

Statement of clarity in relation to the Guidelines of handling a dead body (Mayyit) infected with COVID-19

The World-Federation COVID-19 Task Force has received numerous statements and guidelines across the world in regard to the handling of a dead body (Mayyit) infected with COVID-19 from various countries, health organizations, Muslim councils, Public Health experts, medical health officers, physicians and members of our communities. Many of the guidelines received range across the spectrum of having the option to perform ghusl (with appropriate infection control precautions) to not performing tayyamu or kafan given the risk of potentially spreading the infection widely in the community. This diversity of opinion clearly demonstrates that the health care experts have still much to learn about the nature of COVID-19 disease and there are many questions that remain unanswered. In many of our members, this has created anxiety, fear and uncertainty. This is understandable and we appreciate that we are currently living in a very rapidly changing environment. We are also cognisant of the reality that there are many dedicated and well-meaning organizations and volunteers who may wish to modify The Task Force guidelines or develop their own guidelines around this issue in line with advice from local medical authorities.

At this time, The Task Force is confident in the direction it has provided within the [guidelines which conforms with the religious guidance](#) provided through our Marja, Ayatullah Sistani (May The Almighty prolong his life), in Najaf. However, we wish to emphasize that these are **guidelines** (not rules and regulations) based on our **current** understanding of the disease, the religious implications and current realities of risk assessment. We would like to recommend very strongly that should an organization or group wish to take a different approach such as the ghusl option (with appropriate infection control precautions), that they please consider the following in their decision-making process:

- Consult extensively with medical health professionals, public health experts and the local governmental direction to ensure proper self-protection steps are taken to reduce the risk of transmission to the minimum
- Consult with reputable Islamic scholars with deep understanding of fiqhi laws to guide the ghusl team as to what are the mustahab acts which can be skipped & what+how wajib acts can be reduced to the minimum or done more safely
- Appreciate the availability and capacity of resources of the organization to implement stringent infection control practices to minimize risk of personal and community wide spread of infection as negligence in safe practice can lead to Sharí'y culpability & liabilities

In the entire decision-making process, we must all assume responsibility and accountability of the actions that we take and in particular the impact of our actions on the safety and wellbeing of others in society.

The Task Force has created a group of medical professionals and public health professionals from

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across all the regions of the World Federation and will engage in a process of analyzing all the guidelines and evidence to further evaluate the advice provided in the current guidelines. Rest assured, if this group feels that the guidelines need significant modification, this will be done in a timely way and in alignment with religious guidance to continuously provide direction to our community in an ever changing and dynamic environment

The World Federation COVID-19 Task Force

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