PART I

A. GENERAL CHECKLIST ...........................................................
   1. IMMEDIATELY AFTER A DEATH OCCURS
   2. MAKING FUNERAL ARRANGEMENTS

PART II

A. FUNERAL SERVICE PROGRAM ............................................
   1. ARRANGEMENTS
   2. PARTICIPANTS USHER’S DUTIES .....................................
   3. SEQUENCE OF EVENTS .................................................

1. FUNERAL
   1. KANSHO (Tolling of the Bell)
   2. KANZEN DOKKYO (Chanting of the sutra before the casket)
   3. INGO (Introduction of the Honorary Posthumous Buddhist Title)
   4. HOMYO JUYO (Presentation of the Buddhist name)
   5. SUTRA CHANTING (Chanting of the Sutra before the Amida Buddha)
   6. INCENSE BURNING (Family, Sangha)
   7. DAIHYO SHOKO (Burning incense by the representatives)
   8. OPENING REMARKS (Chairperson)
   9. CHOJI (Eulogy/Condolence words)
  10. GATHA (Buddhist Hymn)
  11. HOWA (Dharma talk)
  12. SHAJI (Words of Appreciation)
  13. CLOSING REMARKS
  14. SHUKKAN (Exit processional of the casket)

3. CREMATION/BURIAL

4. SHONANUKA (FIRST SEVENTH DAY) MEMORIAL SERVICE
General Checklist

IMMEDIATELY AFTER A DEATH OCCURS

1. CONTACT YOUR DOCTOR AND/OR CORONER
   It is required by law to contact the proper authorities in the event of any death. This may be facility staff, doctor, coroner and/or mortuary.

2. CONTACT THE MINISTER.
   A. Contact a minister of his/her temple. If the minister cannot be reached, contact your temple president.
      1. When your minister is notified, he or she will come to conduct the Makuragyo (pillow service). The brief Makuragyo service is conducted immediately after death or at a later time to be arranged with the family. This service may be conducted at a temple, home, health facility, or funeral home. Usually, only immediate family members attend, although close friends and other family members may also attend.
      2. When contacting the minister, be sure to clearly give your own name and the name of the deceased person.
      3. Give the exact location of the place of death (the home, the hospital, etc.).
      4. Give clear and accurate directions, or arrange to meet the minister and direct him/her to the location.

3. CONTACT A MORTUARY
   A. Select a reliable and reputable mortuary. Your doctor, minister, or temple may assist you.
   B. Necessary information about the deceased that will be needed by the mortuary:
      (1) Exact spelling of full, legal name
      (2) Birth date and birthplace
      (3) Social Security number
      (4) Address
      (5) Length of residence at current address
      (6) Name of spouse
      (7) Name and birthplace of father
      (8) Maiden name and birthplace of mother
      (9) Cause of death
      (10) Place of burial or cremation
   C. The mortuary will provide information about and schedule the following:
      (1) Preparation of the body
      (2) Casket / Urn
      (3) Available facilities for funeral, cremation and/or burial services
(4) Funeral cortege and cars  
(5) Cremation or burial arrangement  
(6) Obituary notices (local papers)  

D. The mortuary may also assist you with the necessary paperwork concerning:  
   (1) Death Certificate(s)  
   (2) Social Security death benefits information  
   (3) Insurance claims  
   (4) Veterans and union benefits  

E. Concerning cremation or burial:  
   (1) the choice concerning cremation or burial should be made by the immediate  
       family.

4. CONTACT RELATIVES AND CLOSE FRIENDS  

   A. Notify people by telephone, in person, by telegram or by any other means of immediate  
      communication. Information regarding the Makuragyo and/or Funeral service should also be  
      communicated.  

   B. Service information given should at least include the date, time, and place of the Funeral.

MAKING FUNERAL ARRANGEMENTS  

1. SELECT SOMEONE TO ACT ON BEHALF OF THE FAMILY  

   A. Although a member of the immediate family may make all the arrangements concerning the  
      Funeral and other related services, the family may select a reliable person outside of the family to  
      act on its behalf.  
   
   B. Generally, the duties of this person are to make sure that the funeral arrangements are made  
      and carried out according to the wishes of the family.  
   
   C. It is recommended that this person go over a checklist with the family to make certain that no  
      important details are inadvertently overlooked in the midst of the sorrow and possible confusion  
      which may result from the death of a loved one.  

This person may coordinate notification of the death, transportation for the family, the activities of the  
Funeral participants.  
This person may also compile a personal history of the deceased and if available, obtain the Homyo  
(Buddhist Name card), to be given to the minister.  

2. MEET WITH TEMPLE FUNERAL COMMITTEE  

   A. Some temples have a Funeral committee comprised of temple members who are  
      experienced with planning and carrying out Funeral services.  
   
   B. The purpose of meeting with this committee is to help the family to make satisfactory  
      arrangements, plan the program, select a chairperson, find an organist, choose a possible  
      speakers, select ushers, pallbearers and receptionists to be responsible for koden (Monetary gifts  
      to family), flowers, etc.  
   
   C. Once the arrangements are completed, contact the Temple and Funeral home for final  
      approval/arrangements by each.
3. MEET WITH THE MINISTER
   a. Discuss/request final arrangements.
   b. Discuss/request Homyo, Ingo, Eitaikyo, etc.
   c. Discuss/request non-temple minister(s)' participation.
   d. Finalize date, time and place of funeral.
   e. Finalize altar set up of fruits, flowers, pictures etc.

4. MEET WITH THE FUNERAL HOME
   a. Finalize date, time and place of funeral.
   b. Advise them of the minister(s) participating.
   c. Advise them of desired program details (chairperson, representatives, hymns, etc.)

5. INFORMATION NEEDED BY MINISTER
   A. Deceased full name. If available Japanese Characters for name
   B. Address
   C. Birthplace/Birthdate
   D. Date of Death
   E. Next of Kin name and address
   F. Date and time of Funeral (determined after meeting with minister)

TYPICAL FUNERAL SERVICE PROGRAM

Tolling of the Bell (Kansho)
Chanting of the Sutra before the Casket
Ingo Dentatsu (Honorary Posthumous Buddhist Title presentation) optional
Homyo Juyo (Presentation of Buddhist Name)
Sutra Chanting
Incense Burning (Oshoko)
Opening Address
Incense Burning by representatives
Personal History
Eulogy/Remembrance
Gatha (Optional)
Reading of the Letter of Rennyo (Gobunsho)
Dharma Message (Sermon)
Gatha (optional)
Words of Appreciation
Closing Address
Exit Processional of the Casket
Sangha exit

Other Considerations

1. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS

   A. Altar flowers and a spray for the casket are provided by the family. Other floral pieces are optional.
   B. Osonae (Fruits and or manju) is provided by the family.
   C. Arm bands and gloves used by the pallbearers are provided by the mortuary.
D. Attendance book (usually supplied by the mortuary).
E. Koden Register book may be provided by the family or the mortuary.
F. Otoki: Refreshments (lunch/dinner) after the service are usually provided by the family – optional.
G. Security – the temple can assist in providing security if needed and the bill will be mailed to the family.

2. FUNERAL PARTICIPANTS

A. Minister(s)
   1. officiant: temple minister
   2. attendant: assistant to the temple minister
   3. participant: other temple/retired minister requested by the family (with the permission of the officiant)

B. Chairperson

C. Organist. Provides music during the prelude, postlude, and for gatha singing.

D. Personal History Reader (Chairperson or Family's choice)

E. Condolence Speaker. Extends a word of sympathy or gives the eulogy/remembrances. A close friend or family member is usually assigned this role.

F. Words of Appreciation (Shaji) - Representative of the Family. Expresses, on behalf of the family, words of appreciation for those in attendance, temple, minister, funeral committee, service chairperson, organist, gifts, special support, etc. A relative is usually assigned this role.

G. Floral Arranger. Arranges the floral pieces and keeps a record of the floral donations.

H. Ushers. two or more persons, as needed.

I. Pallbearers. Usually six to eight persons to serve under the direction of the funeral director. They should arrive at the site of the Funeral early enough to receive instructions for carrying the casket.

J. Reception Desk (uketsu). Four or more persons to receive and record the Koden (monetary memoriums) and other donations.

K. Honorary Pallbearers. Honorary members of the family or friends of the deceased usually escort the casket – optional.

L. Organizational Representatives. Representatives of various organizations (and a person to represent the family and friends of the deceased) who will burn incense.

* Note: All participants, should arrive at least one hour before the service begins. Minister(s) and the Chairperson should arrive 1 hour before the service begins.

USHER’S DUTIES

1. Arrive at least 1 hours before the service begins.
2. Arrange chairs according to the expected number of Sangha. Have extra chairs readily available.
3. Help the congregation to their seats. Guide guests toward the front, thus accommodating latecomers in the back.
4. Immediately after the service, all Ushers are to help funeral home staff carry flowers to the van to be transported to the cemetery or chapel.
SEQUENCE FOR RITUAL

MAKURAGYO – PILLOW SERVICE

The Makuragyo is a private family service conducted by a minister following the death of a person. Since it takes place after death, it is considered not a last rite but the beginning of the cycles of memorial rites. Traditionally a sutra was chanted at the deathbed, hence the term pillow service. In America, the minister is called to the place of death, to the home, or to the temple or mortuary for the service.

The Makuragyo service is usually followed by a meeting of the family members and mortuary personnel to plan the time date and information for funeral costs. After the time and date have been established, temple representatives or the temple funeral committee will meet with family to provide any assistance or advice for the funeral service.

FUNERAL RITUAL

Kan Sho: Calling bell
Kan Sho begins the funeral service. This is a ritual striking of the bell in the funeral pattern of 7-5-3. The bell is struck seven times, followed by a crescendo and a decrescendo; struck five times, followed by another crescendo and decrescendo; then struck a final three times.

After the ringing of the Kan Sho, the funeral service begins with the minister entering the hall proceeding to the casket. The casket is traditional open for the funeral.

Option: Memorial Service with urn and picture.

Kanzen dokkyo: chanting before the casket
The minister(s) enter the Hall and stands in front of the casket.
They bow and chant before the casket.
First the Sanbujo (three-respectful-callings) is chanted.
This is from the Hojisan of Zendo Daishi. The Sanbujo acknowledges the presence of all the manifestations of Truth-Reality at this moment of encounter with death.
The Sanbujo is followed by the chanting of the Kisanboge (return-three-treasures-gatha) found in the Gengibun section of the Kanyohso. This is a gatha written by the Fifth Patriarch of the Jodoshinshu tradition, Zendo Daishi. The gatha exhorts all to take refuge in the Three Treasures and awaken to the Primal Vow of Amida Buddha. Following the Kisanboge, the Nembutsu is chanted in the abbreviated style of Nam An Da Bu six times.

Next is the Ekoku (dedicatory-verse). The verse here is a gatha called the Gan-ojo-raisan-ge (In Praise of Birth in the Pure Land), written by the First Patriarch of Jodoshinshu, Nagarjuna, which translates:
I expound on Amida’s venerable meritorious deeds, Whose goodness is as limitless as the waters of the Ocean. Amida’s protecting, pure goodness is bestowed On all sentient beings for their birth in that country.
When the Kanzen Dokkyo is completed, the ministers, other than the chief officiant, burn incense and enter the Naijin or altar area. The Doshi, or chief officiant, burns incense and remains for the Ingo Dentatsu and Homyo-juyo.
Ingo Dentatsu—(optional) Introduction of the Honorary Posthumous Buddhist Title:
* If an Ingo is to be presented, it precedes the presentation of the Homyo. – Usually past presidents of the temple will receive an Ingo. (there is a donation made to Buddhist Churches of America since they present the ingo)

Homyo Juyo—presentation of the Buddhist name:
This is a presentation of the Homyo or Buddhist Name to the deceased if he or she had not received one while alive. If the deceased had been given a Buddhist name, that Homyo is read at this time. The Homyo is made up of two Chinese characters and is preceded by the character Shaku meaning “disciple of the Buddha”.
A Homyo card with the deceased’s name, Buddhist name, and vital statistics is then placed in the casket and another given to the principal mourner.
The Doshi then enters the Naijin to begin the Butsuzen Dokkyo.

Butsuzen Dokkyo—Chanting of the sutra before the Amida Buddha:
The chanting of the sutra before the Buddha now commences. This sutra is Shoshinge, written by Shinran Shonin. As the Doshi enters the Naijin, the other ministers stand. Led by the Doshi, the ministers chant the first eight lines of the Shoshinge, then stop and begin again from the ninth line, sitting down for the remainder of the chanting.
At this point, the family of the deceased, escorted by the ushers/funeral staff will burn incense and return to their seats. They are followed in turn by the relatives and pallbearers only. In Buddhist funerals, burning incense is traditionally done first because burning incense symbolizes an offering to the Buddha and clearing one’s mind to receive the Dharma. It is customary to bow as one passes the immediate family after burning incense. When at a loss of words of condolence, this simple bow can be very expressive of your feelings. The casket may be closed under special circumstances. Sometimes, rather than the casket, the cremated remains of the deceased is brought to the funeral service and a picture of the deceased placed in from of it.

Nembutsu—reciting-Buddha’s-name: The Shoshinge is followed by chanting the Nembutsu six times in unembellished style and six times in embellished style.

Soebiki Wasan—Japanese Hymn: This is followed by the chanting of a Wasan (Japanese Hymn) written by Shinran Shonin.
“The Treasure Ocean of virtuous power is filled to Overflowing Though the defiled waters of deluded passions are not diminished. The Holy Ones of the Pure Flower of Tathagata are born from The Flower of True Awakening. They quickly satisfy all the wishes Of sentient beings.”

Ekoku—transfer-verse:
Next is a dedicatory verse (Ekoku). The Ekoku chanted here is from the last lines of the Kisamboge chanted earlier.
I vow to give equally and to all, this meritorious Truth, Raising the mind of Bodhi in them and Awakening them all to the Realm of Serenity and Joy.
Oshoko (Burning incense) During the sutra chanting the Sangha burns incense, beginning with the family.

Daihyo Shoko (optional) – burning incense by the representatives:
The Daihyo Shoko is the burning of incense by persons representing close friends; representing organizations in which the deceased was a member; representing organizations in which immediate family members are involved; and representing the temple. The Chairperson reads the name of the representative and the name of the organization being represented. The representative will then burn incense, bow to the bereaved family and return to his or her seat.

Opening Remarks:
The chairman will burn incense and return to his podium to begin the second part of the opening remarks. He/she should wear the layperson’s monto shikisho/nenju.

Ryakureki (personal history):
The Ryakureki, a short history of the deceased is read, following the gatha and opening address by the Chairperson.

Choji (eulogy/condolence-words):
Though usually mistranslated eulogy, the Choji are words of condolence given by a good friend or family member of the deceased. The eulogy as understood in the United States is technically not a part of the Jodoshinshu tradition and is often omitted, or when given is more often than not, an elaboration of the Ryakureki.

Gatha (Buddhist Hymn):
The gatha or hymn is almost always Nadame, a hymn of condolence or another Buddhist hymn. The sangha, except family and relatives of the deceased, is requested to stand.

Gobunsho Haikoku (reading of Rennyo’s letters)
The Dharma talk is usually accompanied by the reading of the Hakkotsu no Gobunsho, or Letter on White Ashes, written by Rennyo Shonin, the Eighth Gomonshu of Jodoshinshu. It may be read in the formal chanted style in Japanese, or simply read in English, or both. It is customary to Gassho during the reading.

Howa (dharma-talk):
The Howa is a Dharma Message (sermon) or talk given by the minister.

Shaji (words of appreciation):
The funeral ends with words of appreciation to those attending the funeral and to those involved in conducting it and supported/encouraged people at the difficult time of the death of the deceased family. The Shaji is usually given by a relative or close friend of the immediate family.

Closing Remarks:
The funeral closes with final words by the Chairperson who also announces the time and place of the burial/cremation.
SHUKKAN (exit processional of the casket)  
The casket is then closed and taken out of the Hondo/funeral site led by the ministers and followed by the pallbearers, honorary pallbearers, family and relatives.

CREMATION/BURIAL:  
Kaso: Fire-burial,
Maisy : Earth-burial:
The cremation or burial customarily takes place after the funeral at the cemetery or hakaba (grave site) officiated by the minister(s).

SHONANUKA (First seventh day) MEMORIAL SERVICE  
The Final Service solemnizes the interment or cremation of the deceased.

1. In the event of a cremation, the service is held at the crematorium chapel. In the event of burial, the service is held at the gravesite before burial.
2. The service may be open to others or limited to just the family and close friends.
3. The Shonanuka (First Seventh-Day) Memorial Service is so named because it is held on the seventh day after the death of the individual and is usually combined with the funeral. It is believed in general Buddhism that there was a 49-day interval between the death of a person in this world and the subsequent birth in the next world. Every seventh day, from the first to the forty-ninth, was believed to be a day on which the destination of the deceased was to be considered, depending upon the spiritual value of their previous life’s accomplishments. By chanting the sutras and having special services each seventh day, surviving family members hoped to send the deceased to a better birthplace.

*In the Jodo Shinshu sect, however, these services have a different significance. They are not for the purpose of enhancing the birthplace of the deceased, since their birth into the Pure Land of Amida Buddha is already decided by the power of the Amida Buddha’s Vow. Therefore, in Jodo Shinshu, the purpose of these services is to express thankfulness and gratitude to the Amida Buddha, in memory of the deceased. This is the first service a family has after the disposal of the body by cremation or burial.*

In modern times, usually only the 7th day and 49th day services are held, rather than observing all seven of the memorial services within the traditional 49 day period. It has become common practice, for the convenience of those who participate in the funeral services the 7th day service is usually held on the same day as the Funeral Service.

AFTER THE FUNERAL

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS (OREI)
The family should make certain acknowledgements to whose whom have participated in the Funeral Services.
The listing below indicates customary types of acknowledgements.
Recommended:
(Monetary) Temple or other organizations
   Minister
   Chairperson
   Organist/Pianist
Acknowledgements should be made as soon as possible after the Funeral to those who gave Koden.

**EXPENSES FAMILY SHOULD EXPECT:**
Listed below are usual expenses incurred when a family member passes away.
1. Casket or urn
2. Plot, niche, vault or nokotsudo
3. Burial fee
4. Marker or headstone
5. Upkeep of final resting place
6. Death Certificate
7. Mortuary charges (body preparation, limousine services, etc.)
8. Flowers (for the shrine: two white bouquets, casket spray, etc.)
9. Osonaye (food offerings: omanju or fruit, etc.)
10. Acknowledgements
11. Legal paperwork and counsel

**SUBSEQUENT MEMORIAL SERVICES**

The tradition of Buddhist memorial services is linked to some of the most basic and fundamental teachings of the Buddha; among these are transiency, interdependence, oneness, and karma.

Listed below is the schedule of memorial services generally observed. Briefly speaking, the significance of having memorial services is:

**Shijukunichi (Manchun):** 49th day memorial service

According to the Buddhist tradition, every 7 days after his/her death, the deceased family continues to observe the memorial service until 7 x 7 days, namely 49 days.

Although the origin of this service is obscure, it was believed at one time that on the 49th day after death the karmic destination of the deceased would be determined. By observing a special service, the surviving family hoped to eliminate all karmic effects of evil deeds the deceased may have committed during his lifetime, thus eliminating the possibility of having the deceased sent to any of the hells or animal worlds. This service was regarded as very important for the destiny of the deceased.

However, in our Jodo Shinshu sect, one attains birth in the Pure Land of the Amida Buddha through His Vow. Therefore, Nembutsu followers who have come to rely upon the Name of the Amida Buddha with the mind of shinjin are assured birth in the Pure Land immediately after death.
Isshuki (1 cycle-memorial):
This is on or near the date of death called Meinichi (life-date), one year after the death of a person.

Sankaiki (3 cycle memorial) According to the traditional way of counting, the yearly cycles begin with the Meinichi or death date as 1. One year later then, would be cycle 2, two years later would be cycle 3, etc. The Isshuki does not refer to the year but to the first round or circuit from Meinichi to Meinichi. Thereafter the term used is kaiki or cycle-memorial. In other words, the 3rd cycle Hoji is observed on or near the Meinichi 2 years after the death of the person, the 7th cycle, 6 years after death, etc.

Shichikaiki – 7 -cycle memorial
Jusankaiki – 13 -cycle memorial:
Jushichikaiki – 17 cycle memorial
Nijugokaiki – 25 cycle memorial
Sanjusankaiki: 33th cycle memorial
Gojikkaiki – 50 -cycle-memorial
Hyakkaiki – 100-cycle-memorial
Thereafter observances are held at 50-year intervals.

* In BCA history, the Issei tended to use the traditional way of counting for memorial services, birthdays, anniversaries, etc., but not always. Hence temple anniversaries and other traditional observances may or may not always be consistent. It is however, accurate within one year. The Hoji observances however, have remained according to the traditional way of counting.

As the first year memorial of the deceased approaches, contact the temple and your minister to arrange for a service before the date of death of the deceased.

Our temple holds a Shotsuki (monthly) Memorial Service. All individuals who had a funeral conducted by our temple are listed and named at this monthly service.

The Obon service is a general memorial service held once a year for all those who have passed away since the last Obon service. A special effort should be made by family members to attend the first Obon service (Hatsu Bon) after the death of a loved one.