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# **HANDBOOK ON THE REPATRIATION OF HUMAN REMAINS**

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**2026**

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**Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs  
#2 Prada Street, St. Clair, Newtown, Port of Spain  
Trinidad and Tobago**

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## (1) - REPATRIATION OF HUMAN REMAINS TO TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO – DECEASED NATIONALS

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If a **Trinidad and Tobago national** dies overseas and the family wishes to have the body shipped to Trinidad and Tobago for burial, the below guidelines are to be followed:

1. The family/Importer of Human Remains needs to contact a Funeral Home in the country where the death took place;
2. The following documents must be submitted by the funeral home to the nearest accredited Trinidad and Tobago Overseas Mission.
  - Original\* a letter issued by the competent Authority from the place of death stating the authenticity of the documents produced for the transportation of the deceased person;
  - Original Certificate of Death;\*\* (The Certificate of Death needs to be Apostilled or Authenticated by the country of origin).
  - Original Letter of non-contagious diseases issued by the Health Department abroad. This must be issued by the Coroner, Doctor or Hospital;
  - Original Permit to dispose of or Transport Human Remains;
  - Original Embalming Certificate from the funeral home abroad;
  - Original Trinidad and Tobago passport of deceased. If the deceased has an expired passport, it will be accepted together with the deceased person's valid passport, despite the nationality. In cases where the deceased nationality cannot be verified or tied to Trinidad and Tobago, the application will be categorized as a Repatriation of Human Remains for a Non National to Trinidad and Tobago.
  - Applicable Fee (Refer to guidelines from the processing Mission)

### Note:

\*In particular cases, if the documents are being sent via international courier, notarized copies of the above documents may be accepted.

Please check with the relevant Trinidad and Tobago overseas mission for specific guidelines.

**\*\* Foreign public documents which are to be used in Trinidad and Tobago are often times required to be authenticated in order to be accepted for legal and business transactions. Institutions in Trinidad and Tobago may require that the documents be authenticated by way of an apostille in order to verify the authenticity of the foreign document. An apostille or authentication validates the authenticity of the origin of a public document. In this regard, it is in the family's best interest to have all documents, and in particular the Death Certificate, affixed with an Apostille or Authenticated in the country of origin.**

3. If the deceased national dies in a country where English is not the first language, please note that all documents must be translated into English, by a Registered translator in the country in which the death took place. All translations should then be Apostilled or Authenticated.
4. In cases where there is no Trinidad and Tobago Overseas Mission, a submission can be made to a Trinidad and Tobago Honorary Consul or to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the country where the death took place, once it can be facilitated.
5. The family / the funeral home may contact the nearest overseas mission for advice before transmitting documents. Please visit the Ministry's website at [Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs | T&T Missions Abroad](#) for contact details for each mission.
6. Upon receipt of the aforementioned original documents, the nearest Trinidad and Tobago Overseas Mission/ Honorary Consul / Ministry responsible for Foreign Affairs in the country of death, certifies the documents. The official stamp of the Trinidad and Tobago Mission/Honorary Consul will be affixed to a copy of each document and signed or initialed by the authorized Consular officer. Copies of each document are then transmitted by the Mission to the Consular Affairs Division of the Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs (Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago) via email at [Consular@gov.tt](mailto:Consular@gov.tt). Similar documents are forwarded to the local Funeral Home selected by the person/family/importer. The Consular Affairs Division can be contacted at (1868) 623-6894.
7. The approval of the Ministry of Homeland Security and the Ministry of Health is required for the repatriation of Human Remains into Trinidad

and Tobago. As such, the Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs liaises with the two above-mentioned Ministries to secure the necessary approvals, on behalf of the family and funeral homes. *Funeral homes are not required to visit any of the aforementioned competent authorities to request approvals.*

Funeral Homes within Trinidad and Tobago must do the following:

8. Once approval is granted (as outlined at #7 above), a letter is issued by the Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs addressed to the Customs and Excise Division communicating the authorization to import the body.
9. The local funeral home will be contacted to collect the original letter addressed to the Customs and Excise Division from the Reception of the Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs, #2 Prada Street, St. Clair, Newtown, Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and may subsequently submit the documentation to the Customs and Excise Division for the necessary clearance. The Customs and Excise Division will provide the funeral home with the relevant document indicating there is no objection to repatriate the human remains.
10. It is important that funeral homes and family members refrain from making confirmed flight arrangements in absence of approvals. Approvals will be required by most airlines.

## (2) REPATRIATION OF CREMATED ASHES TO TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO - DECEASED NATIONALS

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### **STEP ONE**

Cremated Ashes may either be repatriated Accompanied or Unaccompanied.

The following documents should be provided when processing a request for the repatriation of cremated remains (ashes) to the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago:

#### **Accompanied**

- Original Death Certificate
- Certificate of Cremation
- Funeral Director's Statement of Death
- Letter from the Funeral Home confirming that the urn contains only the cremated remains (ashes) of the deceased.
- Bio data page of cancelled Trinidad and Tobago passport
- Bio data page of passport for person transmitting the ashes
- Proposed flight itinerary. (Scheduling of flights should take into account an adequate timeframe to allow the missions to receive and certify all document)
- Applicable fee (Refer to guidelines from the processing Mission)

### **Unaccompanied**

- Copy of Death Certificate
- Certificate of Cremation
- Funeral Director's Statement of Death
- Letter from the Funeral Home confirming that the urn contains only the cremated remains (ashes) of the deceased.
- Bio data page of cancelled Trinidad and Tobago passport
- Name of funeral home receiving the urn and their contact details
- Proposed flight itinerary. (Please book flights within an adequate timeframe to allow the missions to receive and certify all document) This should be booked after approvals for Ashes being shipped unaccompanied

## **STEP TWO**

The documents must be taken to the nearest Trinidad and Tobago Overseas Mission or Trinidad and Tobago Honorary Consul to be certified. The official stamp of the Mission is to be affixed on each document and signed or initialed by the authorized Consular Officer. A covering letter listing the documents submitted, seen and certified by the Consular Officer is also provided. In the event that the death occurred in a country where there is no diplomatic or

consular representation, the documents should be submitted to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in that country to be authenticated.

### **STEP THREE**

If the deceased national dies in a country where English is not the first language, please note that all authenticated documents are required to be translated into English by a Registered Translator in the country of origin.

### **STEP FOUR**

The overseeing Mission, Honorary Consul, or Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the country will forward all documents to the Consular Affairs Division of the Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs by email to [Consular@gov.tt](mailto:Consular@gov.tt) for processing.

### **STEP FIVE**

Once approvals are granted by the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Homeland Security, they will be rechanneled back to the Mission, Honorary Consul, or the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. At this point, the local funeral home will be contacted and provided with a confirmation letter of approval to receive the urn on behalf of the family. In this regard, family members should liaise with the funeral home, which will have the approval letter.

### **ACCOMPANIED**

The Consular Affairs Division transmits the documents in support of the application to the Customs and Excise Division to facilitate the necessary clearance. The Trinidad and Tobago overseas mission provides the family member travelling with the urn with a copy of the letter addressed to the Customs and Excise Division.

Persons repatriating ashes must declare the urn containing the cremated remains (ashes) to the Customs Officials on arrival at the port of entry into Trinidad and Tobago.

### **UNACCOMPANIED**

The approval of the Ministry of Homeland Security and the Ministry of Health is required for the repatriation of unaccompanied cremated ashes into Trinidad

and Tobago and the repatriation of ashes for non-nationals. As such, the Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs liaises with the two above-mentioned Ministries to secure the necessary approvals, on behalf of the family and funeral homes.

Once approval is granted, the Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs informs the Comptroller of Customs and Excise of the circumstances under which the repatriation of the unaccompanied cremated remains (ashes) to Trinidad and Tobago is occurring. The Trinidad and Tobago overseas mission will also inform the funeral home in that country.

The local funeral home in Trinidad and Tobago will be contacted to collect the original written approval from the Reception of the Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs, #2 Prada Street, St. Clair, Newtown, Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and may subsequently submit the documentation to the Customs and Excise Division for the necessary clearance.

Families are advised to await the approval prior to booking travel arrangements for the shipment of the ashes.

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### (3) – IMPORTATION OF HUMAN REMAINS AND CREMATED ASHES TO TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO – DECEASED NON- NATIONALS

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Persons seeking to repatriate the remains of **non-nationals** should follow the same steps outlined at No. 1 - Importation of human remains to Trinidad and Tobago and No. 2 – Repatriation of Cremated Ashes to Trinidad and Tobago above. However, the below additional documentation is required.

The deceased must have ties to Trinidad and Tobago and the relative of the deceased is required to submit a letter addressed to the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Homeland Security. This letter must include the name of the deceased, his/her nationality at the time of death, the individual's relationship to the deceased and the reason for requesting that the deceased be interred in the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, including the deceased's ties to Trinidad and Tobago.

Please note that approval to import human remains and cremated ashes (accompanied and unaccompanied) of a **non-national** MUST be granted **prior** to making travel arrangements to transport the deceased to Trinidad and Tobago.

#### **Where to get more information?**

The Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs understands that the death of a loved one is an emotional difficulty and as such if the information captioned on this page seems challenging please feel free to contact the Consular Affairs Division for assistance, or the Trinidad and Tobago Embassy, High Commission or Consulate nearest to you. The Consular staff will be pleased to help in any way they can. The Consular Affairs Division can be reached at [Consular@gov.tt](mailto:Consular@gov.tt)

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### (4) EXPORTING HUMAN REMAINS

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When human remains are being exported, the Consular Affairs Division, Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs, may be required to authenticate or Apostille the Death Certificate which may be submitted by the local Funeral Home or Exporter. The local Funeral Home is advised to contact its counterpart in the foreign country for further guidance.