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Sent courtesy of the Bereavement Authority of Ontario

December 21, 2022

Dear Toronto Funeral Homes and Transfer Services.

Re: Toronto Public Health Letters Regarding Body Shipments

This letter serves to inform you that as of January 1, 2023, Toronto Public Health will no longer be providing routine letters to funeral homes and burial establishments regarding body shipments.

Historically, funeral homes and burial establishments were able to send applications and a fee to Toronto Public Health requesting a letter acknowledging that the deceased person did not die of a communicable disease. Toronto Public Health will no longer be providing this service.

Depending on the body shipment requirements of a recipient country, you may wish to submit your own letter to accompany the shipment, based on information contained in the death certificate or coroner's report. Alternatively, you may wish to contact the relevant medical professional for a letter to attest that the deceased was free from communicable disease at the time of passing.

While Toronto Public Health will no longer provide letters for body shipments, we will continue to provide certificates under the [Funeral, Burial and Cremation Services Act, 2002, S.O. 2002, c. 33](#), for the purpose of disinterments. Please send those requests within 48 business hours of a disinterment to BodySafe@toronto.ca.

Please continue to ensure that you are familiar with, and follow, the requirements that apply to the disposal of corpses set out in [Ontario Regulation 557: Communicable Diseases, 1990](#), made under the [Health Protection and Promotion Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. H.7](#).

In particular and at this time, these requirements apply to corpses of persons confirmed or suspected of having, or was isolated for having, one of the following infectious agents:

1. Anthrax,
2. Ebola virus disease,
3. Haemorrhagic fevers,
4. Lassa fever,
5. Marburg virus disease,
6. Plague (*Yersinia Pestis*), and/or
7. Smallpox.

Please feel free to contact Toronto Public Health by phone 416-338-7600 or by email BodySafe@toronto.ca if you have any questions.

Yours truly,



Dr. Rita Shahin
Associate Medical Officer of Health



Danielle Steinman
Manager, Communicable Disease Control