

Support after a death

Practical help
when someone dies

This leaflet is no longer current.
You can find up to date information on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk)



Department
for Work &
Pensions

Getting the right information and help when someone dies is essential.

This leaflet tells you what you need to do after a death. It doesn't go into detail, but explains where you can get more information and who to contact. Other organisations may also be able to help.

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Registering a death

When someone has died, one of the first things you'll need to do is register the death. In England and Wales you usually need to do this within five days (eight days in Scotland).

For more information please go to:



www.gov.uk/after-a-death
www.gro-scotland.gov.uk

or find your local registrar in the phone book.

If the death was sudden or unexpected, the police or medical staff may report it to a coroner (Procurator Fiscal in Scotland). If there needs to be a post-mortem or inquest, the coroner will tell the registrar when the death will be registered.

What to do next

This can be a very difficult time, but it's important to tell everyone who needs to know. Your registrar may offer you a service that can help by telling other government departments about the death for you.

You'll also need to find the will (if there is one), and start arranging the funeral.

There's a useful checklist of who to tell, and what you need to do, at:



www.gov.uk/after-a-death

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Wills and inheritance

A will should make it clear how a person would like their 'estate' (money and belongings) shared out. The 'executor' will sort this out. It should say in the will who the executor is. To find out more go to www.gov.uk/after-a-death and go to the 'Wills and probate' section. This section also explains what to do if there is no will.

Arranging a funeral

You can't hold the funeral until you have a certificate for burial or cremation. If the death is reported to the coroner or Procurator Fiscal, this may delay when you can hold the funeral.

You should check if the person left written instructions or a will saying what they wanted. If they didn't, it's up to the relatives and the executor to decide between burial or cremation.

You can use the services of a funeral director, or organise the funeral yourself.

If you decide not to use a funeral director, contact the cemeteries and crematorium department of your local council for advice.



www.gov.uk/after-a-death
www.gro-scotland.gov.uk

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Financial help

Paying for the funeral

Always check how the funeral is going to be paid for. The person who has died may have had an arrangement that would pay for it, such as:

- a life insurance policy
- a funeral plan
- an employer's pension scheme or personal pension scheme, or
- membership of a trade union or provident fund.

You may get a Funeral Payment if you or your partner get certain benefits. If the person who died was a war pensioner, you could also get help with the funeral costs.

To find out about a Funeral Payment, go to:



www.gov.uk/funeral-payments

For help with funeral costs for a veteran, go to:



www.veterans-uk.info

Bereavement benefits

If your husband, wife or civil partner has died, you may get bereavement benefits.

Find out more by going to www.gov.uk and searching for 'bereavement benefits'.

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We also have basic information leaflets covering:

- support if you are ill or disabled
- support for carers
- support for parents and guardians
- support if you're planning retirement
- support if you are looking for work.

This information is available in other formats on request.

If you can't use the internet, you can phone for a more detailed leaflet.



Phone **0845 606 5065**
Textphone **0845 604 0710**

Call charges

Calls to **0845** numbers from BT land lines should cost no more than 4p a minute with a 12p call set-up charge. You may pay more if you use another phone company or a mobile phone. Calls from mobile phones can cost up to 40p a minute, so check the cost of calls with your service provider. Charges were correct as of the date below.

This leaflet is only a guide and does not cover every circumstance. We have done our best to make sure the leaflet is correct as of the date below. Some of the information may be simplified or may become inaccurate over time, for example because of changes to the law. We recommend that you get independent advice before making financial decisions based on this leaflet.