

## **Death of an U.S. Citizen in Andorra**

Death is a time of crisis for one's family and friends, especially when it occurs overseas. In the case of repatriating remains from Andorra to the United States, the shipment will have to go through either France or Spain since there is no airport in Andorra. Typically, shipments transit through Barcelona as Andorra is within the consular district of the U.S. Consulate General Barcelona. The instructions below provide information from local funeral homes that help with burial or transportation arrangements, as well as the estimated cost and related documents. There are several important things that the next of kin must do in conjunction with Consulate General Barcelona. We stand ready to assist you with any of these steps at any point.

### **Reporting the Death of an American**

Any death of a U.S. citizen should be reported immediately to the police and to the Consulate General. The American Citizen Service Unit of U.S. Consulate General Barcelona can be reached through the switchboard +34-93-280-2227. After hours, the duty officer is available through the U.S. Embassy Madrid switchboard +34-91-587-2200.

When reporting the death of a U.S. citizen, please provide as much of the following information as possible: the deceased person's name, date and place of birth, passport number, date and place of death, cause of death, and the location of the remains. If possible, please provide us with the full name and phone number of the next of kin.

### **Decisions to be Made by the Next of Kin**

You have three options regarding the disposition of your loved one's remains. You may have the remains cremated and buried in Andorra, you may have the remains cremated and buried in another location, or you may have the remains embalmed and shipped to another location (such as the United States). There are two funeral homes in Andorra that offer cremation, embalming, and transportation services. Both funeral homes have English-speaking representatives and work with funeral services in Barcelona (Iber Condor and Memora International) to facilitate international transportation.

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website soon available

## **Embalming**

Bodies may be embalmed in Andorra whether or not an autopsy was performed. Embalming must be performed between 12 and 48 hours after time of death. The cost of embalming is approximately USD \$900. Embalming methods employed in Andorra are adequate for preservation of remains but additional cosmetics may have to be applied by the U.S. funeral home for a viewing.

## **Cremation**

Cremation is permitted under Andorran law. There is one national crematorium located in the parish of Escaldes-La Plana. To perform the cremation, a license from the Civil Registry is required. After the cremation, the ashes will be collected in an urn to be delivered to relatives or the funeral home.

## **Casket and Containers**

In Andorra, funeral homes have several types of coffins that meet all regulations in Andorra and those of neighboring countries. The coffins are zinc with a wooden exterior. When the remains of a deceased person are to be transported out of Andorra, the remains must be embalmed, casket-welded and filtered, and accompanied by the corresponding mortal remains certificate issued by the medical examiner.

## **Exportation of Remains**

Although remains can be transported through Toulouse, France or Barcelona, Spain before reaching the final destination, most shipments transit Barcelona for administrative and financial reasons. As U.S. Consulate General Barcelona has jurisdiction over consular matters in Andorra, the Consulate General can provide next of kin with the necessary paperwork for transporting the remains.

To transport ashes, a certificate must be issued and include the following information: the identity of the remains, day and time of incineration, and the registration number provided by the funeral home. The ashes must be in a funeral urn.

To transport embalmed human remains, they must be placed in a zinc casket. The box should be welded and have a filter with a registration number. The medical examiner will then proceed to issue the mortal remains certificate. The estimated cost to repatriate the remains from Andorra to the United States through Barcelona is USD \$10,000.

### **Necessary Documents**

The family of the deceased person should work with the U.S. Consulate General Barcelona, the Andorran government, and the funeral home to acquire the following documents:

- Official Andorran report of death (issued by the Civil Registry)
- Official embalming certificate/certificate of cremation/certificate of exhumation of remains (issued by the Public Health Service)
- Transport authorization (issued by the Public Health Service)
- Certificate from funeral home as to the contents of the casket
- Consular Mortuary Certificate covering the shipment of the remains issued by the U.S. Consulate General

Andorra is a signatory to the Agreement on the Transfer of Corpses of the Council of Europe since March 7, 2007. The agreement simplifies the paperwork for the transit across the border between Andorra and Spain. The funeral home will present the C7 form when entering Spain. There is no extra cost associated with the form.

### **Exhumation and Shipment**

The rules are set by each City Hall, ranging between five and seven years for exhumation of a corpse. The price of exhumation is approximately USD \$330. The cost of the shipment is set by the funeral home and the airline. For hygienic and economic reasons, incineration is recommended before transferring the exhumed remains.

### **Autopsy**

Autopsy is not mandatory in Andorra unless ordered by the court.

### **Timing**

According to the Andorran Civil Registration Act (Chapter II, Article 126 and 127), the remains cannot be buried or cremated less than 12 hours from the time of death or the finding of the body. On the other hand, the burial, embalming, or cremation will have to take place within 48 hours after death, unless the judiciary authority states otherwise.

### **Consular Report of Death Abroad**

Although authenticated copies of the local death certificate can be obtained, they are unacceptable in the United States for insurance and estate purposes. In the United States, a “Report of Death of an American Citizen Abroad” (CRODA) issued by the U.S. Consular Officer is generally used in lieu of a foreign death certificate as proof of death. The CRODA is a report that provides the essential facts concerning the death of a U.S. citizen, disposition of remains, and custody of the personal effects of a deceased citizen. The Report of Death is based on the foreign death certificate, and cannot be completed until the foreign death certificate has been issued. The CRODA can sometimes take between two to three weeks or longer after the date of the death, depending on how long it takes local authorities to complete the local death certificate.

We will provide the next of kin with up to 20 certified copies of the Report of Death at the time the initial report is issued. These are provided at no cost. For information on how to request a certified copy of a CRODA, please visit the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Consular Affairs webpage “Copy of a Report of Death of an American Citizen Abroad (<http://travel.state.gov/>).”

### **Additional Information**

When the family members of the deceased person do not have the financial resources to take care of the remains, the Andorran government will cover the cremation fees.

If the deceased person was a beneficiary of social assistance from the Ministry of Social Welfare, the Ministry will cover the cremation fees up to approximately U.S. \$ 1680.

If the deceased person was not a beneficiary of social assistance, then the funeral homes will need an authorization delivered by the judge and the Ministry of Interior before beginning the cremation. In that case, the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Interior will cover the cremation fees.