

## **U.S. Embassy Quito**

Disposition of Remains Report

Updated January 2017

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The following information is submitted in accordance with the referenced requirements. Various area mortuaries were surveyed in order to compile this data. The Technical Health Inspector of the National Health Service (Inspector Tecnico de Sanidad, Servicio Sanitario Nacional) of each province controls the burial, embalming, preparation for shipment and exhumation of remains of deceased persons. Regulations regarding disposition of remains are contained in Decision No. 3523 of the Ministry of Public Health of Ecuador, dated July 3, 2013, which was published in Official Registry No.28 on August 1, 2013. Its scope is nationwide.

### **Part I.**

Republic of Ecuador

### **Part II. U.S. Embassy Information**

U.S. Embassy Quito

E12-170 Avigiras Ave. and Ave. Eloy Alfaro

Quito, Ecuador

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[Country Specific Information - Ecuador](#)

[Safety and Security: Register with the U.S. Embassy in Quito](#)

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

**A. Country Profile:** Ninety-five percent of Ecuadorians are Roman Catholics. The Evangelical Missionary Union represents many Protestants (4 percent of the population) in Ecuador. Anglican churches in Ecuador belong to Province 9 of the Episcopal Church in the United States. Other religions are present in smaller numbers, such as Eastern Orthodoxy, Mormonism, Buddhism, Judaism, and Islam.

#### **B. Religious Activities for Visitors:**

1. Roman Catholic Church: [Archdiocese of Quito](#)
2. Jewish Community: [http://en.turismojudaico.com/contenido/252/Jewish-community-of-ecuador-\(synagogue-and-community-center\)](http://en.turismojudaico.com/contenido/252/Jewish-community-of-ecuador-(synagogue-and-community-center))
3. Jehovah's Witnesses: <http://www.jw.org/es/testigos-de-jehov%C3%A1/oficinas/ecuador/>
4. Mormon Church: <https://www.lds.org/church/temples/quito-ecuador?lang=eng>

5. Islam: <http://www.centroislamico.org/contacto>
6. Protestant Church: <http://www.iglesialuterana.ec/>

#### **Part IV. Funeral Directors, Mortician and Related Services Available in Ecuador:**

For a list of funeral homes in the Quito consular district, please visit our [website](#).

#### **Part V. Profile of Services available in Ecuador regarding preparation and shipment of remains:**

##### **A. Disposition of Remains (general)**

Remains in Ecuador may be buried, cremated, or exhumed. Family members should select a funeral home in country to carry out their instructions. Funeral homes will also assist in obtaining the appropriate paperwork in cases where the family wishes to ship the remains back to the United States.

Morgues are available in most major cities. If the death occurs in a city where there is no morgue available, the Ecuadorian National Police may transport the remains to the closest city with morgue capabilities.

##### **B. Specific facts relating to embalming, cremation, caskets, exportation, documentation requirements, preparation, shipment, and exhumation**

During the embalming process, internal organs will be disposed of, in accordance with article 56 of Decision No. 3523 of the Ministry of Public Health of Ecuador, dated July 3, 2013. See relevant paragraphs below for additional important information.

##### **C. Requirements for deaths by infectious disease or under suspicious circumstances**

Ecuadorian law provides that all deaths caused by non-natural, unknown, or suspicious causes should be accompanied by an autopsy report, detailing the cause of the death.

##### **D. Shipping**

Cargo space availability and fares are independently established by the different carriers. When arranging shipment of remains to the United States, it is of key value to ensure there is space available to fit a coffin in a particular flight. Urns containing ashes are rather easily accommodated.

##### **E. Local authorities responsible for licensing funeral directors and morticians**

In order to legally operate in Ecuador, funeral homes must obtain permissions from the Ecuadorian Health Ministry, sanitary authorities, and the relevant municipal government.

##### **F. Local authorities responsible for making findings regarding the cause of death and for issuing death local certificates**

In order to register a death in Ecuador, the next of kin (or funeral home appointed thereby) must obtain a document called “Informe Estadístico de Defunción” from the attending physician or the coroner who performed the autopsy. This no-fee document,

which indicates the deceased's biographic data and cause of death, must be taken to the Civil Registry for permanent filing and issuance of the Ecuadorian death certificate.

Ecuadorian death certificates can only be issued by the authorities of the Civil Registry in the location where the death took place, or by the National Civil Registry in Quito.

For further information about the Ecuadorian registration process, and to see the list of Registro Civil offices, please click [here](#).

#### 1. MAXIMUM PERIOD BEFORE BURIAL

- a) When body is not embalmed: Burial must be made within 72 hours of death, according to local law. If putrefaction is present, burial must be immediate.
- b) When body is refrigerated at a major morgue: Under Ecuadorian law, bodies that are not claimed within 30 days of death may be disposed of by burial in a common grave or donation to a medical school. However, some morgues, at the director's discretion, may agree on a case-by-case basis to hold a refrigerated body for up to six months.

#### 2. EMBALMING

Embalming may be performed by the Forensic Institute and private professionals employed by registered funeral homes. Accreditation for embalming must be authorized by the Jefatura Provincial de Salud (Provincial Public Health Director). The average cost to embalming in Ecuador is approximately \$500. It is common practice not to embalm, but merely to inject the cadaver with formaldehyde (unless the body is going to be shipped outside the country).

Ecuadorian law stipulates that remains that are to be shipped out of Ecuador must be embalmed. During the embalming process, internal organs will be disposed of, in accordance with article 56 of Decision No. 3523 of the Ministry of Public Health of Ecuador, dated July 3, 2013.

#### 3. CREMATION

Local laws permit cremation of bodies and cremation is approved by the Public Health Director in Quito. In Quito, cremation services are provided by Camposanto Monteolivo, Funeraria dela Paz, Jardines del Valle, Memorial International. Other funeral homes that do not have cremation facilities can contract with these institutions for cremations.

#### 4. CASKETS AND CONTAINERS

Funeral homes must use containers which that all the requirements of the local health authorities. Bodies are not allowed to be exported unless they are embalmed. Sealed caskets made in Ecuador are for one-time use; air-tight metal containers can be made locally.

5. EXPORTATION OF HUMAN REMAINS

Local requirements (Death by non-contagious disease only)

- a) Official death certificate obtained from the Ecuadorian Civil Registry offices.
- b) Next of Kin's consent for exportation of remains (The power of attorney for exportation of human remains should be signed, notarized, apostilled, and then sent to the next of kin's agent in Ecuador, normally a funeral home. Although obtaining the apostille can be a time-consuming administrative task, Ecuadorian authorities typically require this formality in order for the remains to be released to a representative. If next of kin is present in Ecuador, this document can be obtained from the U.S. Embassy).
- c) Embalming certificate.
- d) Inspection certificate from health authorities covering embalming, packing and preparation for shipment.
- e) Permit to transport and export body issued by health authorities.
- f) Customs inspection of shipment and seal on box attesting that the box contains nothing but the remains of the deceased.

6. EXPORTATION OF HUMAN ASHES: (a), (b), (d), and (e) as above, plus cremation certificate. The U.S. Embassy recommends that the next of kin (or his/her agent) contract with a commercial courier service for the international shipment of cremated remains.

7. COSTS

i. Estimated cost of local burial:

In Quito, including rental of grave for four years	\$380.00 - \$860.00
The purchase price of a burial plot plus burial cost (coffin and funeral services)	\$2,000.00 - \$5,000.00 \$750.00 - \$2,200.00

ii. Estimated cost of preparation or remains for shipment:

Embalming (on average)	\$500.00
Preparation for shipment includes embalming, packing, documentation, local transportation, container (coffin and outer container including air-tight or welded metal case).	\$2,000.00 - \$3,100.00

iii. Estimated cost for cremation: \$550.00 - \$1,350.00

Cremation, urn and transportation to facilities

Air freight to ship ashes to the United States \$650.00 - \$850.00

\*Average weight of urn containing ashes is 3-5 kg

iv. Transportation cost for remains (per kilo):

Estimated Transportation Cost by Air to ship body to the United States  
(Additional minimum charges may also apply)

\*Estimated cost per kg varies by airline from \$10.00 to \$20.00.

\*Estimated weight ranges from 200kg to 250kg.

<u>Shipping Information:</u>	<u>Price per kilo:</u>
Quito – Miami	\$ 10.00 to \$ 18.50
Quito – New York	\$ 10.00 to \$ 18.50
Quito – Puerto Rico	\$ 10.00 to \$ 18.50
Quito – Atlanta	\$ 13.00 to \$ 18.50
Quito – Dallas	\$ 13.00 to \$ 18.50
Quito – Houston	\$ 10.00 to \$ 18.50
Quito – Chicago	\$ 13.00 to \$ 18.50
Quito – San Francisco	\$ 13.00 to \$ 18.50
Quito – Los Angeles	\$ 11.00 to \$ 18.50

**Note:** When death occurs in the interior of Ecuador, the remains may be transferred to Quito for preparation and shipment. The funeral home can arrange this domestic transportation, which costs an average of \$600.00.

Additional costs to be included:

- Fuel \$0.45/Kg (minimum fee \$15.00).	
- Security \$0.10/Kg (minimum fee \$15.00).	
- Airway bill	\$15.00
- Shipping agency fee	\$120.00

8. EXHUMATION AND SHIPMENT

Regulations governing exhumation of remains state it may be done only after a minimum period of four years.

Estimated cost of disinterment and shipment:

- Preparation of remains for shipment and paperwork	\$600.00
- Coffin and outer container	\$500.00
- Plus cost of transportation	

(Estimated weight of container approximately 50 Kg)

9. LOCAL CUSTOMS REGARDING FUNERALS, DISPOSITION OF REMAINS, MOURNING, MEMORIAL SERVICES

The power of attorney for arranging for disposition of the deceased's remains should be signed, notarized, apostilled, and then sent to the next of kin's agent in Ecuador (normally a funeral home). Although obtaining the apostille can be a time-consuming administrative task, Ecuadorian authorities typically require this formality in order for the remains to be released to a representative.

An apostille is a certificate issued to authenticate a notary's signature and seal. In the United States, the Secretary of State of the state where a document was notarized should normally provide the apostille. The following webpage contains a full list of competent authorities that can provide apostilles in the United States:

<https://www.hcch.net/en/states/authorities/details3/?aid=353>.

Another alternative is for the next of kin to go to the closest Ecuadorian Consulate and request that they prepare and notarize a power of attorney. In this case, an apostille would not be necessary. For further information regarding notarial services at the Ecuadorian consulates, please visit the Ecuadorian Embassy's website at

[http://www.ecuador.org/nuevosite/serviciosconsulares\\_actosnotariales.php](http://www.ecuador.org/nuevosite/serviciosconsulares_actosnotariales.php).