it.
- 3.2.2 Deceased within the vehicle must be away from the public's view to preserve the dignity of the deceased. Any stickers pasted on the vehicle should comply with LTA's requirement and shall not obstruct the view of the driver.
- 3.2.3 To accord dignity to the deceased and bereaved family members, the deceased or casket should not be stacked on top of each other.
- 3.2.4 The deceased or the casket with deceased inside shall not be placed on the floor at any time.
- 3.2.5 The vehicle shall not be used for storage of deceased.
- 3.2.6 When transporting the deceased, the funeral service provider shall place the deceased in a compartment that is physically separated from the part of the vehicle used for carriage of driver or passengers, and which allows routine cleansing and disinfection.
- 3.2.7 Transported deceased must be placed in a bag or contained in a manner that prevents the leakage of any body exudate or other substance.



### 3.3 Securing of Coffin in Hearse

3.3.1 The deceased or casket in a vehicle or hearse must be properly secured so that it would not endanger any person if it or part of it moves.

3.3.2 The following shows various casket securing mechanisms (i.e. removable stainless-steel stoppers) in a hearse:



## Chapter 4: Guidelines for Handling Deceased in the Funeral Parlour

The Guidelines for Handling Deceased in the Funeral Parlour provide useful information and industry best practices for practitioners in the Singapore funeral service sector in ensuring high public health standards and providing dignified services to bereaved families.

The guidelines mainly cover the scope of work in relation to the management of deceased within licensed funeral parlours. This will help ensure that the Funeral Directors and funeral parlour operators meet high public health standards and accord dignity to the Deceased and bereaved family members.

More information on the above-mentioned guidelines can be found at

<https://go.gov.sg/guidelinesforhandlingdeceasedinfuneralparlour>

You may also access the website by scanning the QR image appended below.



<https://go.gov.sg/guidelinesforhandlingdeceasedinfuneralparlour>

# Chapter 5: Collection and Conveyance of Deceased from Point to Point

## 5.1 Transportation of Deceased or Casket

- 5.1.1 The funeral service provider or the hearse driver shall ensure that the deceased or the casket is securely fastened (as shown in Chapter 2 and 3) in the vehicle or hearse before moving off.
- 5.1.2 When transporting the deceased or the casket, the driver shall drive safely and maintain speed limit or accordingly to the road speed limit.
- 5.1.3 The transfer vehicle, trolleys/stretchers and hearse used to convey the deceased or casket must be cleaned and sanitised after every infectious deceased case handled or at the end of the day for normal cases (refer to Chapter 6 for more details on cleansing of vehicle)

## 5.2 Playing of Music in Hearse

- 5.2.1 Hearse operators and drivers shall ensure that the music played in the hearse shall be of an appropriate level so as not to create disturbance to the public.
- 5.2.2 Music emitting from the hearse should be played at an appropriate level during funerary proceedings e.g. during the foot procession send-off, when travelling on public roads, in consideration of other road users or nearby residents.

## 5.3 Loading/Unloading of Coffin from Hearse

- 5.3.1 When loading the casket into the hearse, the funerary service provider shall ensure that there are sufficient pall bearers to lift the casket to prevent the casket from toppling.
- 5.3.2 When unloading the casket off the hearse at the Crematorium, the funerary service provider shall ensure that the casket is placed securely on the transfer trolley before it is being pushed to the service hall.

# Chapter 6. Maintenance and Disinfection of Vehicles

## 6.1 Maintenance of Hearse and Transfer Vehicle

- 6.1.1 The maintenance regime of the vehicle should closely follow the manufacturer's recommendation. A well-maintained vehicle is more likely to work better and last longer. The vehicle operator should obtain advice from manufacturer/car distributor regarding its maintenance schedule and requirements. Maintenance requirements and regimes vary widely from one vehicle to another.
- 6.1.2 To ensure that the vehicle's warranty remains valid, it is important to follow the manufacturer's servicing schedule and conditions. Generally, servicing is done at a prescribed period of time or mileage intervals and is carried out by trained and qualified mechanics.
- 6.1.3 Conducting daily vehicle checks is a simple and useful way to spot potential risks or defects before vehicles are operated.

## 6.2 Cleaning and Disinfecting of Hearse and Transfer Vehicle

- 6.2.1 Before the start of the hearse and transfer vehicle cleaning, personnel shall put on a pair of gloves and face mask. Avoid touching the face, mouth, nose and eyes during clean-up. Gloves should be removed and discarded if they become soiled or damaged, and a new pair worn.
- 6.2.2 All parts of the hearse and transfer vehicle to be washed, cleaned and disinfected with appropriate disinfectant.
- 6.2.3 An appropriate disinfectant with indication of effectiveness against virus, or bleach solution should be used for cleaning. Personnel shall prepare and apply the disinfectant according to manufacturer's recommendations.
- 6.2.4 Soak cloths with prepared disinfectant or bleach solution and use them to wipe all touched areas and allow to air dry. A steady wiping motion should be used when cleaning horizontal surfaces, to prevent the creation of aerosols or splashing.
- 6.2.5 Avoid using a spray pack to apply disinfectant on potentially highly contaminated areas (such as the interior of the vehicles) as it may create splashes which can further spread the virus. Alcohol-based disinfectant is flammable, do not spray it into the air.
- 6.2.6 Disinfect buckets by soaking in disinfectant or bleach solution. After cleaning and disinfection is completed, the personnel shall remove gloves and wash their hands with soap and water.
- 6.2.7 All waste generated from the clean-up (disposable cloths, gloves, mask, etc.) should be disposed into the bin.

## Chapter 7. Standard Operating Procedures

### 7.1 Development of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)

- 7.1.1 The operators of the hearses and the transfer vehicles shall be responsible to develop SOPs for all drivers based on the above *Guidelines* across Chapters 1 to 7.
- 7.1.2 The operators of the hearses and the transfer vehicles shall ensure all drivers are briefed and adhere to the SOPs.
- 7.1.3 The SOPs shall be properly documented with details such as company letter head, issuance date and approver's name.