

Melbourne Chevra Kadisha Guide: Dignity, and Individual Wishes in Our Care

This guide sets out how Melbourne Chevra Kadisha approaches all Jewish persons requiring a Jewish burial.

Our Commitment

Melbourne Chevra Kadisha cares for every Jewish person who comes into our care with the same dignity, modesty and respect, without exception, regardless of background, religious beliefs, history, gender, sexuality or family structure. Partners are recognised in funeral arrangements and mourning practice in exactly the same way.

Names and Records

Melbourne Chevra Kadisha uses the name provided by the next of kin for funeral notices, website listings and all public-facing arrangements. Separately, official registration with Births, Deaths and Marriages requires use of the person's registered legal name as it appears on government documents. These serve two different purposes, one reflects how a person is honoured by their community, the other is a legal requirement and Melbourne Chevra Kadisha manages both with care and discretion.

Individual Circumstances and Tahara

Melbourne Chevra Kadisha treats every case as individual and unique. Our holistic approach including to tahara, is determined by halacha, by our long-standing traditions, taking into account what is known of the person's life and wishes, considered sensitively and on a case-by-case basis with rabbinic and family guidance.

Family Circumstances

Where family members disagree about a deceased person's identity or wishes, Melbourne Chevra Kadisha follows the recognised legal hierarchy of next of kin, while working actively with families through guidance and negotiation to help find common ground.

Recording Wishes in Advance

Individuals are welcome to record their wishes with Melbourne Chevra Kadisha in advance, so that they are known.

Halacha and Practice

With respect to a Chevra Kadisha, Halacha is based on practises and traditions that have existed under rabbinic guidance for over hundreds of years. It is applied by local rabbinic authorities to the specific circumstances of each community. Melbourne Chevra Kadisha's practices reflect halacha as applied for our community.

Individuals and families wishing to discuss their own circumstances, or to record their wishes in advance, are welcome to contact our office directly.