

LET'S **STOP** THE SPREAD

CORONAVIRUS

Follow this guide when a person has passed away because of coronavirus (COVID-19).

When a person passes away at home

- Do not touch the remains, and leave the remains in the room where the person passed away.
- Contact the police if the death was due to any unnatural causes such as trauma caused by accidents, murder and suicide for example, and if you suspect that the individual also suffered from coronavirus. In cases where no foul play is suspected, it would be advisable to contact an undertaker who is trained in managing such scenarios and who has the appropriate person protective equipment (PPE) for removal.
- If families wish to wash the human remains before burial due to religious and cultural practices, then it is advised that this is done by members of the religious group who are properly trained in the correct use of PPE.
- The deceased's belongings should be cleaned properly with a solution containing at least 70% alcohol or 0.5% bleach. Any clothing should be washed with warm water at a temperature of at least 60 to 90°C.
- Once the remains are prepared for the burial, no further contact is allowed. The deceased's face may be shown at the funeral if there is no contact in the form of kissing or touching of the deceased's face.
- People with respiratory diseases, those who are older than 60-years and those who are immunosuppressed should not form part of the viewing process unless they wear an appropriate medical face mask to prevent further transmission of possible disease.

Funerals

- Human remains can be infectious on surfaces up to nine days, therefore it is important to clean all surfaces that the body was in contact with.
- Cremation is the preferred method for a funeral, but if the family requires a burial then this process should take no longer than two hours.
- All attempts should be made to bury a deceased who passed away from confirmed or suspected coronavirus within three days if there is no indication for a post-mortem examination.



**Western Cape
Government**

Health

