

NATIONAL EMERGENCY ALERT LEVEL 4 – KUA RĀHUI TE MOTU

OFFICIAL GUIDELINES FOR TANGIHANGA

When someone dies – what we need to do first and foremost

- **Immediately contact your local Police and inform them of the death.** You may wish to speak with the Police Iwi Liaison Officer, which your local Police should be able to facilitate easily.
- **Appoint a whānau member to liaise with Police and Health Providers.** This may be the person who contacted local Police in the first instance.
 - Māori communities, iwi, hapū and whānau are being encouraged to establish local ‘kaiwhakarite’ or people who can assist whānau during this time as well. **You may wish to contact your ‘kaiwhakarite’ to seek advice.** Get in touch with your iwi and hapū organisations as well as marae to see if a ‘kaiwhakarite’ has already been established.
- **Contact the deceased’s Health Provider (GP, Hauora, PHO).**
 - If your loved one has died from a known health issue, this will be critical information for the Police – your loved one’s Health Provider must liaise directly with the Police to pass on this information.
 - If your loved one has died from COVID-19 then it will be critical for the Police and/or Health Provider to support you with information on what to do next.
 - If your loved one has died from an unknown cause, a post-mortem will need to be undertaken. The Police will facilitate this process and will liaise directly with your appointed whānau member.
- **Get in touch with a local funeral director** to organise arrangements for burial or cremation.
 - If you are unsure about funeral directors, work with your local Police Iwi Liaison Officer, ‘kaiwhakarite’, Tribal Authority, Health Provider and/or local Civil Defence Emergency Management Centre to identify someone suitable.
- Once you have secured the services of a funeral director, **be prepared:**
 - **They will uplift your loved one wearing full protective clothing** including masks, gloves etc. – this may be daunting for whānau, especially young ones.
 - They will only allow **one appointed whānau member to facilitate arrangements** including paperwork – this may need to be done remotely or at least using strict social distancing measures.
 - **Whānau are not allowed to go to the funeral home** for viewing, karakia, poroporoakī or mihi.
 - All funeral directors are being encouraged to **carry out burials and cremations as quickly as possible** and at the nearest cemetery or burial ground as defined by law.
 - Depending on where you are located there **may be the ability to have the deceased interred at an urupā or private cemetery.** However, this will need to be agreed with the funeral director.
 - However, **this does not preclude whānau from electing to have their loved one placed in storage (refrigerated),** if this facility is available locally, until we are past the current Level 4 Alert – National Emergency. You can discuss this option with the funeral director if you wish to.

TO NOTE:

Tūpāpaku are potentially contagious

- Where possible, try to minimise contact with the deceased loved-one.
- It will be very hard, but we cannot allow any others to come into contact with the deceased or those who are in isolation with them.
- This means that whānau and friends are unable to visit your home or funeral home to pay their respects.
- It also means that the time available with your deceased loved-one will be short.

Cremation

- Although you may not be used to cremation it may have to be an option you consider, especially if you are wanting to return your loved one to their whānau urupā once we recover.
- Be prepared to potentially not have your loved-one's ashes returned until after the pandemic.

Honouring your loved one

- Once whānau know the time of the burial you may want to hold a service at that same time in your own home with those whānau you are isolating with.
- You may also choose to livestream this service with other whānau and friends.
- Once we recover from this pandemic, your whānau may want to come together to honour your loved one. If your whānau member was cremated, you may want to bury their ashes at a whānau urupā. If they were buried immediately, you may choose to hold a service at the burial grounds. These are only some of the ways you may choose to remember your lost loved one.

Getting support

- We encourage whānau to utilise the services of their Police Iwi Liaison Officers, their local 'kaiwhakarite' and their deceased loved-one's Health Providers.
- Grieving is never easy. If you feel you are not coping, it is important to talk with a health professional. For support with grief, anxiety, distress or mental wellbeing, you can call or text 1737 – free, anytime, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week – to talk with a trained counsellor.

John Whaanga

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