

# When someone dies

A step-by-step guide  
to what to do



# Information written with you in mind.

Our guides are produced with the help of older people, carers and expert peer reviewers.

Published: October 2025

*Kindly peer reviewed by the National Bereavement Service.*



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# What this guide is **about**

When someone dies, there are certain things that have to be done. Some people find keeping busy helpful when they're grieving, while others find it almost impossible to think about practical things. This guide can help you manage as best you can.

This guide explains what to do and when, from registering the death to sorting out the funeral. It also explains what kind of financial and emotional support might be available.



All of the information in this guide applies in **England**. This symbol indicates where it differs for Wales and Northern Ireland. If you're in Scotland, contact Age Scotland for advice.

### Emotional support

Many organisations offer support with grief. You might not want to talk about it – or you might not be ready yet – but if you do, there are details of these organisations on pages 29-34.

There might also be community groups local to you that offer general bereavement support or tailored support for people of different ethnicities and faiths. You could search for these online or ask your GP practice about them.

Some funeral plans include bereavement support for the friends and family of the person who has died. If they had a funeral plan, check to see whether this is included.



### Good to know

For more information about the emotional side of things, you might like to read our **Bereavement** guide. It can help you with the feelings you're experiencing and point you in the right direction to get support – both now and in the future.

# What to do first

When someone dies, there are some things that need to be done straight away.

## Following the death

If someone dies at home and their death was expected – because they had a terminal illness, for example – you should call their GP practice and nearest relative (if that isn't you).

A doctor or nurse will come to verify that the person has died. You can then call a funeral director who'll move the person to their premises – or they can give you advice if you'd prefer to keep the person at home.

A doctor will then complete their part of a medical certificate which explains the cause of death. The certificate is sent to a medical examiner (a senior doctor) who reviews it. The medical examiner or one of their team will speak to the nearest relative to check they understand and agree with the medical certificate. You can ask the medical examiner questions and raise any concerns you have about the death at this stage.

If there are no concerns, the medical examiner's office will tell you when you can make an appointment to register the death. In England and Wales, all deaths not referred to a coroner are looked at by a medical examiner.



There aren't medical examiners in Northern Ireland, so doctors send their medical certificates to the registrar. The registrar contacts you to organise registering the death.

If someone dies at home unexpectedly, call 999 straight away and explain what's happened. The death will need to be reported to a **coroner** if the cause of death is unknown, unclear or unnatural – the result of an accident, for instance.



A **coroner** is a type of judge with the legal duty to investigate unexplained and unnatural deaths.

The coroner may order a post-mortem examination to work out the cause of death. You can't refuse this – but you can tell them if you need to arrange the funeral quickly for faith reasons.

If the post-mortem finds a natural cause of death, the coroner's office will give you permission to register the death. If the cause of death is unclear or unnatural, the coroner will hold an inquest. If so, the coroner will let you know when you can hold the funeral – but they'll be the one to register the death after the inquest.

After the death has been registered, you'll be able to purchase death certificates. You can still get started on administration in the meantime using a special certificate issued by the coroner – this is usually called an 'interim certificate'. You can ask for more than one copy.

When someone dies unexpectedly, the police may be called to do a routine visit where they ask questions about the death to help the coroner understand what caused it. This can be unsettling – but it's important to remember that it's normal procedure after a death in these circumstances.



## Next steps

Visit [www.gov.uk/when-someone-dies](http://www.gov.uk/when-someone-dies). In Northern Ireland, visit [www.nidirect.gov.uk](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk).

**If someone dies in hospital**, the hospital will explain the steps you need to take. The cause of death is checked by the medical examiner and the medical certificate is sent straight to the registrar. If a medical certificate can't be issued, the hospital will refer the death to the coroner. The person's body is usually moved to the hospital mortuary until you arrange for it to be taken to the funeral director's premises or taken home.

## Registering the death

**In England and Wales, the medical examiner or coroner provides the cause of death to the registrar of births, marriages and deaths.**

Unless an inquest is required, you must register the death with the registrar within 5 days of being contacted by the medical examiner's or coroner's office unless there's good reason that's not possible – for example, you're unwell and it hasn't been possible to identify someone else to do it.

Ideally, a partner, relative or representative of the person who's died should register the death. If this isn't possible, someone else can register it if any of the below apply:

- They were there when the person died.
- They're responsible for arranging the funeral.
- They're an administrator from the hospital or care home where the person died.

You can go to any register office to register a death. If you go to an office in the area where the person died, you'll be given the documents you need that day. If you go to an office in a different area, there'll be a delay before you get the documents, as the office will have to forward the documents to the one in the area the death happened.

Wherever you go, most offices need you to make an appointment, so it's best to phone in advance to check or to make an appointment on their website.



In Northern Ireland, you need to go to any district registration office within 5 days of the death. See the NI Direct website (page 31) for a list of offices.

To register a death, the registrar will need you to tell them:

- the date and place of death
- the full name of the person who's died (and any other names they once had, such as a maiden name)
- their usual address
- their date and place of birth (if this was outside the UK, you only need to give the country)
- their most recent occupation and if they'd retired
- whether they were receiving a pension or other benefits
- the name, occupation and date of birth of their spouse or civil partner if they had one (even if their spouse or civil partner has already died).



## Next steps

To find an office, visit [www.gov.uk/register-offices](http://www.gov.uk/register-offices). In Northern Ireland, go to [www.nidirect.gov.uk/contacts/district-registrars-northern-ireland](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/contacts/district-registrars-northern-ireland).

**If you have them, you could also bring the person's:**

- medical card or NHS number (or HSC number in Northern Ireland)
- passport
- driving licence
- birth and marriage or civil partnership certificates
- proof of address – such as a utility bill or Council Tax bill.

**The registrar will give you some documents:**

- A certificate for burial or cremation (known as a Green Form in England and Wales and form GR021 in Northern Ireland), which allows a burial to happen or for a cremation application to be made.
- A unique code so you can use the Tell Us Once service in England and Wales (see page 13 for more information).
- A death certificate, which you need to pay for. This is a certified copy of what's recorded in the death register and you often need it to deal with the person's estate, including their finances or property. It can be best to pay for several certified copies at this point, as getting copies at a later date can be more expensive and some organisations (such as banks and life insurance companies) don't accept photocopies.



### Good to know

Many registrars offer information about bereavement benefits for widows, widowers and surviving partners if needed.

**“When our father died, my brother and I went together to register the death. I couldn’t face doing it by myself.”**

Hamid, 44



### If someone dies abroad

You should register the death according to the local regulations of the country. A death certificate issued abroad can usually be used in the UK. If it's not in English, you may need to get a certified translation if you're dealing with the person's affairs – although many European countries now issue certificates in different languages.

You might also choose to register the death with UK authorities so it's recorded with the General Register Offices in England and Wales. You can do and pay for this online at [www.gov.uk/register-a-death](http://www.gov.uk/register-a-death). You can opt to pay for a consular death registration certificate too. Contact the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (page 30) for further information.

If the person who's died had assets abroad, it's best to get legal advice on dealing with them.



## Organ donation and medical research

All adults in England, Wales and Northern Ireland are considered to have agreed to donate their organs when they die – unless they've recorded a decision not to or they're in an excluded group. It's possible to opt to donate certain tissues too.

If the person who's died carried a donor card, was listed on the NHS Organ Donor Register, or had said that they wanted their organs to be donated after their death, then you should tell the hospital staff, GP or coroner's office. The person may have registered particular preferences, such as which organs they wanted to donate. The sooner you tell them, the more likely it is that the person's wishes will be carried out, as organs need to be donated quickly.

The person may have made a request to have their body donated for medical research. For this to happen, they must have made arrangements in writing with a medical school.

After the person dies, their family should contact the medical school as soon as possible for advice. There might be circumstances in which they can't accept the body – for example, they can't accept the body of anyone who's had a post-mortem examination ordered by a coroner. The Human Tissue Authority (page 32) has more information about this, as well as contact details for medical schools.



### Good to know

Visit [www.organdonation.nhs.uk](http://www.organdonation.nhs.uk) for more information about organ donation. In Wales, visit [www.gov.wales/organ-donation-guide](http://www.gov.wales/organ-donation-guide).

## Who to tell

When someone dies, there are government departments and other organisations that need to be told. If the person left a will and named an executor, they're often the best person to do this.

A good place to start is the Tell Us Once service, which allows you to inform several government departments in one go. This service is offered by local councils in England and Wales. When you register the death, the registrar can help you use it or give you a unique reference number so you can use it yourself.

The departments it covers include:

- local services such as electoral and Council Tax services
- HM Passport Office
- the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA)
- the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)
- HMRC for tax purposes
- the Blue Badge scheme.

You can find out more about the Tell Us Once service on GOV.UK. In Northern Ireland, contact the Bereavement Service (page 29).



### Good to know

If there's an inquest, contact the registrar once you've received an interim certificate (see page 7). The registrar can give you a reference number for the Tell Us Once service even though you haven't been able to register the death.

### Other organisations to contact

You should contact other people and organisations separately, such as:

- personal or occupational pension scheme providers
- insurance companies
- banks and building societies
- mortgage providers, private landlords, housing associations or council housing offices
- social services, if the person received community care
- utility companies
- employers or trade unions
- doctors, dentists, opticians and anyone else providing medical care.

You can register the name and address of the person who's died with the Bereavement Register (page 29). This removes their details from direct mailing lists and stops most advertising mail.

If you want to take over the tenancy of the person who's died, seek specialist housing advice. If you're a joint tenant, it should pass to you automatically. Typically, tenancies can only be passed on once.



### Good to know

The Death Notification Service (page 30) and Life Ledger (page 32) can be useful for notifying contacts like utilities companies and financial organisations of the death.

## Powers of attorney, deputies and appointees

If you have authority as a power of attorney, deputy or appointee, this ends when the person dies. However, you should let the relevant services know the following:

- **If you were acting for the person as an attorney** – either under a registered lasting power of attorney or enduring power of attorney – you should tell the Office of the Public Guardian (OPG) (page 33) and send them the original document and any certified copies. Generally, you don't need to send proof of the person's death to the OPG unless they ask for it – although if they died outside of the UK, you must send the OPG a copy of the death certificate.
- **If you were acting as the person's Court of Protection appointed deputy**, contact the OPG for advice about what to do.
- **If you were the person's appointee for benefits**, contact the DWP (page 30).



In Northern Ireland, contact the Office of Care and Protection (page 33).

**“I had power of attorney for my brother. It reassured him to know that I'd make the right decisions for him.”**

Alex, 72



# The funeral

The person who's died might have left funeral instructions in their will or in a letter of wishes. While not legally binding, it's a good way for someone to make their preferences known.

## Arranging the funeral

The person who's died might have taken out a pre-paid funeral plan. This usually means that all the arrangements for burial or cremation have already been decided and paid for. The funeral plan documents will tell you which funeral director to contact.

However, if there aren't any clear wishes, the executor of the will or nearest relative usually decides on funeral arrangements and whether the body is to be cremated or buried, for instance. If the person had religious or cultural beliefs, you can reflect these in the ceremony.

If you're using a funeral director, they'll make sure that you and any relevant professionals complete all the necessary forms.

## Paying for a funeral

If you arrange the funeral, you're responsible for paying the bill – so check first where the money will come from. The person who's died might have taken out a life insurance policy or pension scheme that provides a lump sum towards funeral costs, or a pre-paid funeral plan. It's a good idea to check this before making any arrangements.

Funeral director fees vary considerably, so it's a good idea to ask a few how much they'd charge for the funeral you want.

If the person who's died left money, property or other assets, these can be used to pay for the funeral, as funeral costs come before paying off most debt (apart from secured debts such as a mortgage). Most banks and building societies will release money from the person's account to pay funeral costs if they see a certified copy of the death certificate – but they don't have to do this until **probate** is granted (see page 22). If there's a delay, you might need to pay the funeral costs yourself in the meantime.



**Probate** is the legal process of administering the estate of the person who's died.

**“My wife’s life insurance policy helped cover some of the costs of her funeral.”**

Bill, 81



### Good to know

Quaker Social Action's Down to Earth programme (page 34) offers practical help to anyone struggling to pay for a funeral in the UK. They can offer one-to-one support if the funeral hasn't yet taken place.

### Using a funeral director

Funeral directors have to provide a standardised price list so you can compare costs. It must include the price of a simple funeral, the price of individual items, and the price of any optional items or services. They might ask for fees paid to third parties such as the crematorium and clergy – known as funeral disbursement costs – to be paid upfront.

Be sure to choose a funeral director who's a member of a professional association, such as the National Association of Funeral Directors (NAFD) (page 32) or the National Society of Allied and Independent Funeral Directors (SAIF) (page 33).

You could ask the funeral director about 'direct cremation'. This is where the body is collected from a mortuary and taken to the crematorium. It's less expensive as there's no hearse, no ceremony, and the cremation takes place at a time convenient to the crematorium. You can then hold a commemorative ceremony at another time and place.

You might want to ask about a 'direct burial' – this involves burying the person without a ceremony such as a funeral.

### Arranging a funeral without a funeral director

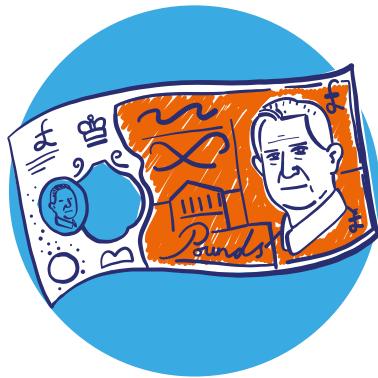
You can also arrange a 'do-it-yourself' funeral. These involve more organising, but they can be less expensive and more personal – in some cases, people plan them for themselves before they die.

If you want to arrange a funeral in your local cemetery or crematorium, contact your local council – or the owner, if it's privately owned.



### Next steps

See our factsheet **Planning for your funeral** for more information.



## Help with funeral costs

If you're responsible for arranging the funeral and you're on a low income, you might be eligible for a Funeral Expenses Payment from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to help cover costs.

Usually, if you receive money from the person's estate, you must repay the Funeral Expenses Payment from this. A house or personal items left to a surviving spouse or civil partner don't count as part of this.

There are rules about who can get help – and how much. Before you start making arrangements with a funeral director, call the DWP Bereavement Service (page 30) or check with your local Jobcentre Plus (page 32). In Northern Ireland, contact the Bereavement Service (page 29).

You must be a partner, close relative or close friend of the person who's died to claim. You or your partner must also receive certain means-tested benefits, such as Pension Credit, Housing Benefit or Universal Credit. The DWP can refuse an application from a relative or friend if they consider that someone else could arrange and pay for the funeral.

You must claim within 6 months of the funeral. The amount you receive may be reduced if the person who's died had a pre-paid funeral plan or life insurance policies.

The council (or some hospitals, if the person died there) can arrange a public health funeral if:

- there's no money for a funeral
- there's no one willing or able to pay for it
- the Funeral Expenses Payment doesn't cover the whole cost and paying the balance would leave you in debt.

It's possible the council or hospital will seek the costs back from the estate. Contact them for further information or, in Northern Ireland, contact your local Health and Social Care board.

### **What does a Funeral Expenses Payment cover?**

A Funeral Expenses Payment helps cover some of the costs of a funeral in the UK, including:

- buying a new burial plot
- burial fees or cremation costs
- reasonable costs for a return journey within the UK for the responsible person to arrange or attend the funeral
- money towards transport costs if the body has to be transported more than 50 miles within the UK
- up to £1,000 towards other things like the coffin, religious costs and flowers.

To claim a Funeral Expenses Payment, call the DWP Bereavement Service (page 30). They can make the claim on your behalf or send you form SF200. You can also download a copy of the form online at [www.gov.uk/funeral-payments](http://www.gov.uk/funeral-payments). In Northern Ireland, contact the Bereavement Service (page 29).

If you don't qualify for a Funeral Expenses Payment, or it doesn't cover the full funeral costs, you may be able to get a Budgeting Loan. These are interest-free loans of between £100 and £812 that you repay out of your benefit payments. Visit [www.gov.uk/budgeting-help-benefits](http://www.gov.uk/budgeting-help-benefits) and download form SF500 to make a claim. This form should also be available from your local Jobcentre Plus (page 32).

If you receive Universal Credit, you can't apply for a Budgeting Loan, but you can apply for a Budgeting Advance instead. Go online at [www.gov.uk/universal-credit/other-financial-support](http://www.gov.uk/universal-credit/other-financial-support) or contact the Universal Credit helpline on **0800 328 5644** for more information. You can also contact Turn2us (page 34) to see if they can help.



## Next steps



Visit [www.gov.uk/funeral-payments](http://www.gov.uk/funeral-payments) to find out more about Funeral Expenses Payments. In Northern Ireland, visit [www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/funeral-expenses-payments](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/funeral-expenses-payments). You can contact the DWP Bereavement Service (page 30) to find out if you're eligible – or the Bereavement Service (page 29) in Northern Ireland.

See our factsheet **Social Fund, Advances of Benefit and Local Welfare Provision** to find out more.

# Dealing with the estate

Probate is the legal process of administering the money, property and possessions – known as the estate – of the person who's died.

## Sorting out the will

The first thing to do is to find out whether the person made a valid will. A will gives instructions about what should happen to their estate. A bank, solicitor, a trusted friend or relative, or a will safe facility may have it.

You can check for a will using the National Will Register (page 33), which you have to pay for, or the Probate Registry (page 33).

If there's a will, the person who's died should have appointed executors, and these executors can apply for a grant of probate to deal with the estate. If there aren't any executors, or if the appointed executors don't want to carry out the role, it's a good idea to get legal advice.

If there isn't a valid will, the person is said to have died 'intestate' and there are different rules – known as the rules of intestacy. Close family members can apply to deal with the estate. In general, the surviving spouse or civil partner automatically inherits all personal possessions, the first £322,000 of the estate and half the remaining assets. Children and grandchildren may also receive half of the balance. But the rules of intestacy are complex – you should seek legal advice if you're dealing with the estate.

If you're named as an executor in the will, or if the person died intestate and you think you're entitled to deal with the estate, you usually need a 'grant of representation'. You can apply for this by post, online or through a probate professional such as a solicitor or accountant.

Go to [www.gov.uk/government/collections/probate-forms](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/probate-forms) to download the relevant forms or call the HMRC helpline for probate and Inheritance Tax enquiries (page 31) to request paper copies. Visit [www.apply-for-probate.service.gov.uk/start-eligibility](http://www.apply-for-probate.service.gov.uk/start-eligibility) if you'd prefer to apply online.

The Courts and Tribunals Service Centre (page 31) can help you through the process of applying for probate. If you need help with the online application, contact the Digital Support helpline.

Sometimes, you can access assets of the person who's died without a grant of representation. It's up to the person or organisation who holds the assets, such as the bank, whether they ask for one. You'll need to provide evidence of the death, your identity, and the role in which you're contacting them before they release any information about the account.

The HMRC helpline for Probate and Inheritance Tax enquiries (page 31) gives general information and advice on matters relating to probate. You can also speak to a solicitor – they'll charge for any advice given or work done, but some offer a free initial half hour.

## Next steps



See our guide **How to be an executor** and our factsheet **Dealing with an estate** for more information – especially if you're thinking about carrying out probate yourself. For legal advice, find a solicitor through the Law Society (page 32).

The National Bereavement Service (page 32) can help you understand whether you need probate and help you find a solicitor if necessary.

## Inheritance Tax

**Inheritance Tax (IHT) may need to be paid on the estate if it's worth more than the £325,000 tax-free allowance. After that, tax is usually payable at 40% – but if at least 10% of the estate is left to charity, the tax payable is reduced to 36%.**

There's an additional allowance known as the 'residence nil-rate band' which applies in circumstances when the home is left to children or grandchildren. Where this allowance applies, the tax-free allowance increases up to £500,000 per person.

There's usually no IHT to pay on estates left to a spouse, civil partner or charity. If a partner dies and hasn't used their tax-free allowance, this can be passed on to the surviving partner, giving them a threshold of up to £1 million before IHT applies.

Some gifts made when a person was alive may be subject to IHT. Whether the gifts are liable for IHT depends on their value, purpose and when they were given. This is a very complex area, so you should seek specialist advice.

Usually, if IHT is to be paid, it must be settled before probate is granted and you must pay it by the end of the sixth month following the person's death. On some assets, such as a house that you decide to keep, you may be able to pay IHT in instalments over 10 years – but interest is charged on the amount due. It's best to ask a probate professional for help.



### Next steps

For more information about IHT, see our factsheet **Dealing with an estate**. For further advice, contact the HMRC helpline for probate and Inheritance Tax enquiries (page 31).

## Tax changes

You might find that your tax allowances change after your spouse or civil partner dies, or that you need to pay a different amount of income tax.

- If you were getting Married Couple's Allowance, you'll receive it for the rest of the tax year (up to 5 April) but not the year after.
- If your spouse or civil partner was receiving Blind Person's Allowance, you can ask HMRC to transfer what's left to you for that tax year.
- If you get extra income after your spouse or civil partner dies, such as bereavement benefits or a pension or annuity, your tax situation might change. It's important to make sure that HMRC are aware of any changes so that you pay the right amount of tax.

If you're over 60 and on a low income, you can get free independent help and advice from Tax Help for Older People (page 34).





# Financial help

If your spouse or civil partner has died, you might be entitled to certain benefits to help make things a bit easier.

The next few pages cover the different types of financial support that might be available depending on your circumstances.

## Bereavement Support Payment

You might be entitled to a lump sum bereavement payment of up to £3,500 and 18 monthly payments of up to £350.

You could be eligible if the following apply:

- Your spouse or civil partner (or partner if you're unmarried but have dependent children) paid enough National Insurance (NI) contributions.
- You were under State Pension age when they died.
- You were living in the UK, or a country that pays bereavement benefits, when they died.

## Benevolent funds and charities

Help is sometimes available from benevolent funds linked to a spouse or civil partner's past employment – or your own. A local advice agency or Turn2us (page 34) could also help.

## War pensions

If your late spouse or civil partner served in the Armed Forces, you might be entitled to help. Contact Veterans UK (page 34) for more information.

## State Pension

The rules around inheriting a State Pension are complex – they depend on when your partner was born and when you reached State Pension age. In general, the following rules apply:

- If you're a widow, widower or surviving civil partner and you reached State Pension age before 6 April 2016, you may be able to increase your own State Pension based on your deceased partner's NI contributions. You may also be entitled to some of their additional State Pension and Graduated Retirement Benefit.
- If you're a widow, widower or surviving civil partner and you reached State Pension age after 6 April 2016, you may be able to inherit part of your partner's additional State Pension.

These rules don't apply if you remarry or form a new civil partnership before you reach State Pension age.



## Next steps

Call Age UK Advice or see our factsheet **State Pension** for more information. Contact the DWP Bereavement Service (page 30) for more information and a review of your State Pension entitlement. In Wales, contact Age Cymru Advice. In Northern Ireland, contact Age NI.

### Means-tested benefits

Check whether you're entitled to any of the benefits listed below.

- **Pension Credit** – there are 2 parts to Pension Credit: Guarantee Credit and Savings Credit. Guarantee Credit tops up a low income to a guaranteed minimum level. Savings Credit is extra money if your income is higher than the basic State Pension.
- **Housing Benefit** – helps you to cover your rent if you're over State Pension age.
- **Council Tax Reduction** – gives you money off Council Tax. This is sometimes called Council Tax Support. In Northern Ireland, you may be eligible for Rate Relief.
- **Attendance Allowance or Personal Independence Payment** – if you need support due to a long-term health condition or disability.
- **NHS Low Income Scheme** – helps you with health costs.
- **Universal Credit** – a means-tested benefit for people under State Pension age, which includes help with rent.
- **Social Fund grants or loans** in England and Wales (or the Discretionary Support Service in Northern Ireland).
- **Help from local welfare schemes** via local councils in England or the Discretionary Assistance Fund in Wales.

See our guide **More money in your pocket** for more information about these benefits. In Wales, see Age Cymru's version of this guide and in Northern Ireland, see Age NI's version. Go online at [www.ageuk.org.uk/benefits-check](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/benefits-check) to use our benefits calculator or contact your local Age UK for a benefits check. In Wales, contact Age Cymru Advice.

# Useful organisations

## Age UK

We provide information and advice for people in later life through our Age UK Advice Line, publications and website.

**Age UK Advice: 0800 169 65 65**

Lines are open 7 days a week from 8am to 7pm.

[www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk)

In Wales, contact Age Cymru Advice: **0300 303 44 98**

[www.agecymru.wales](http://www.agecymru.wales)

In Northern Ireland, contact Age NI: **0808 808 7575**

[www.ageni.org](http://www.ageni.org)

In Scotland, contact Age Scotland: **0800 124 4222**

[www.agescotland.org.uk](http://www.agescotland.org.uk)

## AtaLoss

Directory of bereavement support organisations.

[www.ataloss.org](http://www.ataloss.org)

## Bereavement Register

Register the name and address of someone who's died to help stop unsolicited mail.

**Tel: 020 7089 6403**

[www.thebereavementregister.org.uk](http://www.thebereavementregister.org.uk)

## Bereavement Service

Offers a single point of contact for reporting a death to the Department of Communities in Northern Ireland, and handles claims for

Bereavement Support Payments and Funeral Expenses Payments.

**Tel: 0800 085 2463**

### **The Compassionate Friends (TCF)**

Provides peer support to bereaved parents, adult siblings and grandparents who have experienced the death of a child of any age.

Tel: **0345 123 2304**

[www.tcf.org.uk](http://www.tcf.org.uk)

### **Cruse Bereavement Care**

Provides information, support and counselling for bereaved people.

Tel: **0808 808 1677**

[www.cruse.org.uk](http://www.cruse.org.uk)

### **Death Notification Service**

Notify multiple financial organisations of someone's death.

[www.deathnotificationservice.co.uk](http://www.deathnotificationservice.co.uk)

### **DWP Bereavement Service**

Carries out benefit eligibility checks on relatives, and takes claims for Bereavement Support Payments and Funeral Expenses Payments.

Tel: **0800 151 2012**

### **Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA)**

Contact them to return a driving licence.

Tel: **0300 790 6801**

[www.gov.uk/government/organisations/driver-and-vehicle-licensing-agency](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/driver-and-vehicle-licensing-agency)

### **Financial Conduct Authority**

Regulates pre-paid funeral plans and has a list of regulated providers.

Tel: **0800 111 6768**

[www.fca.org.uk](http://www.fca.org.uk)

### **Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO)**

Contact them to register a death abroad or to find a certified translator for a death certificate.

Tel: **020 7008 5000**

[www.gov.uk/government/organisations/foreign-commonwealth-development-office](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/foreign-commonwealth-development-office)

### General Register Office (GRO)

Registers births, marriages and deaths in England and Wales.

Tel: **0300 123 1837**

[www.gro.gov.uk/gro](http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro)

In Northern Ireland: **General Register Office for Northern Ireland**

Tel: **0300 200 7890**

### GOV.UK

Government website offering information about bereavement benefits and the Tell Us Once service.

[www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)

[www.gov.uk/tell-us-once](http://www.gov.uk/tell-us-once)

In Northern Ireland: **NI Direct**

[www.nidirect.gov.uk](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk)

### HM Courts and Tribunals Service (HMCTS)

For online forms and information on probate.

HMCTS helpline: **0300 303 0648**

Digital Support helpline: **03300 160 051**

[www.gov.uk/government/organisations/hm-courts-and-tribunals-service](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/hm-courts-and-tribunals-service)

[www.gov.uk/government/collections/probate-forms](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/probate-forms)

### HM Passport Office

Contact them to return a passport.

Tel: **0300 222 0000**

[www.gov.uk/government/organisations/hm-passport-office](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/hm-passport-office)

### HMRC helpline for probate and Inheritance Tax enquiries

For information about taxes, including probate, Inheritance Tax and trusts and deceased estates.

Tel: **0300 123 1072**

In Northern Ireland: **NI Courts and Tribunals Service**

Tel: **0300 200 7812**

### **Human Tissue Authority**

Provides information about body donation for medical research, as well as details of medical schools.

Tel: **020 7269 1900**

[www.hfa.gov.uk](http://www.hfa.gov.uk)

### **Jobcentre Plus**

Provides information on benefits, loans, grants and funeral payments.

Tel: **0800 169 0190**

[www.gov.uk/contact-jobcentre-plus](http://www.gov.uk/contact-jobcentre-plus)

### **Law Society of England and Wales**

Helps people find a solicitor and produces guides on legal issues.

[www.lawsociety.org.uk/public/for-public-visitors](http://www.lawsociety.org.uk/public/for-public-visitors)

In Northern Ireland: **Law Society of Northern Ireland**

[www.lawsoc-ni.org](http://www.lawsoc-ni.org)

### **Life Ledger**

Free online service that lets you notify multiple businesses of someone's death at the same time, from banks to utilities companies.

[www.lifeledger.com](http://www.lifeledger.com)

### **National Association of Funeral Directors (NAFD)**

Independent trade association within the funeral profession.

Tel: **0121 711 1343**

[www.nafd.org.uk](http://www.nafd.org.uk)

### **National Bereavement Service**

Provides information on all aspects of bereavement.

Tel: **0800 0246 121**

[www.thenbs.org](http://www.thenbs.org)

### **National Insurance Contributions Office**

For information about National Insurance contributions.

Tel: **0300 200 3500**

[www.gov.uk/government/organisations/hm-revenue-customs](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/hm-revenue-customs)

## **National Society of Allied and Independent Funeral Directors (SAIF)**

Trade association of independent funeral directors.

Tel: 0345 230 6777 or 01279 726 777

[www.saif.org.uk](http://www.saif.org.uk)

## **National Will Register**

You can pay for this service to check if a will has been made or to confirm you have the most up-to-date version.

Tel: 0330 100 3660

[www.nationalwillregister.co.uk/search-for-a-will](http://www.nationalwillregister.co.uk/search-for-a-will)

## **NHS Organ Donor Register**

Service where you can register an organ donation decision.

Tel: 0300 123 23 23

[www.organdonation.nhs.uk](http://www.organdonation.nhs.uk)

## **Office of Care and Protection**

Registers enduring powers of attorney in Northern Ireland.

Tel: 0300 200 7812

[www.justice-ni.gov.uk/topics/courts-and-tribunals/office-care-and-protection-patients-section](http://www.justice-ni.gov.uk/topics/courts-and-tribunals/office-care-and-protection-patients-section)

## **Office of the Public Guardian**

Registers powers of attorney and helps attorneys carry out their duties.

Tel: 0300 456 0300

[www.gov.uk/government/organisations/office-of-the-public-guardian](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/office-of-the-public-guardian)

## **Probate Registry**

Online directory you can search to find will and probate records for someone who died after 1857.

[www.gov.uk/search-will-probate](http://www.gov.uk/search-will-probate)

### Quaker Social Action

Offers practical help and support to anyone struggling to pay for a funeral through its Down to Earth programme.

Tel: **020 8983 5055**

[www.quakersocialaction.org.uk](http://www.quakersocialaction.org.uk)

### Samaritans

Free 24/7 helpline for people in distress.

Tel: **116 123**

[www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)

### Tax Help for Older People

Offers free tax advice to older people on low incomes.

Tel: **01308 488066**

[www.taxvol.org.uk](http://www.taxvol.org.uk)

### Turn2us

Helps people access benefits, grants and other financial help.

[www.turn2us.org.uk](http://www.turn2us.org.uk)

### Veterans UK

Administers pension and welfare schemes and provides support services for members of the Armed Forces and veterans.

Tel: **0808 1914 2 18**

[www.gov.uk/government/organisations/veterans-uk](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/veterans-uk)

### War Widows' Association of Great Britain

Offers help and support to all war widows and their dependants.

Tel: **0845 2412 189**

[www.warwidows.org.uk](http://www.warwidows.org.uk)

### Winston's Wish

Offers support, information and guidance to people caring for a bereaved child or young person.

Tel: **08088 020 021**

[www.winstonswish.org](http://www.winstonswish.org)

# Help us be there for someone else

We hope you found this guide useful. When times are tough, it's so important to get some support. You can help us reach everyone who needs us:

1

**Tell us your story.** If Age UK's information and advice has helped you, we'd love to hear about it. Email [stories@ageuk.org.uk](mailto:stories@ageuk.org.uk).

2

**Donate to us.** We rely on donations to support older people when they need us most. To make a donation, call us on **0800 169 8787** or go online at [www.ageuk.org.uk/donate](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/donate).

3

**Volunteer with us.** Our volunteers make an incredible difference to people's lives. Find out more at [www.ageuk.org.uk/volunteer](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/volunteer) or contact your local Age UK.

4

**Campaign with us.** We campaign to make life better for older people, and rely on the help of our strong network of campaigners. Add your voice at [www.ageuk.org.uk/campaigns](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/campaigns).

5

**Remember us in your will.** A gift to Age UK in your will is a very special way of helping older people get expert support in the years to come. Find out more by calling **020 3033 1421** or visit [www.ageuk.org.uk/legacy](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/legacy).

# What should I do now?

You might want to read some of our relevant information guides and factsheets, such as:

- **Bereavement**
- **How to be an executor**
- **Your mind matters**

You can find all of our guides and factsheets on our website, along with lots more useful information. Visit [www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk) to get started.

You can order free printed copies of any guide or factsheet by emailing [orders@ageuk.org.uk](mailto:orders@ageuk.org.uk) or calling our Advice Line on **0800 169 65 65**. Our friendly advisers can also help with any questions.

All of our publications are available on request in large print and audio formats.

If contact details for your local Age UK are not in the below box, call Age UK Advice free on **0800 169 65 65**.



**0800 169 65 65**  
[www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk)



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