



Averil Phillips
and Family

What To Do When Someone Dies



What To Do When Someone Dies?

Information and next steps

If the person is at home when they die

(i.e. an expected death) contact your doctor no matter what time of day it is. They will arrange to come and confirm death, issuing you with a 'medical certificate' to confirm the cause of death. The person's body cannot be moved until this has happened. Keep the room as cold as possible. Switch off any electric blankets. If they are on a pressure relieving mattress, this can be left on. You may want to wash and dress them, brush their hair. Close their eyes and mouth, roll up a towel and place it under the chin if necessary. If you already know that you would like the person cremated, tell your doctor as they will need to prepare different forms and make further arrangements. You will need to take the medical certificate to the registrar within 5 days to register the death.

If death occurs suddenly (ie: the person has not been seen by a doctor within the last 14 days) the body is immediately in the care of the coroner. This also applies if the person died following an accident or injury, due to an industrial disease, during a surgical operation, if the cause of death is unknown or if the death is unexplained.

Normally a Post Mortem is carried out to establish the cause of death. This can be a very upsetting and scary time for the family.

The police can be involved and may want to question family members. This is a standard procedure which is a legal requirement.

Choosing a funeral director

You do not have to use a funeral director and may wish to organise the funeral yourself. You may want to use some but not all of a funeral director's services. It is important to choose someone that you trust and

understands what it is you want, so you may find calling some different organisations helpful in aiding your decision.

At Averil Phillips & Family we welcome such enquiries. We can help as much or as little as you want. Whether it is help with transport from A-B, supplying a coffin through to organising all aspects of the funeral.

We will talk you through any aspects of the process that you need to know. We can arrange to come and collect the deceased body and take them into our care until the funeral. We can also advise and support keeping the body at home.

We will arrange to meet with you to discuss what ideas you have about the funeral arrangements either at your home or at our offices.

Call The Registration service or make an appointment online

The death of a member of the family, a relative or a friend is a distressing and difficult time. Not only do we have to cope with the grief and sadness there is also the important issue of arranging to register the death.

In England and Wales a death must be registered within 5 days of the date of death, unless the Registrar says that this period may be extended or if the coroner is involved. The Registration itself will take approximately 30 minutes.

Unless the Coroner is involved, you will be issued with a Medical Certificate of Cause of Death by the Doctor of the deceased, who will either be a General Practitioner or a Hospital Doctor. Once you have this certificate you should arrange an appointment with the Registrar.

Who can register the death?

The law states that the following people may register a death:

- A relative of the deceased
- A person present at the death
- The occupier of the house or institution where the death took place if there is not anyone more qualified to register
- The person who is arranging the funeral (that is, the person instructing the funeral director)

Others may be qualified in specific circumstances. Consult a Registrar for details.

You may bring a friend or relative with you to see the Registrar together with any documents (medical card, birth certificates and marriage certificates that relate to the person that has died). The Registrar will see you in private and will ask you questions but please do not worry about the registration - if you are upset, the Registrar will understand and will give you the time you need.

After Registration you will be issued with two forms:

A green form to take to allow you to make arrangements for the burial or cremation. If the coroner has been involved then this may be issued by their office and not the Registrar. **The green form should be given to the Funeral Directors or directly to the burial or cremation authorities.**

The Registration or Notification of Death Form is for Social Security purposes. Please read and complete the back of the form, returning it to any local Department of Social Security Office without delay - this relates to state pensions and benefits.

Death certificates may be required by banks, building societies, solicitors or for some insurance and pension claims (photocopies are not acceptable). You may purchase as many certificates as you wish at the time of registration these normally cost £11.00 per certificate at time of entry.

- Internet provider
- Child's school or childcare provider
- Doctors and dentists
- Hospital clinics or private health care provider
- Solicitor

It is important to note that if the deceased owned a vehicle then it may be no-one now has cover to drive it. Many policies state that a vehicle may be driven by someone else with the owner's permission but as soon as the owner dies any such permission may cease. Contact the car insurance company before anyone drives the vehicle to make sure they are covered.

A service called 'Tell Us Once' has been introduced in England, Scotland and Wales which helps you tell the government just once about a person's death. The registrar will issue this form when you register the death.

Organising The Funeral

We recognise that people need different and personalised support from funeral directors. Some people would like to be given clear guidance and direction whereas others would prefer to be informed about their options, and then feel empowered to make the choices that are right for them.

It is very important to recognise that you do have choices:

- No funeral service this is known as an unattended or direct cremation/burial
- A funeral at which the dead person is not present - usually called a memorial service
- A family-organised farewell event with or without the ashes present. You can hold this anywhere you want at home, a special place or at any time you choose
- A private funeral to which only certain people are invited
- A conventional funeral on which you set your individual stamp - e.g. alternative hearse, colourful coffin, dress code, theme, 'different' music, etc.
- A conventional funeral with all the traditional elements

The Coffin

There are a wide variety of coffins to choose from. Some of which can reflect the personality of the person who has died as well as your budget.

As well as traditional wood veneered coffins with rope handles or brass effect fittings, you can choose from bamboo, willow, pandanus, banana leaf, plain or pictorial cardboard. There are also bamboo and woollen shrouds.

You may want to decorate the coffin yourself with pictures, paintings and poems or embroider the shrouds.

Transport

A traditional hearse with or without limousines for the family, or perhaps a motorcycle hearse, VW Camper Van, Horse and carriage or possibly your own big car or van.

You may want to meet at the crematorium or burial ground or have the cortege set off from the house and possibly take a specific route to take in special places.

Flowers

Flowers can be a beautiful part of the funeral. They can be simple, such as picked from the garden or more formal arrangements. We work with some very talented florists that can create a tribute based on your personal needs. Some flowers can stay with the coffin when it is cremated. Otherwise they will be displayed outside of the crematorium chapels with other floral tributes for five days. You may wish for these to be collected and returned to you so they can be enjoyed at home or given to family members.

Donations

It is increasingly popular to ask for donations to charity instead of funeral flowers.

You can have a cash collection at the funeral service which we will be pleased to organise for you. This can then be given to you or we can forward it to your chosen charity. You can also ask people to contribute through or website or via a fundraising website.

Who should I tell about a death?

When someone dies you will need to contact a wide variety of organisations to inform them of the death. Here are some of those you may need to contact, you may have to send them a death certificate:

- Vehicle registration and driving licence
- Passport
- Motoring insurance and breakdown policy providers
- Insurance companies
- Pension plans
- Bank and building society
- Credit card companies
- Utilities (gas, electricity, water, telephone)
- Employees or employers
- Council tax
- Benefit agency
- Income tax
- Mortgage

Make the service as personal as you can

Consider raising a glass of something to the person who has died at the goodbye moment when the curtains close. Let off some balloons outside after the service.

Put something on the coffin

Whether the funeral is at the crematorium or a burial ground you can ask people to come forward and put a single flower onto the coffin, or a sprig of herb or possibly write a last message. This can make the occasion very personal.

Funeral favours

You can give those who attend the funeral a little keepsake to take home with them. Items such as a bag of forget me not seeds to plant in their garden. It could be some little thing that belonged to the deceased and by which they will be remembered. Little things, but full of personal meaning.

Dress up - or down

Ask them wear a splash of colour or a button hole with the persons favourite flower.

Music

You will want to consider the music you would like for different parts of the service. The music you choose should express how you and everyone else feel. It should have a strong connection to the person who has died.

Music at the beginning, at the end and perhaps a piece or two, or hymns in the middle.

Music can be much more powerful and evocative than spoken words-and the words of a song far less meaningful than its tune and the way it is sung.

If you want to play recorded music, most crematoriums have a cloud-based music system, Obitus or Wesley, which can download from the internet almost anything ever recorded. Any crematorium which does not have such a system may insist on original, not burned, CDs.

It is possible to have live music, a bag piper or a jazz band. A Grandchild singing or playing a musical instrument can be very touching.

Order of service booklets

You can have pictures and poems or favourite sayings of the person who has passed away.

Livestream, filming and photography

Many crematoriums can now livestream and record the service although there is usually a charge for this.

We have filmed services for families which have been put onto a DVD, we have also taken photographs. It can be difficult to remember who is there and what is going on.

More and more people want to share and savour the funeral they made. Take your camera and/or invite others to bring theirs.

Alternatively, you can book a professional.

Food and drinks

It is traditional to have a gathering after the funeral for family and friends to spend time talking and sharing stories. We have facilities for a reception and even for the whole service at our offices to accommodate up to 40 people. You could go to a venue of your choosing and have an afternoon tea, or the local village hall. You could have the persons favourite food or a special family dish, or ask family and friends to make something and bring it, which helps to involve them. We can help to arrange caterer's if you require.

Cremated remains

Ashes are available for collection within a couple of days. Averil Phillips & Family will collect these and arrange to bring them to you.

Step By Step Checklist

Introduction

This is a simple checklist which you may find useful as a reminder of what needs to be done after someone has died. Some of the arrangements will need to be done by the executor or administrator of the estate and others can be done by family or friends.

Please remember that this information is just a guide, and not all of the details will apply in every case.

To help you when filling out forms and writing letters, it may be useful to make a list of important reference numbers and information, such as the deceased's date and place of birth and marriage, National Insurance number and tax reference numbers.

Registering the death	Complete
Contact the doctor (GP) or hospital about obtaining the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death OR Contact the coroner's office to find out when you may be able to register the death.	
Telephone the Registrar of Births and Deaths to make an appointment to register the death.	
Complete the Notification or Registration of Death (BD8) form that you were given by the Registrar of Deaths. This will inform every department using the National Insurance number of the death, but it is advisable to telephone appropriate pensions, benefits and tax offices as soon as possible to avoid inadvertent over-payment of pensions/benefits.	

Arranging the funeral	Complete
Contact a funeral director to discuss the arrangements you want to make for the funeral and your religious or spiritual adviser, if appropriate. The Will may contain specific requests for the funeral, so it is important to check this.	

Who you need to inform	Complete
Tell family members and friends about the death.	
Employer or educational establishments.	
Health professionals. You will also need to cancel any outstanding hospital, dental, podiatry or other health related appointments.	
Agencies providing care such as social services, home carers, meals on wheels and day centres.	

Financial organisations	Complete
Banks / National Savings / building societies.	
Insurance companies (e.g. life, buildings / contents, medical, car, travel).	
Pension providers.	
Credit card/store card providers.	
Any other financial institutions must be informed so that any accounts solely in the deceased's name can be frozen to prevent fraud. You should also inform companies /organisations with joint accounts, although these should normally still be accessible by the other joint holder.	
Property and utilities	Complete
Mortgage provider.	
If the deceased lived in rented accommodation, inform the local authority, housing association or private landlord.	
Buildings and property insurance companies to ensure continued cover especially if the property is left unoccupied.	
Utility companies (electricity, gas, water and telephone) and arrange transfer of account details if necessary.	
TV / internet companies.	
Government offices	Complete
Pensions Service or Jobcentre Plus to cancel any benefits to the deceased or their carer.	
Inland Revenue to deal with tax and Child Benefit payments (if applicable).	
Local government offices that provide services such as the Electoral Register, housing benefit, council tax office, bus pass, disabled parking permits, library membership.	
The DVLA and the insurance company if the deceased owned a car or held a driving licence.	
The Passport Agency.	
Other contacts	Complete
Arrange redirection of post if necessary and reduce the burden of any unwanted mail by registering with the Bereavement Register.	
Clubs / membership organisations/social groups.	
If the deceased held a firearms licence for work and/or recreational purposes, please contact your local police station.	
Dealing with the estate	Complete
Find out if the deceased made a Will and where it is located. It may be at the deceased's property or their solicitor may have a copy. Please call us if you cannot find the Will and we will be able to advise you on the next steps.	
If there is no Will, you will need to decide who will sort out the deceased's estate and they will need to contact the Probate Registry to apply for Letters of Administration.	
Find out if probate is needed. If it is, obtain the Will, find out who the executors are and inform them of the death if they don't already know.	
Gather any documents relating to financial affairs and property ownership. If there is a Will the executor should be responsible for this.	
The executor or administrator will need to decide how to go about the probate process and whether to use a professional or undertake the administration themselves.	

Notes



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