

# What to do when someone dies:

## Your step-by-step guide

This guide will walk you through what needs to happen when someone dies, including what happens immediately right up the day of the funeral. Most things are quite simple and can be done over the

phone or online. As your appointed funeral director, it is our job to be by your side every step of the way.

First and foremost, **don't panic**, call us on **01522 754154** and we will guide you through the process.

### 1 - Was the death expected or unexpected?

If the death was **expected**, you first need to contact the deceased doctor who will attend to verify the death. If the person was under a home care plan such as Marie Curie or Macmillan, the nurse present might do this instead. If you can't reach a doctor for any reason, simply call '111' and the operator will assist you.

If the death was **not expected**, you will need to call 999 and ask for an ambulance. Explain the details of the situation as clearly as possible to the operator, they may decide to send a police officer too. This is normal procedure and nothing to worry about, they are there to help.

If the death occurred in a hospital or a care home, the staff there will take care of all the paperwork at this stage and simply need to be notified of who your appointed funeral director is.

### 2 - Contact your funeral director.

Once the death has been verified, the body of the deceased can be released and taken to the funeral home. Where death was not expected, the coroner may wish to be involved and conduct an investigation following advice from the attending paramedic. In this instance, the coroner will take the deceased into their care and your funeral director will contact them to make further arrangements in due course. You will be kept up to date throughout this process.

### **3 - The Medical Examiner's Role (as of September 2024)**

Once the death has been verified by the doctor, they will complete the MCCD (Medical Certificate of Cause of Death) and will send this to the Medical Examiner. The Medical Examiner will scrutinise the certificate and ensure all is as it should be. In some cases, the Medical Examiner may request that the Coroner is involved. Should this occur, you will be kept up to date with what is happening and why. Once the Medical Examiner is satisfied that all is in order, they will notify the registry office of the death. The Registrar will contact you and make an appointment with them to register the death. **Once the Registrar has made contact you will have 5 days to register the death.** If you require any help with this stage, we are here for you.

### **4 - Registering the death.**

The registrar will let you know beforehand what information they require you to bring to the appointment. If you do not have everything, don't panic, they can usually work around it and are there to help you.

Once the registration is complete you will be asked how many death certificates you would like to purchase.

We normally advise that 3 is enough but you may choose to purchase more or less. Death certificates cost £11 each and can be paid for by cash or card. The registrar will ask you during your appointment to assign a funeral director they can deal with.

### **5 - Tell Us Once.**

Tell Us Once is a government portal that you can use to take care of anything to do with the 'State'.

This includes driver's license, state pensions, state benefits, etc.

The registrar will have issued you with a reference number you can use to log on to the **tell us once website**.

Once logged on you'll be asked a series of questions, it takes around 20 - 40 minutes and once done takes care of all matters relating to the State. Please note this does not include things like private pensions, bank accounts, stocks & shares, private property etc. These will need to be notified separately and may require a copy of the death certificate as proof.

### **6 - Arranging the funeral.**

Once the death is registered the registrar will forward what is known as the '**green form**' to your funeral director. Once we have this, we can begin to plan your funeral and book the crematorium or burial ground, dependent on your wishes. You can visit our dedicated web page for more details regarding **Arranging a Funeral**.

## **7 - Burial or Cremation.**

**Burials** can normally go ahead as soon as is possible. The main considerations are when the gravediggers are available and when is most convenient for you and other family and guests.

For **Cremations**, we will help you to book this online or over the phone with your chosen Crematorium. There are 3 key pieces of paperwork that need to be submitted no less than 3 working days before the funeral is due to take place.

**1) Application for cremation which you will need to sign**

**2) MCCD issued by your doctor**

**3) Green form**

Once again, we will take care of this for you.

Whichever you opt for the funeral will typically take place within 2 – 4 weeks

## **8 Notifying Family and Friends**

Inform family members, close friends, and relevant individuals about the funeral details. You can do this through personal calls, emails, or by publishing an obituary or death notice in local newspapers or online platforms.

## **9 The day of the Funeral Service**

On the day of the funeral, we, as funeral directors, will oversee the proceedings, ensuring that everything runs smoothly. We will coordinate the timing of the service, address any last-minute needs or concerns and be there to offer you support throughout.

## **10 After**

After the funeral service, we can support you with tasks such as organising a burial of ashes, or arranging for the safekeeping of the urn. We also appreciate that this can be a very daunting time, if you need support or someone to talk to, let us know. Whether it's just a chat and a cup of tea or something greater required, we are here to help and will have your back.