



UK Government

# INFORMATION FOR THE BEREAVED

## CORONAVIRUS (COVID 19)

We are extremely sorry for your loss and appreciate this will be an incredibly difficult time.

The death of a loved one can be among the most difficult moments that any of us will face in our lives, and it often falls on those closest to the deceased and grieving the most to organise the funeral.

This leaflet shares important information to help bereaved families, friends or next of kin make important decisions during this national emergency and explains the next steps, answers some of your questions, and guides you to the extra help and support that is available.

## What to expect

### *Immediately following the death of a loved one*

A first step will be to choose a funeral director. You can find an industry-inspected local funeral director via the following websites:

- The National Association of Funeral Directors:  
**[funeral-directory.co.uk](http://funeral-directory.co.uk)**
- The National Society of Allied and Independent Funeral Directors:  
**[saif.org.uk/members-search](http://saif.org.uk/members-search)**

Once you've chosen a funeral director, your loved one will be collected and taken to a funeral parlour or a mortuary. If your loved one is taken to a mortuary it may not be possible for you to visit or spend time with them. This will be a local decision made to keep you and those around you safe and well.

If your loved one is taken to a funeral parlour, you can speak to your funeral director about, where possible, safely arranging a visit to wash, dress and conduct any other religious observances. If your loved one is being prepared for their funeral by a community faith group they will be able to advise you what to do.

### *Registering the death*

You will need to register your loved one's death with the Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages within five days. Once this has been

completed, the registrar can issue you with the Certificate for Burial or Cremation and the Death Certificate. The funeral director will need this certificate.

The doctor who signed the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death may have passed your contact details to the registrar so that they can contact you to organise the registration. However, you may want to contact the Register Office early on so the registration process can be completed and you can proceed with the funeral arrangements.

Further details about how to contact your local Register Office and their services can be found from your local council by visiting:

**[gov.uk/find-bereavement-services-from-council](https://www.gov.uk/find-bereavement-services-from-council)**

### *Preparing for the funeral*

During this difficult period many families are opting to have smaller funerals that follow the social distancing guidelines now, while planning additional memorial events at a later date.

If you have a nominated funeral director who is collecting your loved one, they will contact you to arrange the funeral. Funeral directors have been given advice about how to safely organise funerals during this national emergency, and there are guidelines in place to limit the number of people who can attend to make sure everyone stays safe.

Only members of the deceased's household and immediate family members should attend the funeral. A modest number of close friends may attend if the deceased had no household or family members able to attend. Any mourner who is unwell with symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) (a new continuous cough or a high temperature) should not attend and those attending must observe social distancing measures at all times.

## **Financial support**

Every circumstance is different, so please take time to review whether you are eligible for the financial support available to assist with funeral expenses. Find out more here: **[gov.uk/funeral-payments](https://www.gov.uk/funeral-payments)**

You may be able to receive a Bereavement Support Payment if your husband, wife or civil partner has died. Find out more here:

**[gov.uk/bereavement-support-payment](https://www.gov.uk/bereavement-support-payment)**

If you're bringing up a child whose parents have died, you may be eligible for Guardian's Allowance. You may also be eligible if there's one surviving parent. For more information please visit:

**[gov.uk/guardians-allowance](https://www.gov.uk/guardians-allowance)**

## Bereavement support

We understand that losing a loved one can feel overwhelming, especially if the death was untimely and unexpected. There are a number of organisations that can support you and your family during this distressing time, including:

- Find bereavement services from your council at:  
**[gov.uk/find-bereavement-services-from-council](https://www.gov.uk/find-bereavement-services-from-council)**
- For NHS information and support on bereavement visit:  
**<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/coping-with-bereavement/>**
- For a step-by-step guide after a bereavement visit:  
**[gov.uk/after-a-death](https://www.gov.uk/after-a-death)**
- Cruse Bereavement Care has online resources on how bereavement and grief may be affected by this pandemic: **[cruse.org.uk/get-help/coronavirus-dealing-bereavement-and-grief](https://www.cruse.org.uk/get-help/coronavirus-dealing-bereavement-and-grief)**.
- ataloss.org provides signposting and services across the UK
- For facts about coronavirus (COVID-19) and supporting children:  
**[cruse.org.uk/coronavirus/children-and-young-people](https://www.cruse.org.uk/coronavirus/children-and-young-people)**
- The Compassionate Friends offer support to families after the death of a child of any age and from any cause: **[tcf.org.uk](https://www.tcf.org.uk)** Alternatively, call: **0345 123 2304**
- Childhood Bereavement Network has information and links to national and local support organisations

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This guidance is for England. There is also support available in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales.