

What to do when someone dies

There are **3 things** you must do in the first few days after someone dies.

1. **Get a medical certificate from a GP or hospital doctor.** You'll need this to register the death.
2. **Register the death within 5 days (8 days in Scotland).** You'll then get the documents you need for the funeral.

You should register the death within 5 days.

You can go to any register office but if you use the one in the area where the person died you'll be given the documents you'll need on the day.

If you use a different register office the documents will be sent to the office in the area where the person died before they're issued to you. This means you'll usually wait a few days.

Registering the death will take about 30 minutes - you might need to make an appointment.

Who should register the death

A relative should register the death.

If a relative can't register the death, you can do it if you:

- were there at the time of death
- are an administrator from the hospital (if the person died in hospital)
- are in charge of making funeral arrangements

What you need to do

- Take the medical certificate showing the cause of death (signed by a doctor) with you.
- If the cause of death is unknown, sudden or unexplained it may be reported to the coroner.
- The coroner will give you the documents you need, or they'll send them direct to the registrar. The table below shows the documents needed.

Cause of death	Documents issued by coroner
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Natural causes	Form 100A, or Pink Form 100B if there's a post-mortem - these forms are sent to the registrar, but sometimes given to you
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Unnatural causes/not enough evidence of natural causes	Order for Burial (form 101) or Certificate for Cremation (form 6) so the funeral can take place – will be given to you; Certificate After Inquest (form 99 (rev)) - this states the cause of death and is sent to the registrar (the death is registered by the registrar with no-one present)
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If form 100A or 100B is issued (ie there is no inquest)

If available (but don't worry if not), also take the person's:

- birth certificate
- marriage or civil partnership certificate
- NHS medical card

You'll need to tell the registrar:

- the person's full name at the time of death
- any names previously used, eg maiden name
- the person's date and place of birth
- their last address
- their occupation
- the full name, date of birth and occupation of a surviving or late spouse or civil partner
- whether they were getting a State Pension or any other benefits

You should also take supporting documents that show your name and address (eg a utility bill) but you can still register a death without them.

Documents you'll get

When you register a death, you'll get a Certificate of Registration of Death (form BD8).

You may need to fill this out and return it if the person was getting a State Pension or benefits (the form will come with a pre-paid envelope so you know where to send it).

You can buy extra death certificates - these will be needed for sorting out the person's affairs.

3. Arrange the funeral - you can use a funeral director or arrange it yourself.

It is a common myth that you need to use a Funeral Director in the event of death. This is not the case. There is a lot of information here <http://www.naturaldeath.org.uk/index.php?page=the-funeral-and-burial> around your choices and options.

If you do want to use a recommended Funeral Director, there is a list of them here:

www.naturaldeath.org.uk/index.php?page=funeral-directors-list

You may be able to use the Tell Us Once service to report a death to most government organisations in one go.

Click on the hyperlink or search 'Tell us Once service'.