

Introduction

Jewish funeral service rituals and practices have traditionally followed a strong set of customs and beliefs which are based on the Tradition.

The Jewish people hold the philosophy that one should embrace life while accepting the inevitability of death. The emphasis of Judaism concerns how one's life should be lived and it does not specifically define an afterlife. However, it is implied that leading a praiseworthy life will prepare one for what comes after life.

Sources: <https://www.funeralwise.com/customs/jewish/>

Preparing the Body

- ☐ Jewish burials are to take place as soon as possible. Exceptions are made when the family cannot be present immediately and for other practical reasons.
- ☐ Jewish funerals emphasize simplicity to avoid embarrassment for the poor.
- ☐ It is traditional Jewish practice to perform a ritual washing of the body ("Tahara") and then to dress it in a plain burial shroud.
- ☐ Watchers ("Chevra Kadisha") remain with the body around-the-clock until the funeral.

Funeral

- ☐ Funeral is usually held in a synagogue or funeral home the day after the death. There is no visitation by friends in the presence of the body before the funeral.
- ☐ The body is placed in a simple wood coffin so as not to disturb its natural decomposition.
- ☐ An open casket or cremation is not accepted in the Jewish tradition. ☐ Male guests are expected to wear a jacket and tie with a yarmulke as a head covering, which is available at the funeral home or synagogue.
- ☐ Women wear conservative apparel, a skirt or dress of somber colors, but they are not expected to wear a head covering. They should dress modestly – nothing revealing – no short skirts, short sleeves or open-toed shoes.

Jewish Funeral



Mourning Period

- ☐ The initial mourning period lasts seven days and is called Shiva (Hebrew for seven).
- ☐ During this time, it is appropriate to visit the home of the bereaved. ☐ The family may practice traditions that may include: covering mirrors; burning memorial candles; or wearing the black ribbon that was cut.
- ☐ Men do not shave, women do not wear makeup, and couples refrain from intimacy.
- ☐ This break from daily routine symbolizes the disruption that death has brought to their lives and demonstrates grief through self-sacrifice.

FTC Funeral Rules

Summary of your rights under The Funeral Rule:

- ☒ Buy only the funeral arrangements you want.
- ☒ Get price information over the telephone.
- ☒ Get a written, itemized price list when you visit a funeral home.
- ☒ See a written casket price list before you see the actual caskets.
- ☒ See a written outer burial container price list.
- ☒ Receive a written statement after you decide what you want and before you pay.
- ☒ Get an explanation in the written statement that describes any legal cemetery or crematory rules that require you to buy specific funeral goods or services.
- ☒ Use an "alternative container" instead of a casket for cremation.
- ☒ Provide the funeral home with a casket or urn you buy elsewhere.
- ☒ Make funeral arrangements without embalming.