

Information for undertakers who are arranging the funeral of a Mahayana/Vajrayana Buddhist

The following is based on the Buddhist belief that consciousness continues after the body dies. The first 3 days following death are considered to be particularly important, whereby the subtle process of the mind disengaging from the body is taking place.

We would be grateful if you could bear the following points in mind:

- Where the body has been washed and dressed by the nurses, please just lift the body into the coffin and avoid unnecessary contact or movement. If the body does need to be washed, please just do the absolute minimum.
- If paper prayers have been placed on the body, please replace them after putting the deceased in the coffin. There may also be additional pieces to go on the coffin.
- Please refrigerate the body rather than embalm it if at all possible.
- Buddhists believe that it is possible to help the person who has just died, by trying to maintain a tranquil and compassionate environment around them. Friends and family may want to sit by the body to pray, so facilitating this would be very much appreciated.
- Cremation or burial should not take place before 3½ days have elapsed.

Thank you.