



What Do I need to Do Now

Immediately after someone dies

The first thing to do when someone dies depends on the circumstances of their death.

If someone dies at home and their death was expected

Inform the deceased's GP practice as soon as possible. The Doctor or district nurse will come to verify the death. A doctor then completes their part of a medical certificate which says the cause of death. This is then sent to a medical examiner (a senior doctor) who reviews it. The medical examiner or one of their team will then speak to the nearest relative to check they understand and agree with the medical certificate cause of death. You can ask the medical examiner questions and raise any concerns you have about the death at this stage. You'll also be given a formal notice stating that the MCCD has been signed. This notice tells you how to register the death. Then, when you feel ready to do so, you can contact a funeral director of your choice who will come and take the deceased into their care.

If someone dies at home unexpectedly

Call **999** immediately and explain what's happened. If the cause of death is unclear or unnatural, for example as the result of an accident, or the person hadn't been seen by a doctor during their last illness, the death may get reported to a coroner. The coroner may call for a post-mortem examination to determine the cause of death. Depending upon the circumstances this may delay setting a funeral date.

When someone dies unexpectedly, the police will also be called to do a routine visit. They'll ask questions about the circumstances of the death which may be used to help the coroner to understand the cause of death. This can be unsettling but it's important to remember that it's normal procedure in these circumstances.

If someone dies in hospital

After the death has been verified by a first doctor or nurse, the cause of death will then be checked by the medical examiner, who will then issue an MCCD and formal notice will be issued directly to the registrar.

The body will usually be kept in the hospital mortuary until it can be taken to a Funeral Directors premises. If an MCCD can't be issued, the hospital will refer the death to the coroner.

If someone dies abroad

If someone dies abroad, you should register the death according to the regulations of the country. A local death certificate can usually be used in the UK. However, if it's not in English, you'll probably need to get a certified translation if you're dealing with the person's affairs.

Registering the death

The medical examiner or coroner provides the cause of death to the registrar of births, marriages and deaths. You must then register the death with the registrar within 5 days, unless an inquest is required.

How to register a death:

1. Registrars Office

You would need to make a telephone or online appointment at the Registrar's Office in the area where the person died but if this is not possible (due to logistics etc.) you may be able to register in an office which comes under a different area but could cause a delay in the procedure.

2. Information needed by the Registrar's

You'll have to show – or tell – the registrar:

- the date and place of death
- the full name of the person who's died (and any other names they once had, such as a maiden name)
- their date and place of birth
- their usual address
- their date and place of birth (if this was outside the UK, you only need to give the country)
- their most recent occupation and if they'd retired

- whether or not they were receiving any benefits, including State Pension.
- the name, occupation, and date of birth of their spouse or civil partner, if they had one (even if their spouse or civil partner has already died).

3. If possible, you could also take the person's:

- birth certificate
- medical card or NHS number
- passport
- marriage or civil partnership certificate
- driving licence
- proof of their address (on an electricity bill, for example).

4. The Registrar will provide you with:

- a certificate for burial or cremation (known as a 'Green Form' which you will need to give to the funeral director)
- a unique code, so that you can use the Tell Us Once service
- a death certificate, which you need to pay for. This is a certified copy of what's recorded in the death register and you need it to deal with the person's estate, including their finances or property.

At this stage you may want to order some extra copies of the death certificate (£12.50 per copy), as they may be needed when sorting out the estate of the person who's died and copies requested at a later date may be more expensive. It's also worth noting that ordinary photocopies aren't accepted by some organisations, such as banks or life insurance companies.

5. Tell Us Once service

The 'Tell Us Once' service can be used to report a death to several government departments in one go. The service is offered by most local councils. When you register a death, the registrar will explain the 'Tell Us Once' service and either help you use it or give you a unique reference number so you can use the service yourself. You can use the service over the phone by calling **0800 085 7308** or you can use the service online on GOV.UK.

Tell us Once service informs the following Government Departments:-

- Electoral services and Council Tax services
- HM Passport Office
- the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA)
- the Department for Work and Pensions
- the Blue badge scheme
- HMRC for tax purposes.

You'll need to return the person's driver's licence to the DVLA and their passport to HM Passport Office.

You should contact other organisations as well, such as:

- personal or occupational pension scheme providers
- insurance companies
- banks and building societies
- an employer or trade union
- a mortgage provider, private landlord, housing association or council housing office
- social services, if the person received community care
- utility companies
- their GP, dentist, optician and anyone else providing medical care
- any charities, organisations or magazine subscriptions the deceased person made regular payments to.

You can also register the name and address of the person who's died with the Bereavement Register. This removes their details from mailing lists and stops most advertising mail. You can either register over the phone by calling **0800 082 1230** (the 24-hour automated registration line) or online on their website.

Contact Details for local Registrars

- **HARROGATE REGISTRARS**, 31 Park Parade, Harrogate, HG1 5AG
Tel: (01609) 532154
 - **LEEDS REGISTRARS**: Tel: 0113 222 4408 (Various Locations to Registrar)
 - **BRADFORD REGISTRARS**: (City Hall, Centenary Square, Bradford, BD1 1HY) Tel: (01274) 432151
 - **YORK REGISTRARS**: 56 Bootham, York, YO30 7DA
Tel: (01904) 654477
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Arrange a funeral

The person who died may have left funeral instructions in their will or a letter of wishes.

They may also have taken out a pre-paid funeral plan. This usually means that all the arrangements for burial or cremation have already been decided and paid for.

However, if there aren't any clear wishes, the executor of the will or nearest relative will usually decide if the body will be cremated or buried and what type of funeral will take place.

W Bowers Funeral Directors

W. Bowers is registered with SAIF (The National Society of Allied and Independent Funeral Directors) and adhere to their Code of Practice to deliver the highest standards of service and act in the best interests of bereaved families.

We are transparent in our prices and our Standardised Price List is displayed in both our Hampsthwaite and Harrogate offices and is available to access and download from our website.

After your meeting with one of our funeral directors/consultants you will be provided with a letter detailing all the funeral arrangements and an estimate of costs which will include the funeral director's services and any third party costs known as disbursement.

The funeral director will ensure that all the necessary forms are completed correctly.

Paying for a funeral

If you arrange the funeral, you will be ultimately responsible for paying the funeral account. For example, the funeral account may be paid for by funds in the deceased's bank account before probate or a pre-paid funeral plan.

What if I need help with funeral costs?

If you're responsible for arranging the funeral and you're on a low income, you may be eligible for a Funeral Expenses Payment from the Department of Work and Pensions to help cover costs.

A Funeral Expenses Payment covers the cost of a simple, respectful funeral in the UK, including up to £1,000 towards things like the coffin and flowers.

There are strict rules about who can get help and how much you'll receive. For example, you must be claiming Pension Credit or certain other means-tested benefits, and you must have had a close relationship with the person who died, such as being a family member or partner.

The DWP can refuse an application from a close relative or friend if they consider that someone else could arrange and pay for the funeral. You must claim within 6 months of the funeral.

The council (or some hospitals, if the person died there) can arrange a public health funeral if:

- there's no money for a funeral
 - there's no one willing or able to pay for it
 - the Funeral Expenses Payment doesn't cover the whole cost and paying the balance would leave you in debt.
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Dealing with the Estate

What you need to do to deal with the estate – the money, property and possessions – of the person who's died depends on whether they made a valid will and, if they did, whether you're named as an executor in that will.

If they did make a valid Will and you've been appointed as an executor, then you'll need to apply for a grant of probate to deal with the estate. Probate is the legal process of distributing someone's estate after they die.
