

Procedure for retrieval and transportation of Mortal remains from Finland to India

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This writeup is based on the real case where the mortal remains of the deceased person (unnatural death) have been transported from Finland to Chennai, India with the support of Indian Embassy and the family back in India.

Stakeholders involved:

Finland

- Local Police
- Hospital
- Indian Embassy
- Funeral Home eg., <https://hautaus-mononen.fi/> (Funeral home takes care of the overall documentation and transportation of the mortal remains)
- Immediate family member or Representative of the Family (eg., Indian association representative approved by the family)
- Insurance (Private or the Indian Employer)

India

- Receiving Airport
- Family members

Documentation for Transporting the Mortal remains to India

1. Documentation needed by the Indian Embassy

- Passport of the Deceased person (To be cancelled by Indian Embassy)
- Burial Letter (Death Certificate from Hospital is not the must since Finland takes longer time (several weeks to give a death certificate) - Provided by the Hospital)
- Hygiene certificate - Provided by the Hospital
- Application for the Death certificate (to be filled by a representative of the deceased person)

2. Documentation needed by the funeral home

- Passport of the Deceased person (To be cancelled by Indian Embassy)
- Burial Letter (Death Certificate is not the must since Finland takes longer time (several weeks to give a death certificate) - Provided by the Hospital)
- Hygiene certificate - Provided by the Hospital
- Transportation letter for Mortal remains- Provided by Indian Embassy
- Death Certificate - Provided by Indian Embassy

3. Documentation need by the Indian Authorities and the Airline company

- Passport of the Deceased person (To be cancelled by Indian Embassy)
- Burial Letter (Death Certificate is not the must since Finland takes longer time (several weeks to give a death certificate) - Provided by the Hospital
- Hygiene certificate - Provided by the Hospital
- Transportation letter for Mortal remains - Provided by Indian Embassy
- Death Certificate for India - Provided by Indian Embassy
- Embalming Certificate - Provided by the Funeral home.

Step 1:

Cause of death Investigation - Local Police

If the cause of death for the deceased is unnatural, the local police take over the case and after the investigation is completed, they contact the National Bureau of Investigation who then will take the official message of death to the Indian authorities. Lead time depends on the investigation etc., ETA - Between 3 days to a week to contact Indian Embassy. Police authorities gives OK to the hospital to release the mortal remains,

Note: Family members shall not escalate Indian Embassy or other authorities in India to reach out the local Police because it does not help. Local police will follow their own process and perform the due diligence before reaching out to the family and Indian Embassy.

Step2:

Retrieving the deceased person from the hospital

Family members need to arrange the retrieval of the deceased person from the mortuary of the Hospital. After the deceased person has passed way, the family members should contact a funeral home as soon as possible. The funeral home will help with practical matters related to retrieval.

If the cause of death is clear, an autopsy to determine the cause of death will not be performed. In such cases, the deceased person can generally be retrieved already on the following day after the death.

If the cause of death is going to be investigated with a medical or forensic autopsy, the retrieval is delayed by a few days.

Forensic autopsy

A medical examiner writes the death certificate after a forensic autopsy. If the writing of the death certificate is delayed due to investigations, the medical examiner will first write a burial permission.

The burial permission is given to an employee of the funeral home that retrieves the deceased person from the morgue. Upon request, family members may receive a copy of the death

certificate from the police, who together with the medical examiner determines whether a forensic cause of death investigation is necessary.

Step 3: Engagement with the Funeral home

While Step 2 in progress, the family member or the representative can contact the funeral home.

Funeral homes performs all the necessary documentation and transportation of the mortal remains to India. Funeral home retrieves the body from the morgue , performs the Embalming and hermetically seal of the coffin box, gets the Health inspector certificate, collect documentation from Indian Embassy, validates all the documentation with the Indian Authorities and Airline company and send the mortal remains back to India.

After checking 2-3 funeral homes, we understood <https://hautaus-mononen.fi/> has the best experience in transporting mortal remains to India. Sample quote below,

Helsinki 21.11.2023

To whom it may concern

On request we hereby offer our quotation for repatriation of a deceased from Finland to Chennai, India.

- Coffin	390,00
- Zinc coffin	670,00
- Transportation box	360,00
- Embalming	120,00
- Hermetically sealing	120,00
- Health inspectors fee	150,00
- Carriers	120,00
- Administration	190,00
	<u>= 2.120,00</u>

Approximated airfreight 3.050,00

Ground transportations:

- If pick up from Vaasa	1.255,00
- If pick up from Tampere	633,00

Total from Vaasa: 6.425,00 € Total from Tampere: 5.803,00 €

Additionally, translations and legalization of documents, if needed.

Yours sincerely

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Note1: In case of unnatural death, the insurance company involved in this case did not cover the transportation of the mortal remains. This might vary depending on the Insurance company and the coverage.

Note2: The total cost must be paid in advance the funeral home. Possible to transfer money internationally. Formal invoice will be sent. Logistics tracking will be provided.

Step 4: Transporting the mortal remains.

After necessary documentation has been prepared by the Funeral home, the funeral home reserves the ticket from the Airline company and sends the documentation via the Airline company to the Indian Authorities (Chennai Airport).

The transportation of the mortal remains can be done only when an 'OK2FWD' message is received to the Airline company from the receiving Airport.

Funeral home takes the mortal remains to the sending Airport and checks in the remains with the Airline company. Once its accepted, the tracking of the cargo shipment is shared with the family/representative of the family.

Step 5: Collection of the mortal remains.

Documentation for collecting the mortal remains are shared with the family by the funeral home.

Family can track the shipment and collect the mortal remains from the Airport.

Role of Indian Embassy:

Indian Embassy helps in the end-to-end procedure including,

- Co-ordinating with the family and/or the representative of the family from the respective Indian Association.
- Works with the Police to get information and progress of the case.
- Provides the Death certificate and the transportation letter for the mortal remains to the funeral home.

Role of Indian Association/Representative of the family in Finland:

- Provide support and main point of contact to the family back in India.
- Helping the family and representing them in Finland.
- Works closely with Indian Embassy, the hospital and funeral home to orchestrate the entire engagement on behalf of the family.