

# What to do when someone dies

After a loved one dies, it is difficult to know what you need to do or who you need to contact. Our checklist outlines the key first steps that you are likely to need to take when someone close to you has died.

## 1 – Obtain a death certificate

Contact the GP or hospital about obtaining the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death. You may also need to contact the Coroner's Office in certain circumstances, such as where you have a concern about how a loved one died. You can find the Coroner for your area online by searching for the Coroners Society or by contacting the local authority where the person died

## 2 – Make a notification of the death

Notify the Registrar of the death and complete the appropriate forms. You need to do this within 5 days of the death (including weekends and bank holidays). You can do this online or at the appropriate Register Office. You can go to any Register Office but, if you go to the Register Office local to where the person died, they will be able to give you the documents you need on the day, otherwise you may need to wait a few days to receive them in the post. You can find your local Register Office by looking online or by calling the local authority.

You should call ahead to the Register Office to book an appointment.

To register the death you will need the Medical Certificate (see Step 1 above) and, if the death was reported to a Coroner, you will need permission from the Coroner to register the death. You will need to be able to tell the Registrar:

- the person's full name and any previous names,
  - their date and place of birth,
  - their address,
  - their occupation,
  - any benefits or state pension they were receiving, and
  - the name, date of birth and occupation of any surviving spouse or civil partner.
- It is helpful to also bring to the Register Office the person's birth certificate, Council Tax bill, driving licence, marriage or civil partnership certificate, passport or proof of address if you have them.

When you have registered the death, you will get a 'certificate for a burial' to give to the funeral director, or an application for cremation which you need to complete and give to the crematorium.

## 3 – Secure property

Ensure arrangements are in place to check that the property is secure if it is now left unoccupied and unattended, and to look after any pets.

## 4 – Arrange the funeral

Contact a funeral director to arrange the funeral service. There is more detailed guidance on arranging a funeral on our website at [www.roydswithyking.com/bereaved](http://www.roydswithyking.com/bereaved). We recommend finding a funeral director through the National Association of Funeral Directors (NAFD) or choosing one that has the NAFD kitemark, which is a lion logo,

showing that the funeral director is approved for quality of service by the NAFD

Ensure you keep all receipts for arranging the funeral as these may be required when completing a probate application and/or may help to recover fees if there is a related claim for compensation.

## 5 – Let people know

Aside from telling family and friends, you should also inform:

- their employer or school
- GP and any other health professionals (including cancelling any outstanding medical appointments)
- Care home or other agencies such as social services
- Banks and building societies (this is important so that money can be frozen in their accounts to protect against fraud)
- Mortgage provider or letting agency
- Buildings and property insurers
- Utility companies including gas, water, electricity and council tax.
- TV, mobile phone or internet providers
- Pension Service of the Jobcentre to cancel any benefits. For more information on this please [click here](#)
- the local government office and the electoral register
- HMRC Income Tax Office
- Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)
- DVLA and passport agency
- Any private pension provider
- Post office to arrange re-direction of mail if necessary
- Any memberships they held, e.g. gym or sports clubs
- The local police station if the person who died held a firearms license

The government has a 'Tell Us Once' service that lets you report a death to most government organisations in one go. The service will contact HMRC, the Department for Work and Pensions, the Passport Office, the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency, the local Council, some state pension schemes and Veterans UK (to cancel any army compensation payments the person received). These agencies will then contact you to discuss the tax, benefits or entitlements of the person who died.

At the time of writing, the Tell Us Once service is not available in Northern Ireland, Brighton & Hove, East Sussex, Eastbourne, Harrow, Hastings, Lewes, Liverpool, Manchester, Medway, Rother or Wealden.

The Registrar will also be able to tell you if the service is available in your area. Alternatively, you can contact the service online or by telephone on [0800 085 7308](tel:08000857308).

## 6 – Social media

You may wish to consider closing the person's social media accounts. You will have to contact the social media company directly and each one has a slightly different process.

On Facebook it is possible to choose to memorialise an account, rather than deleting it. This means that it can be left in situ for existing contacts to remember them or share memories.

See their individual websites for more information on the options available to you.

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**This leaflet has been prepared by Royds Withy King, a law firm with a specialist team who can advise following the death of someone close to you.**

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