



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

December 21, 2017

Part I. Name of Country:

Tuvalu

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

After Hours Emergency Phone: +679-772-8049

[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: Christian and Baha'I (on Nanumea Island)

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.

There are no funeral homes in Tuvalu. In the event of the death of an American who has no friends or family in Tuvalu to assist with the burial, the Director of Health (associated with Princess Margaret Hospital) will assist.

Princess Margaret Hospital

Tel: (+688) 20765

Email: pphs@tuvalu.tv

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

What Happens First: The Director of Health (DOH) and attending physician will determine the cause of death and notify the next of kin. Upon notification, the family will be asked whether or not the deceased will be buried in Tuvalu. The U.S. Embassy has no knowledge of remains ever

having been exported to the United States. If the next of kin asks for the body to be returned to the U.S., the DOH would have to research whether that can be done.

Death Certificate/Doctor's Certificate: The DOH will provide the death certificate.

Maximum Period Before Burial: There is no legislation concerning the maximum period allowed between death and burial, but the usual practice is that burial should take place within 24 hours after death. Decisions concerning timing are made by the DOH and attending physicians based on their assessment of the cause of death and the implications of keeping the body unburied for a longer period of time.

Embalming: There are embalming facilities in the country but they are limited to the use of the chemical formalin. There is a mortuary room, but there is no adequate refrigeration facility.

Cremation: There are no cremation facilities in the country and no law governing cremation of human remains.

Caskets and Containers: Although local craftspeople might be able to prepare caskets and containers suitable for exportation of remains, such containers are not readily available. Lead for an inner lining is not available.

Exportation of Remains: There are no laws concerning exportation of remains. Because of a dearth of embalming facilities and lead-lined caskets, exporting a body to the US would be extremely difficult. It has never been attempted.

Exhumation and Shipment: There are no laws concerning exhumation and shipment of remains. The DOH would work with the family concerning their request.

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

Approximate Costs: The cost for burial in Tuvalu will vary depending on the arrangements for the coffin. There is no designated cemetery and permission for land for burial must be requested from landowners. Tuvaluan officials have had no experience returning a body to the U.S. and are unable to give an estimate of that cost.