

Bereavement Guide

The loss of a relative or friend can be a difficult and confusing time. We would like to offer our condolences to you. This leaflet aims to help you through some of the practical aspects of what comes next.

First Step - Contact a Funeral Director

Most of us do not have a lot of experience in the processes that take place after someone has died, funeral directors are experts at this process and will offer you help and guidance all the way through.

It is fine to contact a Funeral Director as soon as you know your loved one has died, however we would advise you don't formalise any arrangements for funerals until you have the necessary paperwork in the form of a Death Certificate and cremation papers.

Second Step - Obtaining a Death Certificate

In order to register a death you will need a Death Certificate, this is usually provided by one of the doctors who has been looking after the deceased person. It will detail the name of the deceased, the time and place where they died and the cause (or causes) of death.

Currently the Death Certificate will be sent directly to the Registrars and you are able to register the death over the phone once that process has been done. Our practice staff will let you know when the certificate has been sent to the Registrar.

The telephone number of the Registrar is 0115 841 5554

Medical Examiners

By April 2023 all deaths will be scrutinised by the Medical Examiners service. Medical Examiners are independent senior doctors experienced in the processes of death certification.

You will receive a call from a Medical Examiners Officer who will ask you a few simple details about your relative, such as their date of birth and address, their occupation and whether you have any concerns about their care.

The Medical Examiners will then scrutinise the records of the deceased and independently reach a conclusion about the cause of death which will then be discussed with the doctor providing the Death Certificate. This ensures the accuracy of the information on the certificate and allows any concerns to be addressed.

The process of scrutiny will be completed very quickly and will not introduce any delay in issuing the death certificate.

Referral to the Coroner

Under some circumstances deaths need to be reported to the Coroner, this doesn't mean there was necessarily anything wrong, reasons include

- The death has been sudden or unexpected, or the cause of death is unknown.
- The death has been as a result of an accident or unusual circumstances
- The death was related to an operation
- The death may be related to a person's employment (past or present)
- The cause of death has not been accepted by the Registrar

The outcome of a referral to the Coroner may be that the Death Certificate can be issued by the GP, an inquest will take place without the need for a post-mortem or a post-mortem may be required.

If a coroner's referral is made you will be informed by the practice and the coroner's team will contact you within 48 hours.

Third Step - Registering the Death

Currently this can be done via telephone once the death certificate has been received by the Registrar. This is a simple process but you will need some information to answer the questions the Registrar will ask. This information is detailed below.

Surname

Forename(s)

Maiden Name

Any other previous names (eg if a person has been married more than once)

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Any other names (eg usually known as even if not a formal name)

.....

Date of Birth

Place of Birth (town & county in England & Wales, or country if born overseas as the country is known now eg Bangladesh rather than East Pakistan)

.....

Place of death

.....

Date of death

Usual Address

.....

Marital Status

Occupation(or former occupation if retired)

Name/Address/Occupation of spouse or civil partner (if surviving) or name & Occupation if deceased

.....

NHS Number of Deceased (if known)

The Tell Us Once Service

When someone dies, there can often be a number of government departments and agencies to notify. For example a passport or driving license may need to be cancelled, or benefits stopped.

The Tell Us Once service can be accessed via the Registrar at your registration appointment and is designed to make things simpler for you.

This usually takes 5 minutes at the end of your registration appointment and you will then be provided with a unique Tell Us Once reference number.

Your options for accessing the Tell Us Once service are

- By Phone - 0800 085 7308
- Online - by accessing <https://www.gov.uk/after-a-death>

Tell Us Once can notify the following government departments after you have registered a death

Adult Social Services	Housing Benefit
Attendance Allowance	Income Support
Blue Badge Parking Permit	Jobseeker's Allowance
Council Housing	Library Services
Council Tax	Overseas Health Team
Council Tax Benefit	Owed Payments to Council
Disability Living Allowance	Passport Service
DVLA	Personal Taxation
Electoral Services	Tax Help For Older People
Employment Support Service	War Pensions Scheme
Working Tax Credit	

The departments who you chose to notify will then contact you directly if they need any more information.

Stopping Junk Mail to the Recently Deceased

By registering with the free service www.stopmail.co.uk or by calling

0808 168 9607 the names & addresses of the deceased are removed from mailing lists. This way you can stop most junk mail within 6 weeks

Who do I Need to Inform About a Death?

Please be aware that some of these may be covered by the Tell Us Once service.

- ☐ The local Social Services Department of the Council. If the deceased was getting meals-on-wheels, home help, day centre care or had an appliance or piece of equipment issued by the department
- ☐ The Inland Revenue
- ☐ The local Council Housing Department (if the deceased was living in a council house)
- ☐ The local Council Tax Office and/or Business Rates Office

- ☐ The local Council Housing Benefits Section (if the deceased was getting Housing Benefit and/or Council Tax Benefit)
- ☐ Any Hospital the person was attending
- ☐ The Landlord (if the deceased was living in rented accommodation), or the mortgage provider (if the house is mortgaged)
- ☐ The deceased's GP practice
- ☐ Any employer and trade union
- ☐ The deceased bank and/or building society
- ☐ The car insurance company (NB if you are insured to drive a car under the deceased person's name you will cease to be legally insured)
- ☐ The deceased's water, gas, electricity and telephone suppliers
- ☐ The Post Office (so they can re-direct the deceased person's mail)
- ☐ Any company or personal pension provider
- ☐ Any home or contents insurance company
- ☐ Any Life Insurance company with which the deceased had a policy
- ☐ The teacher, employer or college of any closely related child or young person
- ☐ It may be appropriate to contact a minister of religion or representative of your faith community.

Things to Send Back

- ☐ Passport to Passport Office
- ☐ Driving License to DVLA, Longview Road, Swansea SA6 7JL
- ☐ Registration documents of a car (for change of ownership to be recorded)
- ☐ Any National Insurance papers to the relevant office
- ☐ Any NHS equipment such as wheelchairs, hearing aids, artificial limbs
- ☐ Membership Cards for clubs, associations etc (claiming any refund due)
- ☐ TV License for a refund
- ☐ Bus Pass
- ☐ Library books and tickets
- ☐ Season Tickets (claiming any refund due)

Things to Stop

- ☐ Milk, papers etc (anything regularly delivered to the house)
- ☐ E-mail address
- ☐ Online Subscriptions
- ☐ Sources of Support

Sources of Help & Support

Age UK Nottingham & Nottinghamshire	0115 8440011
Cruse Bereavement Care	0808 808 1677
The Probate & Inheritance Tax Helpline	0300 123 1072
Self-Help Nottingham	0115 911 1661

(who produce a directory of self-help groups in the Nottingham Area)