



# Foreign & Commonwealth Office

## **Bereavement Information for Bosnia and Herzegovina**

**Prepared by**

**British Consular Services in Bosnia and Herzegovina**

**[www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)**

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The death of a relative or friend is always distressing. But if it happens abroad the distress can be made worse by practical problems. Consular Directorate in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and our Embassy in Bosnia and Herzegovina are ready to help in any way that they can. You may be uncertain what to do next or who to contact for advice. These notes are designed to help you through the practical arrangements you will need to make. Please read in conjunction with "Death Overseas" leaflet which describes the generic functions of consular staff overseas. While care has been taken in compiling these notes, no legal liability for their contents is accepted by the British Embassy or HM Government.

You should be aware that procedures in Bosnia and Herzegovina may differ significantly to those in the United Kingdom. While we understand your need to make arrangements as quickly as possible, this may not always be possible.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

Following the death of a British national in Bosnia and Herzegovina, their next-of-kin, or a formally appointed representative, must decide whether to repatriate the deceased to the UK or carry out a local burial (or cremation). If the deceased was covered by travel insurance it is important for the next-of-kin to contact the insurance company immediately. If there is no insurance cover, the cost of repatriation or burial in Bosnia and Herzegovina will need to be met by the family. Neither the Foreign and Commonwealth Office nor the British Embassy in Sarajevo have budgets to meet these costs.

If the next-of-kin is in the UK our Consular staff in London will pass on to the Embassy in Sarajevo the wishes regarding the disposal of the body together with details of who is taking responsibility for the costs involved. We will do our best to make sure that these wishes are carried out.

It is important to let the Embassy know if the person who died was travelling with a tour company. The company can be a valuable source of assistance and information.

All deaths must be registered locally in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Local and International death certificates are issued by the local Municipality Registrar Office at the place of death. Registrar Offices are located in all the main cities and towns. If a death occurs in a village, the nearest town municipality would issue the certificate required. Local authorities need to be told if the person suffered from an infectious condition (such as hepatitis or HIV) so that they can take precautions against infection.

## **CONSULAR DEATH REGISTRATION AND LOCAL DEATH CERTIFICATE**

There is no legal obligation for the death overseas of a British national to be registered with the British Embassy. However, there are the advantages that a British style death certificate is then available and that a record of the death is afterwards held at the General Register Office in the UK.

To apply you should see the information on our website:

<https://www.gov.uk/register-a-death>

Alternatively you can contact:

**Consular Overseas Residents Services Unit**  
**Room K4.9**  
**King Charles Street**  
**LONDON**  
**SW1A 2AH**

or e-mail [bmdenquiries@fco.gov.uk](mailto:bmdenquiries@fco.gov.uk) with specific enquiries.

A registration cannot, in any case, be made without presenting the death certificate issued by the local civil authorities. The death certificate issued by the local authorities will be sufficient for all purposes in the UK, but it will need to be translated into English. You can apply for a copy through the Funeral Director who can also obtain further copies of the standard death certificate on your behalf.

### **BRITISH PASSPORT CANCELLATION**

In order to avoid identity fraud a deceased person's passport should be sent to the British Embassy in Sarajevo or passport office in the UK for cancellation along with form D01 - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-to-do-with-a-passport-when-the-passport-holder-has-died>. Next of kin can request the passport to be returned. Likewise if the passport has been lost or mislaid, relatives should get in contact with either the Embassy or passport office for instructions on reporting the loss of the document.

### **ADDRESSE/ PHONE NUMBERS**

If you require any form of assistance or help, please contact the British Embassy Consular Section in Sarajevo. The Consular staff will be ready to help you in any way they can. Contact address:

BRITISH EMBASSY SARAJEVO  
Consular Section  
Hamdije Cemerlica 39a  
71000 Sarajevo  
Bosnia and Herzegovina  
Telephone: 00 387 (0)33 282 200  
Fax: 00 387 (0)33 282 203  
Email: [sarajevo.consularenquiries@fco.gov.uk](mailto:sarajevo.consularenquiries@fco.gov.uk)

Local and International Undertakers are responsible for preparing the necessary local or international certificates to transport the body. While the Foreign and Commonwealth Office or the Embassy cannot pay any burial, cremation or repatriation expenses we can offer help to transfer money from relatives or friends in the UK to pay any necessary costs.

Local undertakers will obtain the necessary documents for transportation of the body to the UK:

- local/international death certificate;
- medical death certificate (indicating cause of death);
- certificate of embalming;

- certificate of permission given to transfer the remains to the UK.

## **LOCAL UNDERTAKER SERVICES**

Undertakers' charges (which include the coffin) can vary from approximately £600 to £2500 all prices subject to exchange movements and change. In addition, if you wish to repatriate the body to the UK, you will need to take the additional expenditure listed below into account.

## **TRANSPORTATION OF A BODY TO THE UK**

The price of repatriating a body to the UK can vary between approximately £1000 to £3000 (in addition to the costs levied by the local undertaker). If the deceased was covered by travel insurance, the insurance company will normally have a standing agreement with an international funeral director in the UK to arrange repatriations. If the deceased is not covered by insurance, next of kin will need to appoint an undertaker in Bosnia and Herzegovina or an international funeral director who will liaise with a local one themselves. A list of British companies can be found towards the back of this document. Bosnian undertakers usually establish links with international undertakers in the UK and they normally work together to ensure that all the necessary requirements are met in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the UK. However, note that sometimes the language can be an obstacle and additional assistance with translation could be required.

Local undertakers in Bosnia and Herzegovina are equipped to carry out repatriation procedures and will provide the special caskets required for the international carriage of human remains. Most of them will arrange complete documentation needed for repatriation on your behalf:

- a local civil registry death certificate (two forms are available and equally acceptable: in local language only "Izvod iz maticne knjige umrlih" or bilingual international form "Extrait de l'acte de deces")
- a medical death certificate (including cause of death)
- a certificate of embalming or post-mortem, if carried out
- a freedom of infection certificate issued by a sanitary inspector under the Ministry of Health

## **CREMATION AND TRANSPORTATION TO THE UK**

If next of kin choose cremation and wish to take the ashes back to the UK themselves, they can do so with assistance of local undertakers who will be able to arrange the necessary paperwork and transportation. There are no crematoriums in Bosnia and Herzegovina, so undertakers arrange transportation by plane or by car to the nearest crematorium in Belgrade, Serbia. Please note that airline regulations stipulate that ashes must be placed in luggage for the hold or sent as cargo and cannot be transported as hand luggage.

## **LOCAL BURIAL**

Prices of a local burial can vary between approximately £500 to £1600. If the next-of kin choose to proceed with a local burial they will need to instruct a local funeral director.

## **REPATRIATION**

If the deceased was covered by travel insurance, the insurance company will normally have a standing agreement with an International funeral director in UK to arrange repatriations. If the deceased is not covered by insurance the next-of-kin will need to appoint an undertaker in Bosnia and Herzegovina or an International funeral director themselves.

## **POST MORTEM**

Whilst the procedures involved around a post-mortem can be harrowing for family and friends, the British Embassy has no powers to change procedures or challenge local laws and is often not informed of the details surrounding each individual post-mortem. This leaflet has been drawn up to help you understand under what circumstances a post-mortem would be carried out.

Under the local law, post-mortems shall be mandatory in the following cases:

- 1) of the person who has died at the health institution if the exact cause of death has not been established;
- 2) upon request of medical doctor (MD) who has medically treated the dead person;
- 3) of the person brought to the health institution with unknown cause of death;
- 4) upon request of MD assigned to establish the cause of death;
- 5) upon request of the family member of the deceased;
- 6) if requested by the investigation authority on the basis of a suspicion that the death was caused by a criminal offence or related to the criminal offence;
- 7) when it is of a special relevance for the protection of health of citizens or when epidemiological and sanitary reasons call for it.

The cost of autopsy shall be born by the state except in situations 5 and 6 when it has to be the person who has requested autopsy.

If an individual does die in a medical institution, an agreement may be reached with the next of kin, that a post-mortem will not be carried out. However, this is only after consultations between senior management and the Next of Kin in co-ordination with the pathologist (if there is one at the institution).

Embalming is not an obligatory requirement but can be requested by next of kin especially when repatriation is considered. As far as the Embassy is aware, embalming is only available at General Morgue in Sarajevo.

## **UK CORONERS**

When a body is repatriated to England or Wales, a coroner will hold an inquest only if the death was violent or unnatural, or if the death was sudden and the cause unknown. In some countries the cause of death is not given on the death certificate, and coroners do not generally have access to judicial files from other countries. Consequently coroners may order a post-mortem as part of the inquest. Coroners can request copies of post-mortem and police reports from the foreign authorities. However, these will only be provided once any judicial proceedings are completed. In some instances this can take many months.

In Scotland, the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS) deals with the investigation of all sudden, suspicious, accidental, unexpected and unexplained deaths which occur in Scotland. However, the COPFS does not have the jurisdiction to investigate deaths that occur outside Scotland apart from a few limited circumstances. Broadly, those circumstances include terrorism, cases where the death may have been caused in Scotland but the person died outside Scotland and cases where the death was as a result of murder or culpable homicide caused by another British citizen or subject.

Coroners in Northern Ireland are not obliged to hold an inquest into cause of death. However, next of kin can apply for a judicial review if no inquest is held.

## **RELEASE OF INFORMATION**

Access to information concerning a death, other than post-mortem and police reports are restricted. The Montenegrin authorities can decline to provide this information directly to next of kin or to a third party including Consular offices. Requests for this information can be made through legal representatives. Consular staff can provide lists of English speaking lawyers throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina. The release of information sometimes can take months and documents will be in Montenegrin.

## **LEGAL AID**

British nationals without the available means to appoint legal representation can apply for legal aid in most European countries. The Legal Services Commission in London (Tel: 020 7759 0000, web site [www.legalservices.gov.uk](http://www.legalservices.gov.uk)) is responsible for legal aid applications overseas.

## **INTERNATIONAL UNDERTAKERS IN THE UK:**

ROWLAND BROTHERS INTERNATIONAL 299-305 Whitehorse Road West Croydon Surrey CR0 2HR	Tel: +44 (0) 208 684 2324 Fax: +44 (0) 208 684 8000 Email: <a href="mailto:Info@rowlandbrothersinternational.co.uk">Info@rowlandbrothersinternational.co.uk</a> Web: <a href="http://www.rowlandbrothersinternational.co.uk">www.rowlandbrothersinternational.co.uk</a>
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ALBIN INTERNATIONAL REPATRIATION LTD. 83 Westbourne Grove Bayswater London W2 4UL	Tel: +44 (0) 207 313 6920 Fax: +44 (0) 207 313 6999 Email: <a href="mailto:info@albininternational.co.uk">info@albininternational.co.uk</a> Web: <a href="http://www.albininternational.co.uk">www.albininternational.co.uk</a>
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FUNERAL CARE INTERNATIONAL 221 Upper Richmond Road Putney London SW15 6SQ	Tel: +44 (0) 208 729 0029 Fax: +44 (0) 208 780 2704 Web: <a href="http://www.co-operativefuneralcare.co.uk">www.co-operativefuneralcare.co.uk</a> Email: <a href="mailto:funeralcare.worldwiderepatriation@co-operative.coop">funeralcare.worldwiderepatriation@co-operative.coop</a>
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AVALON  
UK Head Office  
Brooke Court  
Wilmslow, Cheshire  
SK9 7ES  
CO-OPERATIVE INTERNATIONAL  
221 Upper Richmond Road  
Putney  
London, SW15 6SQ

Tel: +44 (0) 161 486 2020  
Fax: +44 (0) 161 486 1473  
Email:  
[Laurence.Aspinall@avalon-trustee.co.uk](mailto:Laurence.Aspinall@avalon-trustee.co.uk)  
Web: [www.avalonfuneralplans.com](http://www.avalonfuneralplans.com)  
Tel: +0208 788 5303  
Fax: +0208 788 2525  
[Henley.wright@letsco-operate.com](mailto:Henley.wright@letsco-operate.com)  
<http://www.co-operativefuneralcare.co.uk/>

KENYON AIR TRANSPORTATION  
81 Westbourne Grove  
Bayswater  
London W2 4UL

Tel: +0207 258 1130  
Fax: +0207 243 3125  
[Katuk@dial.pipex.com](mailto:Katuk@dial.pipex.com)  
<http://www.kenyoninternational.com/>

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FUNERAL  
DIRECTORS  
618 Warwick Road  
Solihull B91 1AA

Tel: +0121 711 1343  
Fax: +0121 711 1351  
[Info@nafd.org.uk](mailto:Info@nafd.org.uk)  
[www.nafd.org.uk](http://www.nafd.org.uk)

A list of local undertakers can be found in:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/list-of-funeral-directors-in-Bosnia and Herzegovina](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/list-of-funeral-directors-in-Bosnia-and-Herzegovina)

## **BRAKE, GOVERNMENT CHARITY INFORMATION**

Brakecare provides services for people affected by road crashes, including information contained in a Bereavement Pack that is given to families following a death on the road. Brakecare also works to promote road safety through community campaigns including Road Safety Week, educational literature. You can contact Brakecare about their Bereavement Pack or about their road safety work on 01484 559 909 or e-mail them at

[brake@brake.org.uk](mailto:brake@brake.org.uk)

[Brake main support pages](#)

[Brake main literature page](#)

[Coping with grief](#)

[Brake's helpline](#)

## **SAMM - Support After Murder & Manslaughter**

SAMM is a national UK Charity supporting families bereaved by Murder and manslaughter. They also provide advice and training to many agencies on issues relevant to the traumatically bereaved.

Support After Murder and Manslaughter

Kings Norton Police Station 20

Wharf Road Kings

Norton B30 3LT

Email: [info@samm.org.uk](mailto:info@samm.org.uk)

SAMM's helpline: 0121 451 1618 and 0845 872 3440

Further information can also be found on their website at [www.samm.org.uk](http://www.samm.org.uk)

May 2018