

Expression of Guidance

הצהרת רצון והדרכה

Chevra Kavod HaMet (Chevra) of Adath Jeshurun Congregation, Minnetonka, Minnesota

חברת כבוד המת של קהילת עדת ישורון

This document guides my loved ones in honoring my wishes at the end of my life. This is not a binding legal document and can be updated or withdrawn at any time. The purpose is to provide my loved ones with clarity, compassion, and comfort during what will be a tender and sacred time. By signing this document, I am expressing that I understand and desire the following care upon my death.

Foundational Jewish Values in Caring for the Deceased

ערכי יסוד בטיפול בנפטר/ת

Jewish tradition teaches that caring for the dead is the truest act of kindness—chesed shel emet, (**חסד של אמת**), for it is offered with no expectation in return. The Chevra Kavod HaMet, comprised of volunteer congregants, upholds this sacred obligation by tending to the deceased with honor, modesty, dignity, and deep respect.

When Death Approaches

כאשר המיתה מתקרבת

When death appears imminent, my family is encouraged to contact the Adath Jeshurun Congregation clergy. The clergy and staff can provide support and help prepare the family for the steps that follow.

At the Time of Death

בעת הפטירה

After my death, my family should notify the Rabbi, as soon as they are able. The Rabbi will guide my loved ones through the immediate steps, including notifying the funeral home and beginning the sacred process of caring for my body in accordance with Jewish tradition.

The Sacred Journey: From Death to Burial

המסע הקדוש: מהפטירה ועד הקבורה

1. Transfer of the deceased - The funeral home, in coordination with the Chevra coordinator and clergy, will bring my body into their care. This transfer will be done respectfully and without unnecessary delay.
2. Shmira (שמירה) - Jewish tradition teaches that the body and soul of the deceased should be accompanied as much as possible until the funeral. The Chevra makes every effort to provide shmira volunteers. Participation in shmira by family and friends is encouraged. The Chevra may not be able to provide coverage every hour.
3. Tahara (טהרה) - Members of the Chevra will prepare my body in accordance with Jewish ritual. This includes: a gentle washing, a ritual pouring of water and purification, prayers, and dressing in simple garments. The process is carried out with absolute modesty, reverence, and respect.
4. Tachrichim (תכריכים והכנה לקבורה) - The traditional burial garments symbolizing equality and simplicity will be placed upon me. If I wore a tallit, it will be wrapped around me, with one corner cut to signify its ritual completion.

5. Placement in the Aron - casket (הנחה בארון) - I will be placed in a simple wooden Aron. The Aron reflects humility and the belief that all are equal before God. I understand personal objects will not be placed in the Aron.
6. Funeral Service (טקס הלוויה) - The funeral service will be held at the synagogue, chapel, or graveside. The liturgy includes Psalms, eulogies, and prayers that elevate the soul and support mourners.
7. Burial (קבורה) - At the cemetery, the Aron will be lowered into the grave before the recitation of Kaddish. As a final act of love and honor, family and friends will be invited to participate in the mitzvah of burial by placing earth upon the Aron.
8. After Burial (לאחר הקבורה) - The clergy and community will remain available to support the mourners through the days and weeks of mourning and grief, helping guide them through shiva, shloshim, and the pathways of healing.

My Wishes

רצונתי

At the time of my death, I ask my family to call upon the Adath Jeshurun Chevra Kavod HaMet to carry out the practices described in this document, to the extent possible. These customs reflect my values and my desire for a burial marked by ritual, dignity, and simplicity.

I have read and agreed to this Expression of Guidance.

English name (שם): _____

Hebrew name: _____ bat/ben _____ (father) and _____ (mother)

Signature (חתימה): _____ Date (תאריך): _____

Witness (עד): _____ Date (תאריך): _____

I have shared this document with the following members of my family:

Other information to guide end of life decisions:

Cemetery name and location (if known) _____

Veteran status (for flag placement at cemetery) Yes No

Holocaust survivor status Yes No