

**When someone dies –  
for relatives & next of kin**



**Severn  
Hospice**  
here and at home

**This leaflet is to help you understand the arrangements that have to be made after a death. When a death occurs there is a lot to do, which can seem very daunting. We hope to guide you through the essentials of registering a death and how to start thinking about the funeral.**

As the next of kin you will be given the medical certificate of cause of death, signed by a doctor. You will need this in order to register the death. You are required to register within five days at the offices of the registrar of births, deaths and marriages – local to where the death occurred.

**Shropshire** To make an appointment at any of the local registration services you must either call 0345 678 9016 from Monday to Friday between 9.15am and 4.30pm or book online at [shropshire.gov.uk/bereavement-services](http://shropshire.gov.uk/bereavement-services)

**Telford & Wrekin** Call 01952 382444 from Monday to Friday between 9am and 5pm.

**Mid Wales** To make an appointment at your local office call 0845 602 7038 or 01597 827468 from Monday to Thursday between 9am and 5pm and 9am to 4.30pm on Friday.

## **Who can register a death?**

**Normally, a death should be registered by:**

- A close relative
- A person present at the death
- The occupier of the premises where the death occurred
- The person responsible for the funeral (but not the undertaker)

## **What information will you need to provide?**

- Date and place of death
- Date and place of the person's birth
- Full name (and maiden name if applicable)
- Former occupation of the deceased
- Usual address
- Name of husband, wife or civil partner
- Their date of birth
- If applicable, information about state pension and benefits which the deceased received

## What do you need to take to the registrars?

- The medical certificate of the cause of death
- The deceased's birth and marriage certificates, if available, and their medical card
- National Insurance number if possible
- Blue badge and concessionary bus pass if they were issued by Shropshire Council
- Some money to purchase death certificates – it is useful to buy several copies at the time of registering as photocopies will not be accepted in places like banks

## What documents will you receive?

- Certified death certificate
- Certificate of registration, sometimes called the BD8, which needs to be sent to the DWP to notify them of the death if the deceased received a state pension or other benefits
- Certificate of burial or cremation, called 'the green form', which serves as proof to a funeral director or crematorium authority that a funeral may take place

## Arranging and paying for a funeral

Many people choose to use a funeral director to take on the responsibility of organising everything after taking instructions from you, but it is possible to organise a funeral yourself. The Natural Death Centre website explains what you need to do if you are making your own arrangements: [naturaldeath.org.uk](http://naturaldeath.org.uk)

If you are arranging a funeral yourself, funeral directors will care for your relative until the day of interment for a fee.

If the deceased has not left specific instructions you need to decide between burial, cremation or a green funeral. Costs vary but cremation always costs less than burial.

It is wise to discuss the possible cost of the funeral with your funeral director if there is no pre-paid arrangement. Funerals are expensive and there is no loss of respect to the deceased in getting quotes from at least two companies, and in looking at which items really matter to you and which you can manage without. A deposit is often required.

Continued overleaf

Paying for the funeral is the priority in settling the estate, so you should be reimbursed if it is possible. Some people are entitled to a contribution to the cost of a funeral from the Social Fund. This depends upon the circumstances of the person arranging the funeral, not those of the deceased. You must be in receipt of what is defined as a qualified benefit, which includes income support, pension credit, income-related ESA and housing benefit. Even if awarded, this does not cover the entire cost of a funeral.


## The coroner

In certain circumstances, deaths may have to be reported to the coroner. Usually the death will have been reported by the doctor prior to your visit to the registrar and you will have been told of this. The coroner will do one of three things:


- Decide there is no action necessary and process paperwork to allow the registrar to proceed with the registration
- Hold a post mortem to establish the cause of death. He/she will issue paperwork to the registrar confirming the findings and then allow the registrar to proceed
- He/she will decide to hold an inquest. If this is the case, the coroner's office will give you as much information as possible about the proceedings

**This leaflet has been provided by  
Severn Hospice's social work team.**

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