

# Manchester Muslims COVID-19 Burial Group - Response Plan

In order to ensure that we (the Manchester Muslim Community) are prepared as best as possible to deal with COVID-19 deaths during these unprecedented and challenging times, it is absolutely essential that a **co-ordinated, joined up, collaborative and consistent approach** is adopted across the various Manchester Muslim organisations/ supporting services involved to ensure the issues are tackled effectively and efficiently.

To help us achieve this we have set out the guidelines below: -

## **Guiding Principles**

- 1. Reliance on Allah (SWT):** First and foremost, we must wholeheartedly accept that nothing happens without the decree (Qadr) of Allah SWT. In these unprecedented and dark times, we must turn to our Lord at every opportunity to ask for His forgiveness and guidance.
- 2. Work alongside National Burial Council (NBC) Guidelines:** It is important that all organisations are guided/ directed by the NBC with the support of their Regional Co-ordinator. The NBC is an umbrella organisation that represents Muslim funeral services across the UK and are proactively leading discussions on behalf of its representatives with the UK government and Public Health England.

## **Scope:**

This group will only deal with matters relating to COVID-19 deaths within Manchester. Any non COVID-19 deaths will follow the usual arrangements that are already in place with the local masajid and funeral services.

## **Proposal:**

Every masjid will be given the opportunity to be clustered with one of the designated COVID-19 Masjid<sup>1</sup> who will take care of the funeral arrangements for that deceased. These are:

- 1. Manchester Central Mosque (Victoria Park), 20 Upper Park Road, Manchester, M14 5RU**  
**Contact: Qadir Ahmed Chohan (07904 092748)**  
Deceased will be collected from mortuary in a coffin box and taken directly to cemetery for burial.
- 2. Darululoom Islamia (Longsight), 1 Hawkhurst Road, Levenshulme, Manchester M13 0ST**  
**Contact: Khalil Hussain (07815 561818)**  
Deceased will be collected from mortuary in a coffin box and taken directly to cemetery for burial.
- 3. City Jamia Masjid, 347-349 Stockport Road, Longsight, Manchester M13 0LF**  
**Contact: Atif Hamid (07951 445025)**  
**Alternative Contacts MMBT: Abdul Huy Malek (07817 232267) Ashraf Timol (07879 490834)**  
If circumstances permit, washing and shrouding of deceased will be performed at the masjid, otherwise deceased will be collected from mortuary in a coffin box and taken directly to cemetery for burial. All burials will be dealt with on a case by case basis.

Please speak to the relevant designated contact above if further details are required on the funeral process.

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<sup>1</sup> A COVID-19 Masjid is selected on the basis of having the ability to provide full burial facilities i.e. wash/ shroud/ store/ transport a deceased.

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## Process/ Guidance:

- The family of the deceased should inform their local masjid of a COVID-19 death.
- The local masjid will then make the referral to their chosen clustered COVID-19 Masjid who will make the necessary preparations for the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death (MCCD), Registration and transportation of the deceased.
- The local masjid will maintain communication with the bereaved family to advise them of the process for the COVID-19 death and will act as a link between the family and the COVID-19 Masjid.
- To control the spread of infection, it will not be possible for family members to view the deceased.
- Handling of the deceased at any point of the process, including at the burial, shall only be undertaken by specially trained personnel equipped with the correct Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).
- If a Covid-19 Masjid decides to perform washing and shrouding at its premises in agreement with the family, this must be done in a safe and dignified manner, managing any risks and in compliance with Public Health England (PHE) guidance.
- In order to reduce the risk of spreading infection, all disposable items used in the funeral process i.e. PPE, towels, used body bags, etc shall be disposed of safely as clinical waste.
- A thorough decontamination will be required of the washing area (mortuary table) if ghusl is performed as well as any equipment used for transporting or preparing the deceased i.e. ambulance trolley, casket, bier, refrigerator, etc. This is to eliminate any risk of spreading infection.
- No shrouded burials without a coffin box will be allowed.
- The Janazah (funeral) congregational prayer shall only take place at the cemetery.
- There will be limits imposed on the number of people that can attend the burial.
- If family members of the deceased are in isolation, they will not be permitted to attend the burial.
- **Important:** Charges and payment methods may vary between the COVID-19 masajid so please make sure you are familiarised with payments due in advance.

## Action Plan

1. **Form Core Team** that will represent the interests of the Manchester Muslim Community and co-ordinate funeral activities in a safe and dignified manner.
2. **Develop a Central Register of Each Mosque** within Manchester to form a holistic view of what storage and burial facilities are available and establish main points of contact.
3. **Obtain Adequate PPE** and ensure the safety of the volunteers carrying out the funeral process in accordance with government, Public Health and NCB guidelines/ standards.
4. **To Ensure Appropriate Volunteers are Recruited, Trained and Provided Guidance** with reference to the handling, preparing and burial of the deceased in a safe and dignified manner.
5. **To Engage/ Strengthen Relationships with Relevant Authorities** i.e. masajids, hospitals, bereavement centres, mortuaries, registrars, councils, cemeteries and coroners (where required) to ensure funerals are performed in accordance with the appropriate authoritative guidelines.

**This document will be reviewed regularly and will evolve to ensure it is updated and continues to serve the needs of the Manchester Muslim Community.**