

U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Consular Affairs Disposition of Remains Report

The following general information is provided to assist families in making initial decisions in case of death of their loved one. Indicated costs are estimates and should be considered as guides only. These estimates also relate only to costs incurred in Vanuatu. U.S. funeral home costs would be handled separately.

Updated: March 2022

Part I. Country: Vanuatu

Part II. U.S. Embassy Port Moresby

Address: Harbour City Road, Port Moresby, National Capital District, Papua New Guinea

Phone: (+ 675) 308-9100

After-hours U.S. citizen emergencies: (+ 675) 7200-9439

[State Department Country Specific Information](#)

[State Department Travel Information](#)

[Smart Travel Enrollment Program \(STEP\)](#)

Part III. Profile of Religions of the Host Country and Religious Services available to visitors.

Country Profile: Visit the State Department's website ["U.S. Relations with Vanuatu"](#)

Religions: Approximately 75 percent of the population is Christian, of which an estimated 25 percent is Presbyterian, 11 percent Roman Catholic, 13 percent Anglican, and 11 percent Seventh-day Adventist. Other Christian groups comprising 15 percent of the population include the Church of Christ, the Apostolic Church, the Assemblies of God, other Protestant denominations, Jehovah's Witnesses, and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons). Six percent of the population is Jewish. Other religious groups present include Baha'is and Muslims. The John Frum Movement, an indigenous religious group with its own political party, is centered on the island of Tanna and constitutes less than 1 percent of the population.

Part IV. Funeral Directors, Mortician and Related Services Available in the Host Country: Embalming service is available through Defloor Industries (only embalmer) and it also provides coffins and tombstones:

- 1) Defloor Industries
 - a. Salili, Route des Colons, Boite Postale 241, Port Vila, +678 25055, +678 776 4945, +678 775 3950, defloor.industries@portvila.co

The Embassy is aware of two companies that can assist with repatriation of remains:

- 1) ProMedical VESA
 - a. PO Box 822, Port Vila, +678 26996, admin@promedical.com.vu ; Emergency Number: +678 25566 /115 (24/7)

- 2) QBE Insurance (only if the deceased was covered by a QBE policy)
 - a. Level 2, Tana Russet Complex, P.O. Box 186, Port Vila, +678 35300, info.van@qbe.com

DISCLAIMER: The U.S. Embassy Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea 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.

Part V. Profile of services available in the host country regarding preparation and shipment of remains.

a. General conditions: Basic mortuary services are available in Vanuatu, most of which are located in Port Vila. There are no known services available in the outer islands or provincial centers. Bodies may need to be transported by inter island aircraft or helicopter (charters are available) to Port Vila for mortuary services. This will involve further costs, which can only be established on a case-by-case basis.

b. Local circumstances: Due to tropical conditions, burial or embalming should take place as soon as possible after death. There is one mortuary at the Port Vila Central Hospital (PMB 9013, Port Vila, +678 22100) that has a limited number of spaces for human remains. In these circumstances, it may be necessary for the next-of-kin to arrange for rental of a refrigerated container to house the body until embalming or burial can take place. Costs for container rental will vary according to supply and demand at the time.

c. Shipment by air: International airlines will not uplift without the confirmed address of receiver in the United States. Please note that experience has shown that it can be difficult to secure confirmed onward transportation of the casket once it reaches LAX, especially if the ongoing carrier is a small domestic airline. A U.S. based mortuary service provider may need to be engaged to assist with such services from port of entry in the United States to destination.

Freight costs from Port Vila are based on the destination, weight of selected coffin, and weight of the deceased. Quotes can be obtained from the airline after providing this information. A less expensive option may be to have remains sent to Australia or New Zealand for cremation, and from there the ashes can be sent to US. This option would cost approximately \$15,000 USD, including the following services: initial treatment of the body, transport to hospital, admission to the mortuary, mortuary fees, embalming, hermetically sealing remains, coffin, freight, other disbursements (administrative, materials, phone calls, etc.) Services not covered by this amount would include transport from airport to funeral home in Australia or New Zealand, any customs fees at destination, cremation, urn, funeral directors' fees in Australia or New Zealand, and onward fares to destination.

d. Local authorities responsible for licensing funeral directors and morticians: None.

e. Local authorities responsible for making findings regarding the cause of death and for issuing death local certificates: Death certificates are issued by the Port Vila Central Hospital (PMB 9013, Port Vila, +678 22100.) Death certificates can take five to seven days to process and may take longer in criminal cases. Autopsies services are available in Vanuatu for criminal investigation purposes and are performed by Doctors from either Australia or New Zealand

- (1) There are no regulations pertaining to the legal maximum period before burial of remains.
- (2) Embalming Services: Defloor Industries. Costs for embalming vary by the weight of the deceased:

Embalming and body care for:

60 kg to 70 kg	VUV166, 750 (\$1,502.25)
80 kg to 90 kg	VUV178,250 (\$1,605.86)
100 kg to 110 kg	VUV189,750 (\$1,709.45)
115 kg to 130 kg	VUV201,250 (\$1,813.06)

Embalming and body care after autopsy:

60 kg to 70 kg	VUV189,750 (\$1,709.46)
80 kg to 90 kg	VUV224,250 (\$2,020.27)
100 kg to 110 kg	VUV258,750 (\$2,309.00)
115 kg to 120 kg	VUV293,250 \$ 2,641.89

In each case of embalming, must add VUV18, 400 (\$165.76) for mortuary taxes.

- (3) Cremation Services: No cremation services are available in Vanuatu. Cremation can be obtained in Australia but would require exporting the remains first. For further information: <http://www.customs.gov.au/webdata/resources/files/Importing-or-exporting-Human-remains-or-ashes.pdf>

- (4) Caskets and Containers:

Lead line coffins for international shipment are available from Defloor Industries.

Lining satin white or champagne, VUV18, 100	(\$163.06)
Lining coffin A white or champagne, VUV7, 000	(\$63.06)
Lining coffin D white or champagne, VUV8, 000	(\$72.07)

Funeral service cost for Defloor Industries at VUV63, 250 (\$569.82)

- Put the body in coffin, and sealing
- Packaging the coffin for travel
- Strap around the coffin

Cold Table bed rent:

1-day VUV15,000 (\$135.14) if coffin buy

1-day VUV25,000 (\$225.23) without coffin buy

(5) Exportation of Human Remains: All human remains repatriated to the United States must be shipped in a leak-proof container. All human remains imported to the United States must also be accompanied by a death certificate stating the cause of death. For more information, see <http://www.cdc.gov/quarantine/human-remains.html> . Air carriers will generally require:

- Embalming by US standard method.
- Use of hermetically sealed coffin or casket.
- Use of all wood outer shipping-container – wrapped or packaged, inclusive of absorbent material, in either a "custom-made carton", protective wrapping, felt or foam sheeting and suitably stitched and labelled
- Certified copy of death certificate.
- Locally issued burial and/or transit permit.
- Embalmers (non-contraband) affidavit – to be typed in funeral home letterhead.
- Shipper declaration for dangerous goods – if not embalmed.
- Non-contagious disease letter from local health authority – to be typed on letterhead of local authority or Coroner/Medical Examiner.
- Full flight itinerary, with name/address/phone number of consignee (quarantine clearance cannot be issued without this information).
- Passport or copy of passport.
- Next of kin/contact information in final destination.

(6) Local Burials: Local burial costs are charged according to ages, and dates of burial. Transportation is charged separately at VUV2, 500 (\$22.52)

- Fetal death / Still born (working hours), VUV14,130 (\$127.30)
- Fetal death /Still born (after hours), VUV17, 285 (\$155.72)
- 1 month to 8 years (working hours), VUV27, 200 (\$246.58)
- 1 month to 8 years (after hours), VUV27, 370 (\$244.38)
- 9 years to 13 years (working hours), VUV27, 770 (\$250.18)
- 9 years to 13 years (after hours), VUV28, 260 (\$254.59)
- 14 years to adult (working hours), VUV34,060 (\$306.84)
- 14 years to adult (after hours), VUV48, 960 (\$441.08)

(7) All cost estimates are based on an exchange rate on 23 November, 2021 of \$1.00 USD = 111 Vanuatu Vatu.

(8) Exhumation and Shipment: Exhumations are possible. Notification must be made to the local council's civil status officer.