

Regional Guide

Procedure to manage the remains of deceased patients with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 infection

1. Notify the manager and the supervisor. They will make sure to get you a morgue stretcher and a second shroud.
2. Apply basic practices and the additional precautions required until the remains are placed in a shroud and that the cleaning of the room and the exterior of the shroud be done.
 - 2.1 If the patient dies intubated on mechanical ventilation, the patient must be transferred to a negative pressure room before performing extubation (extubation of the deceased patient generates aerosols). Prepare the patient for the mortuary in this room (full PPE including N95).
 - 2.2 The patient must be prepared for the mortuary. If the patient is not intubated, he can be prepared in his usual room.
3. Disinfect the exterior of the shroud and the stretcher with Oxivir wipes before removing the remains from the room or the unit. Then apply the facility's current procedures for transporting remains within the establishment. The main team must remain in the room.
 - 3.1 A second team (with PPE) will receive the patient at the room or unit doors (if the unit is red) or they will clean the shroud and stretcher and place a second shroud on the patient.
 - 3.2 The red isolation sticker with COVID-19 written must be placed on the shroud.
 - 3.3 The second team is the one that brings the patient to the morgue. Housekeeping and the security guard must be involved in the transfer to ensure that the hallway remains clear and, in the event that the hallway/elevator needs to be cleaned.
 - 3.4 The security guard is responsible for writing down the names in the morgue logbook.
 - 3.5 Personal effects must be double bagged and identified with the patient's name and record number. Write the name of the next of kin and their telephone numbers on the bag. Personal belongings must be quarantined in a plastic bin for 14 days before being released to family members.
4. Follow the waiting time required based on the ventilation capacity of the room (how many times the air is changed per hour) before entering a room without the needed respiratory protective equipment. If the cleaning has not been done, make sure to wear droplet-contact PPE when cleaning the room.
5. Before handing over remains to a funeral home, advise Public Health to ensure that the transfer is handled properly.
6. If an autopsy must be done, take the necessary precautions: aerial / contact (N95) / negative-pressure room / visor / disposable gown level 3 / gloves).