

בש"ד  
ק"ק עדת ישראל-עדושווער

**Edgware Adath Yisroel Congregation**

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Rabbi Zvi H. Lieberman

## Intro

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In earlier generations every local Kehilla had a Chevra Kadisha with their own unique minhagim and takonos which were rigorously adhered to. In our time, given the terrible destruction of the communities of old, many of these established minhagim have been lost and confused. Especially in a community such as ours, where we come from numerous backgrounds and without a shared tradition, much confusion exists of what is appropriate and correct. Especially at a time when a person suffers bereavement and wants to be comforted by what seems familiar, it is painful to lack certainty or understanding of what needs to be done or how it is done.

In reflection of past tragedies and losses where the pain was inadvertently compounded by this lack of clarity, this brief guide has been compiled to give understanding and direction of what needs to be done and how.

It is my hope and prayer that it not be needed, but rather we merit with all of Klal Yisroel the time of

בלע המות לנצח ומחה אדני ידוד דמעה מעל כל פנים וחרפת עמו יסיר מעל כל הארץ כי ידוד דבר:  
ואמר ביום ההוא הנה אלדינו זה קנינו לו ויושיענו זה ידוד קנינו לו נגילה שמחה בישועתו:  
ספר ישעיה פרק כה

## Help and contact numbers

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### *Rav*

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**Rabbi Zvi H Lieberman**

Mobile: 07956 957 287  
Office: 020 8931 7917  
Home: 020 8931 6206

### *EAYC Shul Secretary*

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Rafi Youngerwood

Mobile: 07796 216 040  
Home: 020 8958 2239  
Email: [secretary@eayc.org](mailto:secretary@eayc.org)

### *EAYC Shul Administrator*

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Vicki Green

Office: 020 8238 2491  
Email: [admin@eayc.org](mailto:admin@eayc.org)

### *EAYC Committee Designate*

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Alex Portnoy

Mobile: 07774 113 495  
Home: 020 8958 2363  
Email: [gabbboyim@eayc.org](mailto:gabbboyim@eayc.org)

## *Burial Societies*

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### Adath Yisroel

Tel: 020 8802 6262/3

### United Synagogue

Finchley Office (for Bushey and Willesden Cemeteries)

Tel: 020 8343 3456

Ilford Office (for Waltham Abbey and East London Cemeteries)

Tel: 020 8518 2868

### Federation of Synagogues

020 8202 3903

### Spanish and Portuguese Jews' Congregation (Sephardi)

Tel: 020 7289 2573

For other congregations you should contact their synagogue office.

## *Registrars*

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### Barnet

Barnet Register Office, 182 Burnt Oak Broadway, Edgware, HA8 0AU

Tel: 020 8731 1100

### Harrow

The Civic Centre, Station Road, Harrow, HA1 2UX

Tel: 020 8424 1618 (Monday to Friday, 9am-1pm and 2pm-4pm)

Tel: 020 8863 5611 (Sunday and Bank Holiday mornings)

### Camden

Camden Register Office, Camden Town Hall, Judd Street, London, WC1H 9JE

Tel: 020 7974 1900

Tel: 020 7278 4444 (Sunday and Bank Holidays 9-11am)

## **Pitira**

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After the pitira, when possible, the Niftar's face is covered, limbs are straightened and the Niftar is placed on the floor.

Light a candle if possible near the Niftar (if it is not possible as the person died in hospital, light a candle at home as soon as possible).

The Niftar is constantly attended by two Jews until burial. This Mitzvah of 'vaching' (watching) is a duty which devolves upon the family and close friends. An Onan who is a Cohen is allowed to perform this Mitzvah. Where the body is in a hospital mortuary it is sometimes difficult to 'vach' the body, for this reason we recommend that the Niftar be brought home as soon as practicable after the pitira. You should contact the Chevra Kadisha for assistance with this. This is however generally impossible until a death certificate has been issued. The co-operation of the hospital administration will be needed.

## Anninus

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From the time of pitira until the burial, a mourner is called an Onan.

Only immediate relatives are considered onanim or availim. They are; spouse, children, parents and siblings. Boys under Bar Mitzvah and girls under Bas Mitzvah age are not obliged to observe these Halachos, except for Keriah.

An Onan does not do any positive Mitzvos, does not recite any berachos and does not daven. He does not put on tefillin but must wash his/her hands before eating. On Shabbos the halachos of Anninus do not apply, however, private aspects of availus continue to apply.

An Onan is allowed to leave the house to help or deal with any aspects of the burial arrangements. He may go to his place of work in order to set in motion arrangements for his absence for the period of the Shiva. A business owned by an Ovel must close during the Shiva. Alternatively, the business may be sold or partners should withdraw from the partnership for the duration of the Shiva. (For further details of this complex area, please speak to the Rav if necessary.)

Except for going out and wearing shoes, which an Onan may do, all other forms of mourners' restrictions such as not shaving or going to the hairdressers etc., apply.

An Onan may not eat meat or drink wine except on Shabbos. However, during Shiva there are no restrictions on what one may eat or drink.

From the time of death until the end of the Shiva a special Yahrzeit candle should be kept alight at all times - even through Shabbos. The candle, of course, must never be lit on Shabbos.

## Arrangements

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Before the Levaya and Kevura can be arranged, it is necessary to formally register the death with the local Registrars. However, in order to expedite matters you should contact the burial society of the community of which the Niftar was a member to inform them of the pitira. (See contact details above)

### *Death Certificate*

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Your first task is to obtain the death certificate from the doctor or hospital. Halachoh demands that the Niftar be given every possible respect. Therefore, requests by doctors to carry out a post mortem examination should be refused by relatives unless the Coroner insists upon one being undertaken. You should contact the Rav or the appropriate Chevra Kadisha if you have any problems with uncooperative doctors. There are now alternatives to an invasive post mortem investigation.

### *Green Form and Registration*

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The death certificate will have to be taken to the Registrar for Births and Deaths for the district in which the death occurred. You should be able to find out the address of the registrar from the doctor or hospital who issued the death certificate. The registrar's office is only open for a few hours each weekday and you should therefore endeavour to go to the registrar as soon as possible so as to avoid any delays in arranging the Levaya and Kevura. In most registration districts it is possible to see the registrar out of hours (by appointment) on Sunday mornings. It will help the registrar and save time later if the following information can be supplied:

- i. The full name of the Niftar(also the maiden name in the case of a woman).
- ii. The date and place of death and the Niftar's usual address.
- iii. The date and place of birth - town and county (If born abroad - Country of birth).
- iv. Occupation (and husband's occupation, in the case of a woman).
- v. Whether the Niftar was in receipt of a pension or allowance from public funds (take along the pension book etc.)
- vi. If the Niftar was married - the date of birth of the surviving spouse.
- vii. The National Health medical card number - take along card.

It is often useful to obtain a few copies of the registration certificates for insurance purposes, etc. You should therefore have sufficient money (about £20) on you for payment. Once the green burial certificate has been issued by the registrar, it is necessary to take it to the Burial Society of the synagogue to which the deceased belonged who will arrange the Levaya and Kevura.

Once the Levaya and Kevura have been arranged, you should inform the community and Rav and give them the appropriate details.

### *Adath Yisroel*

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If the Niftar was a member of the Adath Yisroel Burial Society, phone the Burial Society Office on the above number.

Out of office hours leave a message on the answer phone (name of the Niftar, which synagogue the person belonged to and a contact telephone number of the person making the arrangements)

### *United Synagogue*

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If the Niftar was a member of the United Synagogue, phone the Burial Society Office on the number above. Out of office hours leave a message on the answer phone (name of person who was Niftar, which synagogue the person belonged to and contact telephone number of the person making the arrangements)

If you need to speak to someone urgently when the Burial Society is closed, phone their night line on 07957 119119.

## **Kriah**

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The Kriah is the tearing of one's outer garment as a sign of grief. A sweater or waistcoat is acceptable, but not a tie, underwear or scarf. For parents the Kriah is done on the left-hand side (near the heart) and for other relatives on the right-hand side. The Kriah garment is worn for the duration of the Shiva but not on Shabbos.

## **Levaya**

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If the Niftar is at home the preparation for the Levaya and Kevura will be carried out by members of the Chevra Kadisha who will discuss the detailed arrangements with you at the appropriate time.

At the arranged time the Kriah will take place and the Niftar and family will leave the home and hespedim (if appropriate and permitted) and Tehillim recited. The Availim and the menachamim will then accompany the aaron for a short distance before they will leave for the Kevura.

If the Niftar is not in the house, the aaron may be brought to the home after the Tahara - when Kriah will take place - followed by the Levaya with hespedim and Tehillim.

It is not appropriate for men and women to stand mixed at a Levaya.

Arrangements should be made for someone to be with any Availim who are not going to the Kevura and to accompany them at the Shiva house.

## **Kevura**

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If there is no Levaya at the home, the Kriah is carried out at the cemetery immediately before the Kevura.

For Availim who go to the Kevura, a close friend or relative should take with slippers or non-leather shoes to change into after the Kevura. One should wash one's hands after changing shoes.

The custom of the Adath Yisroel Burial Society is that women do not go to the Kevura. Those men and women who do wish to go to the Kevura should make sure to do so immediately after the Levaya.

## Avilus

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### Shiva

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It is recommended that you arrange for a close friend or relative to be on hand and help with such matters as answering the door and phone, purchasing and preparing food and contacting relatives and friends whom you wish to inform.

The Shul Secretary will need to know where you will be sitting Shiva and how many chairs you will require. They will also need to discuss with you the times of Davening at the Shiva house. You will have to arrange for the chairs, siddurim (and Sefer Torah) to be collected.

A stock of Yahrzeit and Shabbos candles should be purchased for the week.

A close friend should prepare the meal for the Availim on return from the funeral which should consist of at least a hard boiled egg and a roll or bread.

### Tefillos

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In the Shiva house all mirrors should be covered. Excess furniture should be cleared away to make room for the Shiva chairs and to prepare an area for Tefillos.

A table should be placed facing east on which should be placed the two candles which are to be lit during the Tefillos.

### Halachos

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During the Shiva period Availim may not sit on chairs more than 24cm high or wear leather footwear. They should wear their Kriah garment. Appropriate clothing should be worn but there is no need to wear black. Availim may not leave the Shiva house except to go to Shul if there is no Minyan at home. Men do not shave, women do not wear make-up and marital relations should be suspended from the time of death until after the Shiva.

Visitors should be discouraged from kissing or embracing the Availim.

During the Shiva one should only read serious Torah literature such as the Iyov or Eicha. The Halachos of Avilus may also be read.

Availim may rise from Shiva in time to prepare for Shabbos. Before going to Shul on Friday evening the Availim should change their clothing and take off the Kriah garment. The Availim enter after Lecha Dodi, just before Mizmor Shir l'yom Hashabbos to be greeted by the Kehilla with Hamokom.

Availim cannot be called to the Torah during Shiva. If the Ovel is the only Cohen in the Shul, he should leave before Krias HaTorah.

The Shiva ends on the morning of the seventh day after the Kevura, with the day of the Kevura counting as the first day. If the seventh day is the Shabbos, all public mourning ends on Friday afternoon but private mourning continues until after the conclusion of davening on Shabbos morning.

*May we all see B'nechomas Tzion V'Yerushalayim.*