



U.S. Consulate General Guayaquil

Disposition of Remains Report

DISCLAIMER: The U.S. Consulate General in Guayaquil, Ecuador 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.

The following information is submitted in accordance with the referenced requirements. Various area mortuaries were surveyed in order to compile this data. The District Health Director (Dirección Distrital de Salud) of each province controls the burial, embalming, preparation and authorization for shipment and exhumation of remains of deceased persons. Regulations regarding disposition of remains are contained in Decision No. 0192-2018 of the Ministry of Public Health of Ecuador, dated March 29, 2018, which was published in Official Registry No.226 on April 20, 2018. Its scope is nationwide.

Part I.

Republic of Ecuador

Part II. U.S. Consulate Information

U.S. Consulate General

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Guayaquil, Ecuador

Phone: (593-4) 371-7070

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[Country Specific Information - Ecuador](#)

[Safety and Security: Register with the U.S. Consulate General in Guayaquil](#)

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

A. Country Profile: According to the INEC (The Ecuadorian Institute of Statistics and Census): 80% of Ecuadorians are Roman Catholics, 11.30% belong to the Evangelical Missionary Union (represented by many Protestants in Ecuador), 1.29% are Jehovah Witnesses, other religions are present in smaller numbers, such as Eastern Orthodoxy, Mormonism, Buddhism, Judaism, Spiritism, and Islam.

B. Religious Activities for Visitors:

1. Roman Catholic Church: <http://conferenciaepiscopal.ec/category/iglesia-catolica/>
2. Jewish Community: <http://godaven.com/detail.asp?Id=17021>
3. Jehovah's Witnesses: <https://www.jw.org/es/testigos-de-jehov%C3%A1/visitas-a-betel/ecuador/>
4. Mormon Church: <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/temples/details/guayaquil-ecuador-temple?lang=spa>
5. Islam: <http://www.islamec.org>

Part IV. Funeral Directors, Morticians, and Related Services Available in Ecuador:

We have a list of funeral homes that have experience working with U.S. Citizens: [List of Funeral Homes](#)

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. For you to complete the process you should select a funeral home from the list above since they know how to gather all the required documents so you can complete the burial/cremation and get a U.S. Death Certificate (CRODA).

Morgues are available in most major cities and hospitals. If the death occurs in a city where there is no morgue available, the Ecuadorian National Police will transport the remains to the closest city with morgue capabilities. All the Ecuadorian provincial morgues are listed in the National Forensic Sciences and Legal Medicine Service's website: <https://www.cienciasforenses.gob.ec/sedes-provinciales/>. All these morgues have freezers and infrastructure to conduct autopsies and death investigations to determine causes of death.

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 or preserved, in accordance with the Ordenanzas of each Municipality or G.A.D. (Gobierno Autónomo Descentralizado) [Acuerdo Ministerial 5186 on Official registry 379 from 20-Nov-2014 Chapter 2 Art. 5](#)

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. Also, violent deaths (by suicide, homicide, or accident) will require an autopsy report and cannot be cremated unless there is a judicial authorization. Please be aware that if the death occurred suddenly, they might perform an autopsy.

D. Shipping

The different carriers independently establish cargo space availability and fares.

When arranging shipment of remains to the United States, it is important to ensure there is space available to fit a coffin in a particular flight. Urns containing ashes are easily accommodated and can be either shipped via cargo or hand carried. To export/transport remains or ashes to the U.S., the Ecuadorian Ministry of Health must issue the proper authorization. This process is taken care of by the funeral home you hired.

E. Local authorities responsible for licensing funeral directors and morticians

As determined in Resolution ARCSA-DE-040-2015-GGG of the Ecuadorian National Sanitation Agency (Agencia Nacional de Control, Regulación y Vigilancia Sanitaria) which was published in Official Registry No.538 on July 8, 2015, all establishments providing funeral services (crematoriums, funeral homes, etc.) are exempt from the issuance of a license or permission to operate. This means that funeral homes do not need to have a license for operating in Ecuador. However, they will be subject to controls and sanitation supervision.

F. Local authorities responsible for making findings regarding the cause of death and for issuing death local certificates (INEC form)

To register a death in Ecuador, the next of kin (or funeral home appointed thereby) must obtain the INEC document (“Informe Estadístico de Defunción General”) from the attending physician (usually provided by a hospital) 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.

The authorities of the Civil Registry can only issue Ecuadorian death certificates. Death certificates have a digital number which makes them verifiable and downloadable from the Civil Registry's website.

For further information about the Ecuadorian registration process, to verify digital certificates, and to see the list of Registro Civil offices, visit:
<https://www.registrocivil.gob.ec>.

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 or cremation (with the proper authorization) must be immediate. If a judicial process needs to be followed with the remains, then these must be properly embalmed for temporary preservation.

b) When body is refrigerated at a major morgue: Under Ecuadorian law, remains 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 staff and private professionals employed by funeral homes, under a specific request of the family and/or when the National Sanitation Agency orders this process due to the epidemiological risk of the death.

The average cost of embalming in Ecuador is approximately \$550. The normal practice in Guayaquil, however, is not to embalm, but merely to inject the cadaver with formaldehyde so it can last a few days for the proper funeral service.

Remains that are to be shipped out of Ecuador must be embalmed.

3. CREMATION

Local laws permit cremation of bodies. Cremation is requested and approved by public or private health establishments of the city where the cremation will take place.

Cremation facilities have been available in Guayaquil since January 1987. These establishments operate under the control and supervision of the Ecuadorian National Sanitation Agency (ARCSA). Funeral homes that do not have cremation facilities can subcontract to ones that do, meaning that all funeral homes are able to offer cremation services.

4. CASKETS AND CONTAINERS

Funeral homes must use containers that meet 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 OR HUMAN ASHES

Authorization to transport a body, remains, or ashes outside Ecuadorian territory will be requested and approved by Health Zone Coordinators (Coordinaciones Zonales de Salud) through the International Sanitation Unit of Epidemiological Supervision (Unidad de Sanidad Internacional de Vigilancia Epidemiológica). The requestor (usually the funeral home) will need to present the following:

- a) Copy of the Ecuadorian death inscription obtained at the Civil Registry's office
- b) Copy of the embalming or cremation certificate
- c) Copy of the autopsy report (if applicable)
- d) Copy of ID or passport of requester

6. COSTS

i. Estimated cost of local burial:

Burial plot plus burial cost (coffin and funeral services)	\$5,890
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ii. Estimated cost of preparation or remains for shipment:

Embalming (on average)	\$900
Preparation for shipment (packing, documents, transportation, etc.)	\$2,450
Container (metal coffin and outer container case)	\$1,120
TOTAL	\$4,470

iii. Estimated cost for cremation:

Cremation, urn, and transportation	\$2,240
Cremation permits for exportation	\$560
TOTAL	\$2,800

Cremation with urn and burial plot <i>(Average weight of urn containing ashes is 5.00 kilos)</i>	\$4,370
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Estimated TOTAL Transportation Cost by Air

(Preparation and transportation based on a total shipment weight of 200 Kg, additional minimum charges may also apply)

From Guayaquil to New York (East Coast)	\$1,450
From Guayaquil to Washington D.C.	\$1,618
From Guayaquil to Seattle (West Coast)	\$1,945
From Guayaquil to Dallas	\$1,629
From Guayaquil to San Francisco	\$1,981
From Guayaquil to Los Angeles	\$1,618
From Guayaquil to Chicago (Mid-West)	\$1,170
From Guayaquil to Miami	\$1,535
From Guayaquil to Puerto Rico	\$1,282

Note: When death occurs in the interior of Ecuador, the remains may be transferred to Guayaquil for preparation and shipment. The funeral home can arrange this domestic transportation, which costs an average of \$500.

7. EXHUMATION AND SHIPMENT

Regulations governing exhumation of remains states that it may only be done after a minimum period of four years unless there is a Court order with the proper Health District Director's authorization.

Estimated cost of disinterment and shipment:

- Shipment, paperwork, coffin, and outer container \$1075
- Exhumation \$70

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

The power of attorney for arranging for disposition of the deceased's remains is an authorization that you as a family member must give to the Ecuadorian Funeral Home so they can do this process for you. You have two options: To get it from a local U.S. Notary which you will have to apostille before sending it or, get it from an Ecuadorian Notary in the United States.

- An apostille is a certificate issued to authenticate public and official documents. Every State has its own competent authority to issue apostilles. Please check the following link to locate the closest authority in your State
<https://www.hcch.net/en/states/authorities/details3/?aid=353>.

- Your other alternative is to get the notarized power of attorney from an Ecuadorian Notary which you can only obtain from an Ecuadorian Embassy/Consulate. Please check the following link to locate the closest Ecuadorian Consulate. (If you choose the Ecuadorian Notary, you do not need to apostille the document) <https://www.cancilleria.gob.ec>