

Disposition of Remains Report: Melbourne, Australia

PART I. Name of Country

Australia

PART II. Consulate Information

The consular district of Melbourne covers the States of Victoria, South Australia, Tasmania, and the Northern Territory

Address: U.S. Consulate General Melbourne
Level 6, 553 St. Kilda Road
Melbourne, VIC 3004
Australia
Website: <https://au.usembassy.gov/>

Phone: (03) 9526 5900
After Hours: (03) 9389 3601
Email: MelbourneACS@state.gov

State Department [Country Specific Information for Australia](#)
State Department [Travel Information for Australia](#)
Registration with [U.S. Embassies and Consulates](#)

PART III. Profile of Religions of the Host Country and Religious Services available.

A variety of religions are freely practiced in Australia. According to the 2016 Census, Christianity is practiced by 52% of the population while Islam (2.6%) and Buddhism (2.4%) are the next most practiced religions.

PART IV. Funeral Directors, Morticians and Related Services Available in Melbourne's consular district.

DISCLAIMER: The U.S. Consulate General Melbourne, Australia, assumes no responsibility or liability for the professional ability or reputation of, or the quality of services provided by, the following persons or firms. The order in which the names appear have no significance. Professional credentials and areas of expertise are provided directly by the funeral directors, morticians, and other service providers.

Note: The undernoted hyperlinks for the various funeral homes are best viewed via Google Chrome.

VICTORIA:

Tobin Brothers Funerals. Multiple Locations. <https://tobinbrothers.com.au/home/>
White Lady Funerals. Multiple Locations. <https://www.whiteladyfunerals.com.au/locations/vic/>
Le Pine Funerals. Multiple Locations. <https://www.lepinefunerals.com.au/>

Simplicity Funerals. Multiple Locations. <https://www.simplicityfunerals.com.au/locations/vic/>

Further information for Funeral Directors in Melbourne is online at <https://www.gatheredhere.com.au/funeral-directors-melbourne-guide-lists/>

SOUTH AUSTRALIA:

Blackwell Funerals. Multiple Locations. <https://www.blackwellfunerals.com.au/>

White Lady Funerals. Multiple Locations. <https://www.whiteladyfunerals.com.au/locations/sa/>

Simplicity Funerals. Multiple Locations. <https://www.simplicityfunerals.com.au/locations/sa/>

Further information for Funeral Directors in South Australia is online at <https://www.gatheredhere.com.au/funeral-directors/sa/>

TASMANIA:

Turnbull Funerals. Multiple Locations. <https://www.turnbullfunerals.com.au/>

Millingtons Funeral Home. Multiple Locations. <http://www.millingtons.com.au/>

Further information for Funeral Directors in Tasmania is online at <https://www.gatheredhere.com.au/>

NORTHERN TERRITORY:

Darwin Funeral Services. <https://darwinfuneralservices.com.au/>

Simplicity Funerals NT. Multiple Locations. <https://www.simplicityfunerals.com.au/>

Further information for Funeral Directors in the Northern Territory is online at <https://www.gatheredhere.com.au/>

PART V. Profile of services available in Australia regarding preparation and shipment of remains:

Funeral Directors in Australia assist with every aspect of the process and will prepare remains for cremation/interment in Australia or repatriation to the United States. Adequate services are available to refrigerate, house, handle, embalm, transport, and process human remains.

(1) Maximum period before burial:

There is no specific legal period within which the burial must take place regardless of whether the remains have been embalmed or not.

(2) Embalming:

Embalming is only required by regulation when remains are to be exported. Embalming facilities are available in all the major funeral establishments in Melbourne, Adelaide, Tasmania, and the Northern Territory. Funeral Directors in Alice Springs send remains to Adelaide or Darwin for cremation and that attracts additional air freight. While embalming is typically required for exporting deceased remains to the U.S., exceptions can be made for religions that prohibit

embalming. In these instances, the body can be prepared in accordance with said practices and hermetically sealed in the transport coffin for shipment.

(3) Cremation:

Cremation is permitted under local and national law and there are several crematoriums in Victoria, South Australia, Tasmania, and one in Darwin. There is no crematorium in Alice Springs. The cremation process may commence after the appropriate clearances have been issued by the Coroner's Office in the State where the death occurred.

(4) Caskets and Containers:

Export quality caskets and shipping containers, which meet the requirements of 7 FAM 259, are available in Melbourne, Adelaide, Hobart, Darwin, and Alice Springs.

(5) Exportation of Remains:

Human ashes: To export ashes, the following documents are required:

- (a) Death certificate from the Registry of Births Deaths and Marriages.
- (b) Cremation certificate
- (c) Certificate from the Funeral Home or the Crematorium that the container holds only the cremated remains of the deceased.

Human remains: To export remains, the following documents are required:

- (a) Australian death certificate or Coroner's certificate permitting disposal.
- (b) Embalming certificate issued by the funeral home
- (c) Packing certificate issued by the funeral home
- (d) Infectious diseases certificate issued by the Department of Health in the Australian State where the death occurred, certifying that there were no infectious diseases in that State at the time of the death
- (e) Export authorization issued by the Department of Health, in the Australian State where the death occurred
- (f) Consular Mortuary Certificate issued by a U.S. Consular Officer.

(6) Costs:

Costs could vary significantly from funeral home to funeral home in Victoria, South Australia, Tasmania, and the Northern Territory and would depend on the type of service required. It is recommended that you check the exact cost in U.S. and Australian Dollars when you select an Australian Funeral Home. The cost of burial and repatriation of the remains will vary depending on where the death occurred. Additional charges may apply if the deceased must be transported to Melbourne or Adelaide from Tasmania or the Northern Territory for local burial or repatriation to the U.S. Australian Funeral Homes accept credit card payment. There is no consular fee for U.S. citizens.

Local burial: The average cost for interment with embalming and a funeral service is US\$7,000. However, it is best to check directly with the Australian Funeral Home you choose. (Cost includes collection and transportation of remains, preparation, median price-range casket, funeral home charges, burial plot and interment, all documentation, and administrative fees. *It does not include* a press notice, flowers, or a religious service).

Cremation & Disposal of Ashes: The average cost for cremation is US\$4,000. However, it is best to check directly with the Australian Funeral Home you choose. (Cost includes preparation of remains, crematorium fee, collection and transportation of remains, packing, documentation, mailing and administrative fees. *It does not include* a press notice, flowers, or a religious service).

Shipment of Remains: (The average cost is US\$10,000 based on 150 kg as an average weight)
(Total cost includes all funeral director fees for collection and transportation of remains, embalming, shipping casket, U.S. regulation shipping container, all documentation, and administrative fees).

Air Freight: FedEx and DHL will not transport human remains in any form. Freight charges imposed by local cargo companies vary depending on the weight and dimensions of the item. It is recommended that you work in conjunction with the Australian Funeral Home for the freight cost, and check whether that cost forms part of the quote for repatriating the body to the United States.

(7) Exhumation and shipment: A permit issued by the Department of Health is required before an exhumation can take place. It could take up to four weeks, sometimes longer, to receive this clearance. There is no time before which an exhumation is permissible. Related paperwork and exhumation costs vary from Australian State to State. In addition, the presence of an Australian Funeral Director is required and that will be an additional cost.

(8) Autopsy: If the circumstances of the death fall within the meaning of "Reportable Death" as outlined in the Coroner's Act (all non-natural causes of death), the Coroner will begin an investigation to establish the medical cause of death. The autopsy can be full or limited as decided by the State Coroner. The time taken to establish the medical cause of death may take up to ten weeks because of microbiology, anatomical histology, toxicology, and pharmacology testing. Any member of the person's family, their doctor or attorney, can request a copy of the autopsy report.

Objecting to an autopsy: The next-of-kin has the right to object to an autopsy being performed (religious reasons etc.) If the coroner decides that an autopsy will be performed, the next-of-kin can apply to the Supreme Court for an order preventing it. This must be done within 48 hours of the next-of-kin being notified that their objection to an autopsy has been refused.

(9) Local Customs Regarding Funerals, Disposition of Remains, Mourning, Memorial Services:
Australia is home to a diverse religious population with varying funeral and mourning practices. Local place of worship should be consulted when preparing services. Australian funeral homes typically provide services for wakes, funeral/memorial commemorations, cremation and/or interment of deceased persons. Relatives and friends of the deceased are usually welcome to such services.

(10) Remarks:
Death certificate: Once the medical cause of death is ascertained and the body is released to the funeral director, the coroner's office passes information on to the Registry of Deaths so that

the death can be registered. The Registry is responsible for issuing an official death certificate. In cases where the death is subject to a coroner's investigation, the coroner's office will issue a document permitting "cremation, burial or other disposal". In these circumstances, the Registry will issue an interim death certificate pending the official cause of death from the coroner. The official death certificate will only be issued when the coroner's investigation is completed.

Organ donation: Organ donation can only take place if the death has occurred in certain circumstances: the person must have died in hospital, usually in intensive care and always on a ventilator, so that their circulatory system is still intact. This means that organ donation is not a possibility in most coroners' cases.

Updated: November 4, 2022