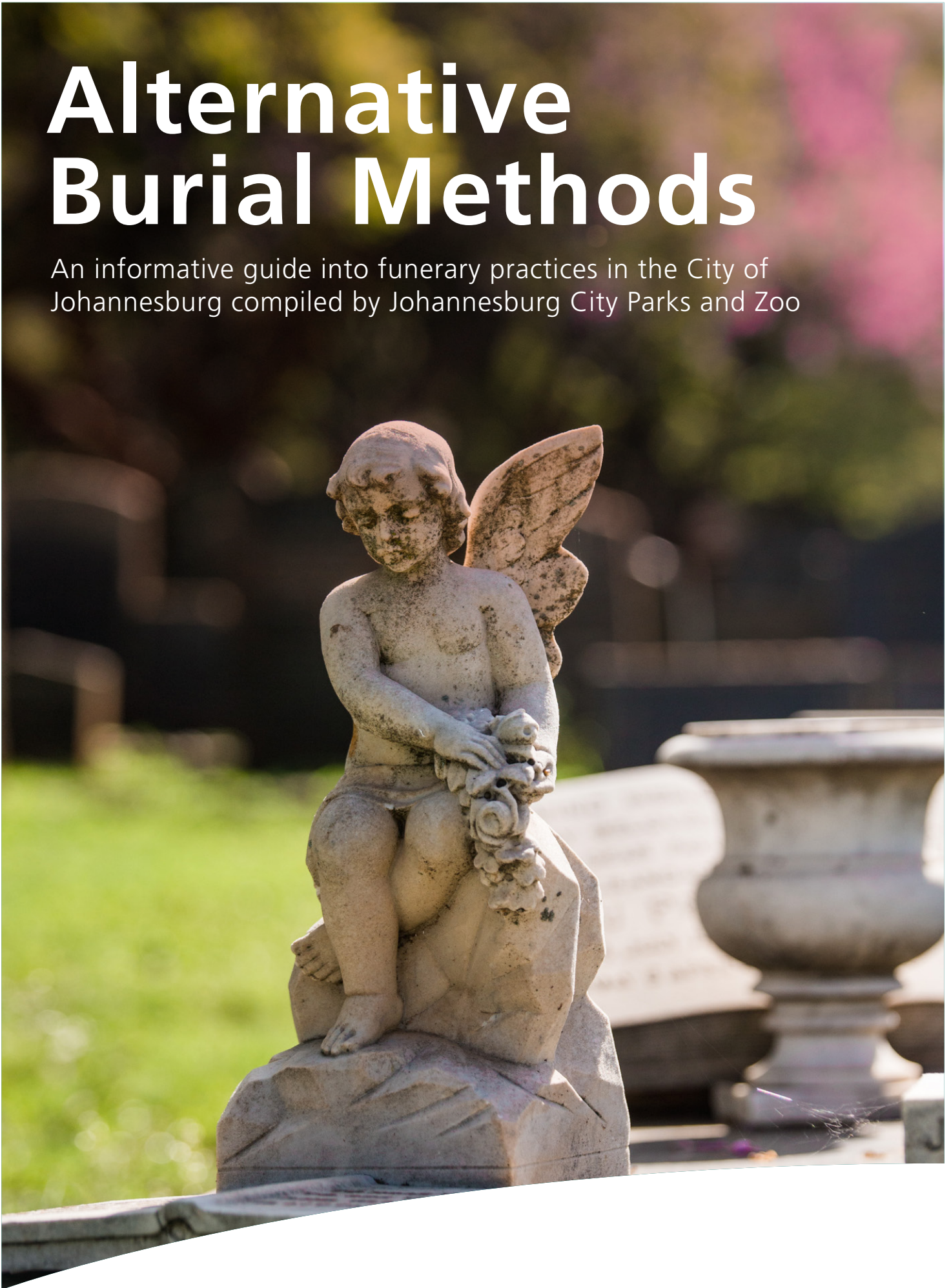


# Alternative Burial Methods

An informative guide into funerary practices in the City of Johannesburg compiled by Johannesburg City Parks and Zoo









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# Introduction

Death is a topic that few people wish to discuss, but it is a reality that affects all human beings. In the emotional response to loved ones dying, it can be difficult to handle issues related to their burial and other legalities, however respecting and preparing for the process leaves a life honored and well remembered.

## **Why This Booklet?**

Though the issue of mortality is one faced by all humans, unfortunately when it arrives sometimes families are ill prepared and don't know how to handle the situation. This information leaflet is designed to assist the bereaved family through this difficult time in City of Johannesburg facilities.

# 01. Burial Methods

Throughout the centuries, mankind has been laid to rest in various ways. The following represent options currently available in the City of Johannesburg:

- Standard first burials: New grave allocated to the family of the deceased.
- Second Interments: 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> burials: Available to family members, who choose to bury 1 or 2 additional family members in the same grave.
- Reduction burials: Involve the exhumation of remains into a small coffin, which is then buried again, allowing additional burial space in the same location.
- Cremation: A family receives ashes of the deceased and decides how to best honor the memory of their dearly departed thereafter.

Joburg residents are encouraged to consider alternative burial methods to ensure that there is enough burial space for future generations. Even though the City currently has sufficient burial space this might not be the case in the future as there is increasingly competition for available land as potential burial space can be used for housing, building of schools and businesses. Other factors

contributing to insufficient burial land are:

- Increasing population.
- An increase in internal and external migration.
- Relatively high death rates in the City of Johannesburg.
- Limited financial resources.
- Limited land for cemeteries.

## Multiple Challenges In Securing New Sites:

- Land environmentally unsuitable for burials.
- High costs to acquire privately-owned land.
- Need for vast amounts of land for a single function.
- Delays in development, potentially leading to illegal burials or pollution of groundwater sources.

A photograph of a cemetery with a vase of pink and white flowers in the foreground. The background shows rows of tombstones under a cloudy sky at dusk or dawn. The text "Second Interments" is overlaid in white.

# Second Interments

Multiple burials, or second burials, provide a feasible alternative to single grave burials. This process involves placing the first burial at 2m deep, with the subsequent burial at 3m within 12-18 months of the first interment.

#### Multiple Burials Provide:

- Recognition of living family members' ongoing cultural and religious beliefs to the deceased.
- Convenience of travel and costs by only having to pay respects to a single gravesite, instead of multiple graves or cemeteries.
- Reduction of funerary costs from erecting a single tombstone.
- Facilitation of communication to ancestors through a single resting site.

Johannesburg residents are embracing the second interments which is evident from the increased use of this method, for instance during 2018/19 almost 30% of burials in Johannesburg were through this method. (See the graph on next page.)

#### How do you request 2<sup>nd</sup> interment burial methods?

- A family applies through the undertaker, who will then refer the family to the cemetery concerned for grave verification and application for re-opening.
- The family will provide the grave number to the usher for verification, and if

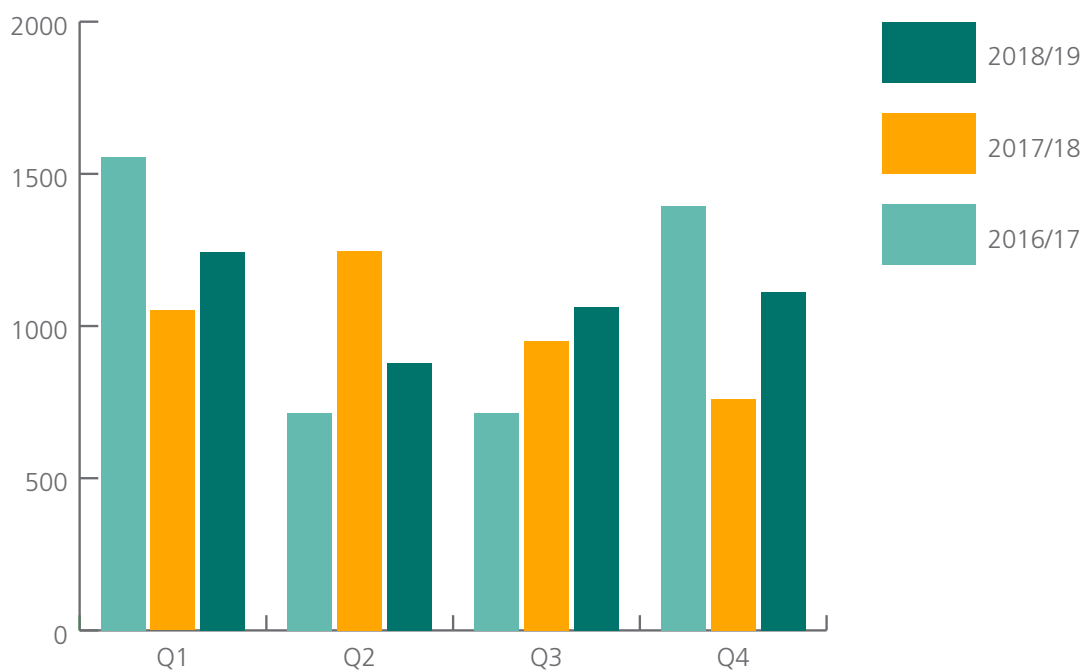
correct, commence with booking for re-opening with submission of an affidavit. Payment and proof of payment should be submitted to the cemetery.

- A grave will be re-opened, provided there is no tombstone on the grave. If there is a stone, the family will be asked to arrange for the removal thereof. Thereafter digging will take place and the family will be asked to return on the Friday to check and sign off as proof that the grave is open.

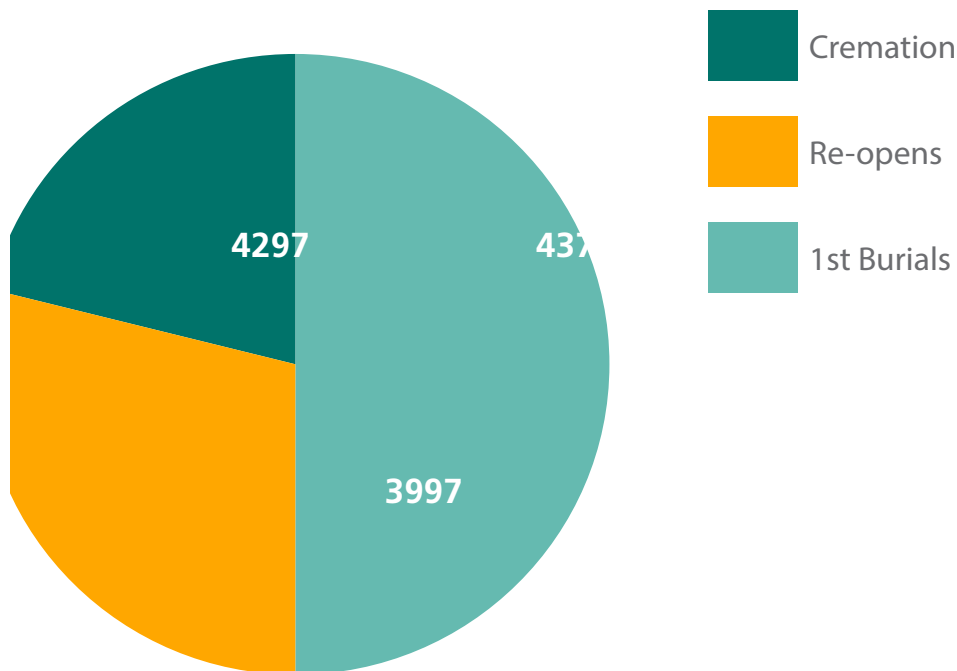
#### The required documents are:

- Affidavit
- Grave number and details of the deceased
- Copy of application for a grave (owner of rights)

Re-Openings Yearly Growth Statistics



Re-Openings Yearly Growth







# Reduction Burials



This involves the exhumation of remains from a grave that is more than 30 - 40 years old and placing them in a small coffin, which is then reburied in the same grave, allowing for additional 2 burial spaces for the same family in the same location.

#### **How do you request a reduction burial?**

- The family applies through the undertaker, who will then refer the family to the cemetery concerned for grave verification and application for reduction burial.
- The family will provide the grave number to the usher for verification, and if correct, will book for reduction to commence with submission of an affidavit. Payment and proof of payment should be submitted to the cemetery.
- A grave will be re-opened, provided there is no tombstone on the grave. If there is a stone the family will be asked to arrange for the removal thereof. Thereafter digging will take place and the family will be asked to return on the Friday to check and sign off as proof that the grave is open.

#### **Documents needed when requesting reduction burial method:**

- Affidavit
- Grave number and details of the deceased
- Copy of application for a grave (owner of rights)

#### **Exhumation Process**

This process involves families that enlist the services of an undertaker to carry out the exhumation.

#### **Procedures to be followed when applying for an exhumation:**

- Permission must be obtained from the Gauteng Provincial Government: Forensic Medical Services, 28 Harrison Street, Johannesburg, Private Bag 7128, Johannesburg, 2000. Contact Person: Ms. C. Finger Tel: (011) – 689 5540 Fax: (011) – 689 5555.
- Permission must be obtained from the office of the Minister: Department of Corporate Governance and Traditional Affairs, Gauteng Provincial Government: No. 37 Sauer Street, Bank of Lisbon & 63 Fox Street, Corner House Buildings Johannesburg, Private Bag X79, Marshalltown, 2107. Tel: (011) 355 4000 / 5000 Fax: (011) 834 3670 / 355 5196. Website: [www.dlg.gpg.gov.za](http://www.dlg.gpg.gov.za).
- Permission must be obtained from the Medical Officer of Health, Johannesburg City Parks and Zoo, Greater Johannesburg Metropolitan Council - JHB City Parks and Zoo House, 40 De Korte Street, Braamfontein. Contact Person: Cheryl Greaves Tel: (011) – 712 6663. Fax: (011) – 712 6684.
- Permission must be obtained from the owner of land (e.g. farm/plot) on which

the grave (s) is (are). If graves are in the cemetery belonging to a local council, the local council has to be approached for permission to conduct the exhumation. An official letter from the relevant cemetery confirming the grave number is required.

- An additional fee is payable at Johannesburg City Parks and Zoo, JHB municipality.
- Application must be made at the nearest Police Station, 7 days prior to the exhumation, in order to have a police officer present at the grave when the actual exhumation takes place.

**All conditions as stipulated by the above authorities must be strictly adhered to, before any exhumation shall be carried out, in terms of the Removal of Graves and Dead Bodies Ordinance, 1925 (Ordinance 7 of 1925).**

- Certified copy of deceased's death certificate is required.
- Certified copy of the applicant(s) ID and affidavit are required.
- Certified copy(s) of the close relative(s) ID and affidavit are required.
- Application letter from the undertaker concerned.
- Grave number verification letter from JCPZ.

The affidavit(s) from the family(ies) must state why they need to do an exhumation and this must be obtained at the police station or with the commissioner of oaths and the following information should appear on the affidavit:


- a. ID number of applicant(s) and names of close relatives with affidavit/s are required.
- b. Residential address and contact numbers, if applicable.
- c. Relationship of applicant to the deceased and reason why the family wants to exhume the body.
- d. Place where deceased is buried and place of re-interment.
- e. Date of death, grave number and position, if buried as a pauper.

The permission holds well only in so far as this administration is concerned. The approval for reburial has to be obtained from the relevant authority; being the owner of land (e.g. farm/plot) or the local council.





# Cremation



Cremation is a method of body disposal that serves as an alternative to the traditional burial in a coffin or casket. Placed in a chip wood coffin container, the remains are incinerated in an industrial furnace (called a cremation chamber) and reduced to basic chemical compounds - gases and ashes, which are called cremains.

Cremains pose no health risk and are generally returned to the deceased's family who will either keep it in an urn or a special container, inter them at a memorial site or crematory, or disperse them during a special ceremony. Cremation was brought to Europe in 2500 BC by Romans and largely replaced earth burials until Christianity became the dominant religion. Cremation takes approximately 90 minutes to cremate a normal size body. The cremains (ashes) can be buried in an ash grave and distributed as the family and friends wish to, or be kept. For those who wish to bury ashes it is suggested that a tree is planted with the ashes, as the roots will absorb the nutrients into the tree as a living memorial.

Ash graves memorial walls and gardens of remembrance are available in selected cemeteries. These are ways for families and friends to have places to visit, and they take less space.

### **Cremation provides for:**

- A more environmentally-friendly option because no land is disturbed for burial purposes.
- Cremains can be carried by loved ones anywhere at any time.
- Families can visit memorial walls and take cremains along when relocating.
- Cost saving - a cremation service is less expensive than a traditional funeral service. Choosing cremation helps families eliminate many costs associated with funerals such as the casket, headstone cost, and gravesite.
- Memorial service - allows friends and families to commemorate their loved ones and celebrate the life of the deceased.

### **How do you request a cremation?**

- Undertaker books for cremation with JCPZ booking office.
- Date confirmed with crematorium.
- Check if chapel is available and if cremation will be attended by families and loved ones.

- Undertaker submits all documentation (Forms A, B, C, D, E & interment form copy of the death certificate).
- Cremation is then scheduled and takes place.

### **Cremations Process**

The hearse delivers the deceased at the crematorium once a booking has been confirmed and all the mandatory documentation has been received by JCPZ. The coffin is removed from the hearse and moved into the chapel to be placed on the catafalque, if a service/attendance was booked. If there is no attendance, the cadaver will be delivered directly to the cremator room.

During the service/attendance, the coffin remains on the catafalque. Once the service is completed and the mourners leave the chapel; the coffin is moved onto a transfer belt to the cremator room. The identity and details are checked and verified; after which

the details are loaded onto the computer system. The coffin is placed into the cremator and the cremation begins and should last between 45 minutes to 1.5 hours. Upon completion, the cremation remains are checked and raked together for the final cremation process to be completed.

Once cooled, the remains are checked and metal residues are removed from the remains for recycling. The remains are placed in the crenulator for reduction. When complete, the remains are removed and transferred into a suitable packaging (sealable plastic bag) which is clearly marked. The remains are stored until they are collected by the undertaker/applicant acting on their behalf or the ashes are dispersed within the crematorium grounds in accordance with the applicant's wishes.



A photograph of a cemetery. In the foreground, there is a green lawn with shadows from trees. To the right, a concrete building with several windows is partially visible. In the middle ground, a brick mausoleum with a small covered entrance stands on a grassy area. Large, leafy trees are in the background under a blue sky with some clouds. The text "Mausoleum Burial" is overlaid in white on the right side of the image.

# Mausoleum Burial

This is above ground burial mainly utilized in areas not suitable for digging. Unlike the conventional in ground burials families can pre-buy units. Currently there are two mausoleums that are located in the Westpark Cemetery and Panorama Cemetery.

#### **Advantages of mausolea:**

- One of the key advantages of mausoleums is that they are considered to be a cleaner and dryer option than a traditional underground burial.
- This option will appeal to people who do not want to be cremated, or are apprehensive about being buried underground.
- Another advantage is that mausoleums actually reduce the amount of land that is used for a burial and is therefore more ecologically friendly than an underground burial. A mausoleum may attract people who are greener at heart.
- Mausoleums are buildings; therefore they allow people to visit in comfort all year-

round as the crypts are protected from inclement weather, unlike traditional graves in a cemetery.

- Some mausoleums also provide appropriate background music and convenient benches so that visitors can sit in comfort and reflect in a peaceful environment.
- Although many people are not aware about this, mausoleums are actually quite common and many cemeteries provide single, companion or family configurations.
- This provides the opportunity to purchase a family mausoleum where all members of the family can be entombed together when the time comes. This option of entombment is lightly more cost effective.
- Burials can be extremely difficult during the winter months and in many rural areas where the appropriate equipment is not readily accessible. This is not an issue if you choose to be interred in an above ground mausoleum.







## 02. Procedures

### Booking a Grave

At times, handling of a burial of families and friends can be trying. To simplify this matter, procedures are standardized to make it easier for all involved. During times of normal burials, an undertaker plays an important role in smoothing the process.

Firstly, the undertaker calls the Johannesburg City Parks and Zoo booking office to book the grave/s for burial. On receipt of the booking, the administrative clerk issues a reference number, and on confirmation of payment, issues a receipt together with the grave number.

A burial notice is issued to the cemetery's administrator, bearing the names of the deceased and the name of the funeral undertaker, as well as the date, time and grave number. Graves are dug to specifications. At each step in the process, a series of cemetery staff check and re-check the information to ensure correct burial in the correct location.

Funeral ushers and the cemetery's administrator are on hand to ensure that the correct location is allocated and the grave is dug properly. The undertaker co-ordinates to ensure that the burial is done appropriately and within requirements.

In recognition of the need for dignity at the time of burial, these steps are followed carefully to ensure that records are kept and the memories of the deceased are preserved for future generations.

### Erecting The Tomstone/ Finding Burial

Previously, families erected and unveiled the tombstone at the end of the mourning period or when the grave submerged into the earth. Today, families opt to erect the tombstone at the burial. This practice cuts down on time and costs of having to prepare for an additional ceremony for the family to re-gather again.

**A Stonemason** is a person who handles the process to erect memorial work on behalf of a person (owner of rights) according to the by-laws. See the extract below:

#### The process is as follows:

A person intending to erect a memorial work must make and complete the prescribed application form to the officer-in-charge.

Such application must be made not less than five working days before the date of erection.

Memorial work may only be erected during working hours, but may, with the approval of the officer-in-charge, be erected outside working hours.

No person may - (a) Erect memorial work, or bring material into a cemetery for the purpose of erecting memorial work, without the written consent of the officer-in-charge;

- Remove memorial work for additional inscriptions or other alterations without the consent of the officer-in-charge; or

- Erect a memorial work on a Saturday, Sunday or a public holiday, without the written consent of the officer-in-charge.

The Council is not liable for damages to memorial work resulting from any subsiding soil.

A person erecting memorial work must, at the request of the officer-in-charge, produce the written consent.

Memorial work or material to be used in the erection of such work may not be conveyed in a cemetery or crematorium in a manner that may damage the roadways, pathways, lawns, grounds or other memorials.

Any surplus material or rubble resulting from the erection of any memorial work, must be removed by the person responsible for such erection, immediately after its completion.

### Social Burial Process

**Indigent Burials:** An indigent person is a needy or poor person whose family is unable to afford the burial costs. Social burials only cover qualifying indigent individuals registered on the Expanded Social Package Register.

The burial/cremation shall take place once the Ward Councilor and the Social Worker in the area concerned have provided all the necessary documentation including; a Socio-Economic Assessment Form and an authorization Form to JCPZ.

Burials or cremations are provided

through contracted undertakers hired by Johannesburg City Parks and Zoo. The cost of the funeral and half grave fees are borne by the City of Johannesburg's Social Development department.

The contracted undertaker will be advised by a JCPZ authorized official to remove a body and conduct the funeral, provided all relevant documents are attached.

The family has an option of cremation. The burial sites will be limited to the nearest affordable one to the family's place of residence as determined by JCPZ and the family will be allowed to be present at the funeral. Only one (1) indigent person per grave may be buried/cremated.

Funerals are conducted on Mondays to Thursdays.

**Pauper Burials:** A Pauper is an unknown or unidentified person. JCPZ is responsible for the burial of paupers from the three Government Mortuaries: Diepkloof, Hillbrow and Roodepoort. The contracted undertaker liaises with JCPZ and the government mortuaries for the collection of bodies and burial of these at a designated Cemetery.

The contracted undertaker provides the following services: body collection; registration of death; pressed wood untreated coffin; Transportation and burial of the bodies. The cost is borne by JCPZ.

The burials for paupers are done on Wednesdays only.

## 03. Cemeteries & Crematoria in Johannesburg

Johannesburg carries the stories of many in its graveyards and cemeteries. There are 37 cemeteries and two crematoria under the custodianship of Johannesburg City Parks and Zoo, many of which are at full capacity for first burials. Even though the City continues to set aside multi-million rands for the development of new cemeteries, the City continues to develop and grow, so does the pressure on burial space.

Children and adults are buried every day.

Cemeteries are closed on Easter Holidays and Day of Reconciliation

Cemetery visiting hours for safety reason are from 07:00-15:30 daily.

See table for a cemetery near you.



Region	Cemetery	Suburb	Status
A	Diepsloot Memorial Park	Diepsloot	Active
A	Midrand Cemetery	Midrand	Passive
B	Westpark Cemetery	Montgomery Park	Active
B	Brixton Cemetery & Crematorium	Brixton	Passive
B	Newclare Cemetery	Bosmont	Passive
B	Fairlands Cemetery	Fairland	Passive
B	Ferndale Randburg Cemetery	Ferndale	Passive
B	Malibongwe Drive (Fountainbleau) Cemetery	Randburg	Passive
C	New Roodepoort Cemetery	Braamfischerville	Passive
C	Panorama Agricultural Holdings Cemetery	Roodepoort	Passive
C	Muslim & Hindu Cemetery (Georginia)	Roodepoort	Passive
C	Hamberg Cemetery incl. Muslim	Roodepoort	Passive
C	Maraisburg Cemetery	Maraisburg	Passive
C	Horizonview Cemetery	Horison View	Passive
C	Old Roodepoort Cemetery	Roodepoort	Passive
C	Davidsonville Cemetery	Roodepoort	Passive
C	Florida Cemetery	Roodepoort	Passive
C	Cosmo City Cemetery	Cosmos City	Passive
C	Weltevreden Park Ext 5 Cemetery	Weltevreden Park	Passive
D	Doornkop Cemetery	Soweto	Passive
D	Dobsonville Cemetery	Dobsonville	Passive
D	Avalon Cemetery and Extension	Soweto	Passive
D	Nancefield Cemetery	Klipspruit	Passive
D	Klipspruit West (Le Roux) Cemetery	Eldorado Park	Passive
E	Waterval Cemetery	Midrand	Active
E	Alexandra Cemetery	Alexandra	Passive
E	Sandton Cemetery	Sandton	Passive
F	Braamfontein Cemetery Crematorium	Braamfontein	Passive
F	Turffontein Concentration Camp Cemetery	Suideroord	Passive
G	Lenasia Cemetery	Klipspruit West	Passive
G	Olifantsvlei Cemetery	Golden Highway	Active
G	Eldorado Park Cemetery	Klipspruit	Passive
G	Elandsfontein Cemetery	Elandsfontein	Passive
G	Ennerdale Hiltonia Cemetery	Ennerdale	Passive
G	Finetown Cemetery	Finetown	Passive
G	Green Village Cemetery	Soweto - Doornkop Ext	Passive
G	Lakeside Cemetery	Orange Farm	Passive

## 04. What to Do Once a Family Member dies

*(The information below is based on general procedures followed by families upon death of loved ones. They may not be applicable to your family's cultural practices. Please seek the advice of an elder where applicable).*

Death might happen under the following circumstances:

- If a person dies in hospital of natural causes, the doctor will issue a death certificate. Many private hospitals don't have mortuary facilities. In those cases, a funeral director needs to be contacted immediately to collect the deceased. State Hospitals generally have mortuary facilities; the body must remain there until a death certificate is issued.
- If a person dies in hospital of unnatural causes, the body will need to be transferred to a state mortuary for a compulsory post-mortem (autopsy). The state mortuary will then issue a death certificate.
- If a person dies at home of natural causes, one should contact the doctor first. Provided the doctor is willing to issue a death certificate, one can contact a funeral director to transport the deceased to a mortuary. A death certificate can be obtained from the deceased's doctor if the doctor had seen the deceased within 24 hours of his/her death or within a reasonable time whereby the doctor is assured of the cause of death. If the doctor is unwilling to sign the death certificate, a funeral service will arrange for a private autopsy to be performed to ascertain the cause of death. The death certificate will then be issued by the pathologist at the mortuary where the

autopsy was performed.

- For those who have died of natural causes at home and do not require an autopsy there is a further requirement if they are to be cremated. A second doctor needs to examine the body to confirm that there is no reason why the body cannot be cremated. Both doctors need to sign cremation forms which are then handed to the medical referee at the crematorium who will then give the final permission for the cremation to take place.
- If a person dies at home of unnatural causes, one must contact the police. The police will organize the removal of the body to a State Mortuary where a compulsory autopsy will be performed and a death certificate be issued.
- Please note: In all the above cases the body is to be identified by a relative or friend before the death certificate can be issued.
- A Death Certificate/Notification of Death (cause of death) also known as the BI-1663 Medical Certificate: The death certificate referred to here is not the 'Death Certificate' from Home Affairs.
- The next of kin do not need to wait for the death certificate (BI-1663 Medical Certificate) to be issued as the preferred funeral director will usually take care of it.

### Identifying the Deceased

- Anyone who knew the deceased is allowed to identify the body of the deceased, provided they take both their own and the deceased's identity book or passport to the mortuary. The mortuary staff will then issue a mortuary/body number.

### Death Rituals

- At home, funerary preparations are made once the death has been announced: each family will follow their own rituals for instance some will cover up reflective items (e.g. mirrors, TV), switch off the radio, remove furniture and lower the mattress to the floor in one room so that the deceased's wife or mother can sit comfortably until the day of the funeral. This is done to relieve strain from climbing into bed caused by grief.

### Make Funeral Arrangements

- This is the time to involve as many family members as possible, as it is possible to be emotionally exhausted and stressed at this stage. Several family members can help to run errands and only meet to discuss progress now and then.
- Make appointments to tour funeral homes. Once a funeral home is found, the director can take care of a lot of the paperwork and other arrangements, for instance they can obtain the death certificate, plan the wake and funeral with your input. Make sure you request several copies of the death certificate to keep with your financial documents.

- A funeral service is not a legal requirement in South Africa, however, it is customary to have an 'end of life ritual or ceremony' to commemorate the life that has passed. When planning a funeral, all decisions should be made in terms of a person's will.
- Try to ascertain what kind of funeral the deceased would have preferred – burial or cremation. The responsibility for funeral arrangements and determining the deceased's last resting place normally falls on the closest next of kin or persons named as heirs in the deceased's will.
- For legal and health reasons it is not recommended that one attempts to carry out the job of an undertaker oneself. The services of a funeral director/undertaker are required for transport and sanitary storage of the body. Funeral directors' valuable knowledge in handling home affairs and their experience with the various funeral arrangements can make things a lot easier for families.
- In certain instances the deceased's body may already have been removed from the scene. It is absolutely acceptable to select a different funeral director to continue with the arrangements from this point onwards. Members of the National Funeral Directors' Association of Southern Africa (NFDA) and other funeral bodies have reasonable standardized rates for removals, so changing funeral directors should not affect the amount you pay for the funeral service. It is important to know that it is your right as a consumer to select the funeral director who best suits you, whether it is based on price,



religion, or any other factor.

(N.B: The above funeral arrangement information is biased towards African burial rituals).

### The Role of Funeral Undertakers

A funeral home, funeral parlor or mortuary is a business that provides funeral services. Their services may include a prepared wake, the funeral and the provision of a chapel. See details below:

- Transport the body to and from a mortuary.
- Obtain a Death Notice from medical attendants.
- Register the death at Home Affairs and collect the death certificate.
- Supply the bereaved family with both the original and certified copies of these forms for estate purposes.
- Make arrangements for death notices to be published in the newspaper.
- Offer a selection of coffins from which to choose.
- Book a cemetery or crematorium.
- Prepare and dress the deceased for viewing / burial / cremation.
- Provide local transport of deceased.
- Embalm the deceased for repatriation (if needed).

- Make arrangements to repatriate the deceased across borders (if needed).

### Preparing the Corpse

Before mortuary services were readily available, the deceased were promptly buried following their death. Today, the corpse remains at the funeral parlour until the day before or the morning of the funeral. At the mortuary, the family dresses the deceased in either new clothes or a favorite outfit.

### The Wake

On the day before the burial, the deceased is brought home to spend their last hours with their family. In preparation for the burial, the men slaughter a cow that corresponds to the deceased's gender. The slaughtered cow is meant to honor the ancestors and feed the mourners.

### Funeral Food

Before any food is served, mourners wash their hands in a mixture of cold water and aloe. Traditionally, this practice was used to cleanse mourners who had handled the corpse.

The women then cook the slaughtered cow meat, seasoned only with salt, in large cast iron pots on an open fire. For distinguished guests, the food is cooked in the house on gas stoves.

### Funeral Checklist

- Obtain legal pronouncement of death

from an attending doctor or hospice nurse.

- Arrange transportation of the body to the funeral home (or coroner if an autopsy is required).
- Obtain death certificates (multiple copies).
- Identify any burial benefits or services the deceased may be eligible for (veteran's benefits, military honours, religious groups, fraternal organizations, etc.).
- Obtain a burial permit (sometimes referred to as a permit for disposition).
- Compile information for the obituary.
- Choose a funeral home.
- Set a time and date for the service.
- Decide on the suitable method of burial (traditional burial, cremation, green burial, interment in a mausoleum, etc.).
- Select a casket or cremation container.
- Select a grave marker and inscriptions.
- Identify a location for interment.
- Identify a location for the service.
- Decide on the type of service (memorial, wake, military, Jewish ceremony, celebration of life, etc.).
- Choose a florist and desired flower arrangements.
- Pick photos to be displayed at the service.
- Prepare any other displays, videos or memorabilia for use at the service.
- Write the obituary.
- Communicate the preference for flowers, donations to charitable organizations or both in the obituary or death notices.
- Pick funeral music or songs to be played/sung at the service.
- Select the clothing for the deceased.
- Choose passages to be read at the service (scripture, poems or other meaningful readings).
- Purchase and compile photos for a memorial register or guest book.
- Purchase memorial cards.
- Create and print memorial folders or programs for the service.
- Arrange transportation to and from the service for family members.
- Coordinate transportation for the casket.
- Choose an officiate to lead the service (religious leader, family member, etc.).
- Decide who will perform the eulogy.
- Decide who will read the chosen passages.
- Choose pallbearers.

- Arrange any food or beverages to be served during or after the service.
- Arrange embalming and preparation of the body, if desired.
- Submit the obituary to selected newspapers.
- Design and printing of hymn sheets/ funeral pamphlets.
- Details of the funeral, such as the venue and time of the day.
- Catering (light snacks and tea).
- Candles and floral arrangements.
- Musicians like singers or bagpipers or an organist.

#### What To Take To A Funeral Parlor:

- Identity Documents of the deceased.
- Next of kin's Identity Document.
- Funeral Policy – (if there is one)
- Marriage certificate (this is required by the insurance company if you have a policy).
- A photo of the deceased for hymn sheets.
- Clothes - for the deceased to be dressed in.
- A sound system/video equipment setup.
- Petals/flowers to sprinkle on the grave.
- Personal items belonging to the deceased and special memorabilia to display at the funeral.





## How Mourners Must Behave In Cemeteries

**Religious or memorial services:** A person who desires to have a religious or memorial service at a cemetery or crematorium must apply to the officer-in-charge and pay the prescribed fee.

**Control of hearses at the cemetery:** No person in a cemetery may – (a) drive a hearse or cause a hearse to be driven except on a designated roadway; (b) park a hearse or detain a hearse on a roadway after the coffin has been removed from the hearse; or (c) park a hearse in such a manner that it interferes with other burials in progress.

**Conveyance of coffins and bodies:** An applicant in terms of Section 3 is responsible at his or her own cost for ensuring that a coffin is conveyed to the cemetery for burial or to the crematorium for cremation. No person may in any street, cemetery, crematorium or other public place, convey a body in a disrespectful manner.

**Duration of service:** The officer-in-charge at the cemetery may issue instructions relating to - (a) the parking of vehicles; (b) a funeral procession; (c) the duration of a service. (d) Every person taking part in a funeral procession at the cemetery, or attending a cremation service must comply with all reasonable instructions of the officer-in-charge.

**Hours for burials:** No person may occupy a chapel at a cemetery for the purpose of a funeral service or cremation, for more than 30 minutes, without the permission of the officer-in-charge and payment of the prescribed fee.

Burials may take place only between 08h00 and 15h00; (b) The Officer-in-charge may, on such conditions as he or she may determine, and on payment of the prescribed fee, give permission to bury outside the stipulated hours; (c) If the burial takes place outside the stipulated hours, the applicant will provide tools and assume the responsibility of closing the grave; (d) If the applicant requires the Council to provide the service outside the stipulated hours, the Council may provide such service on payment of the prescribed after hours fee, subject to such conditions as the officer-in-charge may determine.

Communities are encouraged to report criminals who vandalize the cemetery and tombstones. They must report any act of crime they witness in cemeteries.

## 05. Heroes Acre

### What Is It?

The classification of a hero, is in most cases a person who has paid the ultimate sacrifice for his country, however, individuals can also be classified as a hero when placing their lives at risk in safeguarding other people or by great feats of courage or recognized for special achievement in a particular field.

Cemeteries worldwide have areas set aside for such people normally called a Garden of Remembrance or Memorial Park. In these gardens one normally finds war graves, military graves, police graves and memorials to an individual or a group of people.

Since the liberation of Africa from its Colonial past, such gardens have become synonymous with a Heroes Acre; however, a Heroes Acre is a product of historical reality. It is an expression as well as a symbol of the collective will of the people to forge and make their own history and to be their own liberators by participating in the protracted, arduous and bitter struggle for self-determination and freedom from colonialism and apartheid. It focuses attention on permanent historical values upheld by the people of South Africa, distinguishing these values as a heritage because of its importance and the continuity of history in the making. Heroes Acres arouse national consciousness, forges national unity and identity, engenders the spirit of patriotism and are symbols of the people. It is a testimony to the fact that true history is a living and natural force forever impelling man to do and achieve more for the betterment of mankind.

### How Is It Booked?

A letter is written to the member of the mayoral committee (MMC) of Community Development, requesting permission for a burial of a High Profile person (i.e. a politician, musician or sports person).

## 06. Before death occurs: important considerations

### Drafting Of A Legal Will

If someone dies without a will, it will cause much delay in settling affairs and can even lead to hardship for their family. That is why everyone should have a will, no matter how young you are, or how little time you may have left to live. It is still sensible to clearly state your wishes in legal form. Your bank manager, assurance or legal adviser will be able to assist you. You can always update your will on a yearly basis or in later years as your financial or marital status changes.

### Keeping Your Documents Together

Many people find that a safety deposit box or perhaps a file is an ideal place to keep valuable documents like wills, share certificates, assurance policies and all the other documents that record your financial life. These boxes can be obtained from your bank. Your safe can also be used for document storage. It is imperative that you mention all passwords for e.g. policies online procedures, if applicable.

Whatever you do, you will save your next of kin a lot of frustration and worry by collecting your financial records and keeping them together in one place.

### Cost And Cost Need

When someone dies, all his/her banking accounts are frozen by law. Often this causes problems for the surviving family during the period while the estate is being settled. This process can take six months or even longer.

Some undertakers require payment in advance. If this is a problem, arrangements should then be made with the undertaker, who will send the account to the executor of the estate. If the account is sent directly to the next of kin, it should be handed over to the executor. You may appoint your own executor, e.g. a parent or the bank itself.



## 07. FAQ

### **What is the role of a funeral undertaker and where do you find them?**

- Undertakers are responsible for conducting burials, and are located in almost all parts of the city.
- Most of the undertakers are on JCPZ database, visit [www.jhbcityparks.com](http://www.jhbcityparks.com)

### **What is the role of JCPZ when there is a funeral?**

The role of JCPZ is to provide a burial site once booked by the undertaker and to provide the holes for burials.

### **How can I remember my family's burial site?**

The cemetery offices will issue the grave number that is given to the families along with the cemetery name. Families can use that information in future to remember where their family members have been laid to rest

### **When can memorial stones be erected?**

A Memorial stone may be erected 6 months after burial and a head stone maybe erected immediately after burial.

### **Who are the role players?**

Families, stone masons and cemeteries.

### **What do families need to do?**

- Visit or call cemetery offices.
- Families should verify the grave number and do an affidavit, make payments, etc.

### **Where can communities lodge complaints/ find more information?**

Through the undertaker.

### **How can people go about requesting alternative burial methods?**

Please contact JCPZ cemetery offices:

Cemetery offices are open from 07:00 to 16:00 from Mondays to Fridays.

<b>Cemeteries</b>	<b>Contact Numbers</b>
Avalon cemetery	010 230 0174
Eldorado Park cemetery	011 665 9157
Elandsfontein cemetery	011 857 3079
Doornkop cemetery	011 857 3102
Lenasia cemetery	010 233 0122
Westpark cemetery	011 446 2033
Newclare cemetery	011 473 4086
Braamfontein cemetery	011 338 5189
Alexandra cemetery	011 809 8023
Waterval cemetery	011 665 9157

### **How do you request Indigent burials and provision for those unable to bury their dead?**

Indigent families can approach their ward councilor for assistance in the matter.

### **What is the role of an Ombudsman?**

- An ombudsman is an official appointed to investigate individual complaints against a company or an organization, especially a public authority.
- His role is to facilitate informal conflict resolution by providing advice, suasion, and mediation to follow up with actions and referrals.

**For more information contact**

Reggie Moloi

011 712 6714

[rmoloi@jhbcityparks.com](mailto:rmoloi@jhbcityparks.com)

[www.jhbcityparks.com](http://www.jhbcityparks.com)