

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

# What to do When Someone Dies

**Tel:** 0800 024 6121



National  
Bereavement  
Service

Bereavement is usually an emotionally difficult time. When someone dies there are many practical matters to attend to, including arranging the funeral and dealing with the legalities of what they owned. You may be unfamiliar with these practicalities, making this more challenging and stressful. To help and support you, we have produced this leaflet to summarise the tasks into four simple steps; notification, funeral, wills, and probate. This is not a comprehensive guide so please call us if you are unsure whether all of these steps apply to your circumstances.

**Our service provides a free helpline to answer any questions you have, or you can visit our website at [www.theNBS.org](http://www.theNBS.org).**



### Step One: Notification

To notify any organisation officially about the death, you will need to obtain a Certified Copy of Death Certificate from the Registrar of Deaths or an Interim Certificate of the fact of death from the coroner if they have an ongoing investigation into the death. The patient's GP or the hospital doctor submits their proposed cause of death to the Medical Examiner who will confirm their agreement and then the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death will be forwarded electronically to the Registrar. Or if the death was unexpected, unnatural or the cause unknown, the death is referred to the coroner by a doctor or the police. You will be informed when you may make an appointment with the Registrar of Births and Deaths local to where the person died. The GP/hospital or Coroner may give you the details for this.

If the death and/or the funeral is overseas, or you are unsure of where to register the death please contact us for help.

Tell Us Once (TUO) is a free service that allows you to report a death to central and local government departments. When registering the death, you will be given a unique code to use

the Tell Us Once Service. TUO is not available in Northern Ireland and is not normally available for deaths overseas.

There are many organisations who need to be told about the death in addition to family and friends. This can be daunting and time-consuming. We have a checklist leaflet to help you know who to inform and record when you have done this. You can find it on our website under the Quick Guides tab.

### Step Two: Funeral

You will need to contact the Funeral Director to discuss the arrangements you need to make for the funeral. The Funeral Director can arrange for a Minister/ Celebrant to conduct the ceremony if you have not already done so.

Please get in touch if you would like us to find the nearest Funeral Director to you. We only signpost to Funeral Directors who are members of professional associations with high standards. Check if there is a funeral plan, or the Will may have specific requests for the funeral arrangements. You should not confirm funeral arrangements until you know how the funeral will be paid for. If you are unsure, please call us.

### Step Three: Wills

You need to discover whether the deceased person made a Will and obtain it. Original Wills may be located at the deceased person's home. However, if a Solicitor/ Will writer wrote the Will it may be stored at their offices with a copy being provided at the time it was written. If you know there is a Will and it cannot be found, please call us. The Will normally names an Executor(s) who should gather all documents relating to property ownership/rental and financial affairs associated with the estate. If there is no Will, the deceased person died "Intestate" and there is a process to establish who may be appointed as Administrator to deal with the estate.

### Step Four: Probate Managing the Estate

Probate is not required after every death, as it depends on the money, property and other

belongings they have left behind and who will inherit them. If it is needed, the legal process is very similar whether or not there is a Will. There are some differences in the forms and if there is no Will, the Rules of Intestacy dictate who will inherit. Note that the rules in Scotland are very different to the rest of the United Kingdom.

It will depend on both the complexity of the estate and your confidence with paperwork administration whether you can carry out probate yourself or choose to use a legal professional. It is important to ensure it is done correctly and any tax owed is paid on time, or the person carrying out probate becomes liable to rectify any mistakes.

We recommend you call us and have a conversation to explore your choices. We can introduce you to expert ethical solicitors if that turns out to be the right choice for you.

We are here to help you with the practical side of bereavement. From registering a death to arranging a funeral and more, we can help you comply with all the essential legal requirements.

**Tel: 0800 024 6121 Or visit: [www.theNBS.org](http://www.theNBS.org)**

## People and organisations who need to be informed

- Family members and friends
- Use Tell Us Once to inform central & local government agencies such as HMRC/DWP/DVLA/Blue Badge/TV licence
- Educational establishments or employers
- Union/professional associations
- Inform health professionals - cancel any outstanding hospital or health related appointments
- Any agencies, i.e., home carers/day centres, social services
- Pre-paid funeral plan provider
- Banks/building/friendly societies credit & charge card companies
- National Savings and Investments, bonds
- Private pensions
- Mortgage provider or equity release company
- Landlord/Housing Association
- Use a direct mail suppression service
- Store loyalty cards and catalogue companies
- Insurances e.g. buildings/home contents/vehicles/pets/other
- Utility providers e.g. gas/electricity/oil/water/drainage
- Telecommunications and internet related e.g. phone providers - landline & mobile/broadband/cable or satellite TV provider/digital media
- Clubs/societies
- Places of worship

### You Are Not Alone.

We are here to support you with any and every question or concern you may have.

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**Tel:** 0800 024 6144

**NBS Chat:** [www.theNBS.org](http://www.theNBS.org)

**Email:** [info@theNBS.org](mailto:info@theNBS.org)

**Monday – Friday** 9.00am – 6.00pm

**Saturday** 10.00am – 2.00pm