



**U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Consular Affairs
Disposition of Remains Report**

December 21, 2017

Part I. Name of Country:

French Polynesia

Part II. U.S. Embassy Information

U.S. Embassy Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Tonga, Tuvalu

158 Princes Road, Suva Fiji

Phone: +679-331-4466

Fax: +679-330-2267

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[State Department Country Specific Information](#)

[Register With the U.S. Embassy](#)

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

[Country Profile](#)

Religious Activities For Visitors: A variety of Christian services are available

Part IV. Funeral Directors, Mortician and Related Services Available in the Host Country:

DISCLAIMER: The U.S. Embassy in Suva, Fiji 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.

FUNERAIRES HAPIPI

PK 20,2 c/mont, Paea, Tel : 689-45-42-20

FUNERAIRES MIN CHIU

PK 4,5 c/mer, Arue, Tel: 689-41-38-38

FUNÉRAIRES VAXELAIRE

Avenue Georges Clémenceau

Mama'o Pape'ete BP 4486 98713

Tel. +689 40 42 77 79

Part V. Profile of services available regarding preparation and shipment of remains:

What Happens First: French law requires no specific minimum time within which interment must be made; however, this should be done as quickly as possible in order to avoid any deterioration of the remains. City Hall requests that the person who discovers the body immediately contact a doctor who will issue a medical certificate.

Initial Death Certificate (Doctor's Certificate): Regardless of where the death occurs, a doctor needs to certify the death and verify its cause. This certification will be required for burial or for shipment to take place. If the death occurs in a hospital, the attending physician will provide the certificate. An autopsy is required if the cause of death cannot be determined or certified by the physician, or if the death occurs under suspicious circumstances such as suicide or homicide. An autopsy normally takes between one to three business days. In any case, a local funeral home should be contacted as soon as possible and be given the death certificate. The funeral home can provide guidance and prepare the required French documents. Using the medical death certificate, an official death certificate showing the time, date, and place of death and the name of the doctor in charge will be obtained (usually by the funeral agent) from city hall.

Maximum Period Before Burial: French law stipulates that cremation or burial must take place within two months. Exceptions may be requested.

Embalming: There are embalming facilities in French Polynesia. The law does not require the body to be embalmed unless the remains will be shipped abroad or if the appropriate local sanitary storage facilities do not exist. Embalming may not be done until a death certificate, attested by a physician, is issued, which generally takes at least 24 hours.

Cremation: There are no crematoriums located in French Polynesia, but cremation services can be arranged in New Zealand.

Caskets: There are different types of caskets available in French Polynesia. For air transport, the body must be embalmed and encased in a hermetically-sealed zinc casket.

Exportation of Remains: The same documents are required to ship bodies and ashes. They are usually obtained by the funeral home. Local requirements for the exportation of human remains are as follows:

1. Embalment of the remains
2. Enclosure of the remains in a hermetically-sealed zinc casket
3. Consular Mortuary Certificate
4. Mortician's Certificate of embalming
5. French Death certificate
6. French Transit permit
7. Certificate of non-contagion

Two business days is the absolute minimum to begin the process of shipment abroad. In most cases, it will take three to four business days for shipment. Delays will sometimes occur, due to funeral homes having to wait to receive confirmation of coverage for all expenses. Local funeral homes are familiar with the procedures and documents needed for the exportation of remains.

Exhumation and Shipment: French authorities permit disinterment only with court orders.

Cultural issues related to funeral, mourning and memorial customs: None.

Approximate Costs: Please note that costs can vary widely. It is advisable to obtain a firm estimate of the costs before authorizing any payment.

Estimated shipping costs from Bora Bora to Tahiti:

Funeral home agent flown from Papeete	\$800
Taxiboat from/to Bora Airport	\$600
Air Archipel charter flight	\$4,250
Total	\$5,650

From Tahiti to the U.S.:

Funeral Home services	\$4,000-\$6,000
Air freight to the West Coast	\$3,700
Air Freight to the East Coast	\$4,200
Translation of documents	\$400
Air Tahiti transport fee (airport)	\$30
Europ Assistance processing fee (if applicable)	\$675
Total	\$8800-\$11,500