



# B e r e a v e m e n t   G u i d e

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REGISTERING A DEATH - YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED



*“May the beautiful  
memories of your loved  
one become keepsakes of  
the heart”*



# H O W C A N W E H E L P ?

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We hope that this guide will be of some help to you at this difficult time. If you are in doubt about anything, please do not worry, our staff will guide you through the procedure for the registration of a death.



# C O N T E N T S

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# REGISTERING A DEATH

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The death should be registered in the district where it took place. If this is inconvenient, the death can be registered by declaration in a different district. This means giving the information about the death to the Registration Service in your local area. It will then be sent to the Register Office in the area where the death took place to be recorded in that district. This may involve a delay in the receipt of documents that you may need to organise the funeral.

If you are not sure in which district the death occurred, please call for advice. You should make an appointment to register the death within five days, unless there are special circumstances. Please call us to make an appointment as soon as you have the 'medical certificate of cause of death' from the relevant doctor. You must bring this certificate with you when you come to the Register Office.

There is no charge for registration. You may need to buy some death certificates, please see page seven.



# WHO MAY REGISTER A DEATH?

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The following people are able to register a death in the order as shown:

- A relative present at the death.
- A relative present during the last illness.
- A relative living in the registration district.
- A person present at the death.
- The occupier of premises where a death occurred.
- The person arranging the funeral (but not the undertaker).



The Register Office will need the following information

- The date and place of death.
- The date and place of birth.
- The full names, and any other names used, of the person who has died (and maiden surname if this applies).
- The former deceased's occupation.
- The full names of her/his husband/ wife/ civil partner (if she/he was a married woman/man, widow/widower or civil partner) and that person's occupation.
- The address of the person who has died.
- Whether the deceased received a private pension from public funds.
- If the deceased was married, the date of birth of his/her husband or wife.
- If the deceased was in a civil partnership, the date of birth of his/her civil partner.
- You should provide the National Health Service number of the person who has died, if known. The medical registration card itself, if available, should be given to the registrar. (Please do not delay registering the death if you do not have the medical registration card).

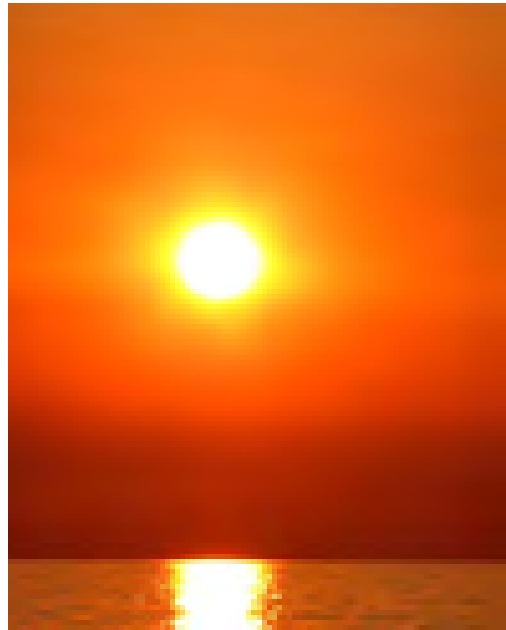


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### **What does it mean if the death has been referred to the coroner?**

It is sometimes necessary for a doctor to refer a death to the coroner.

This is usually when the death is unexpected, unexplained or is following surgery. If there is a link to an industrial disease this may also be reported to the coroner. In such circumstances there will be additional paperwork the Register Office will need to receive from the coroner before the death can be registered.



In certain circumstances, when you attended an appointment to register a death the registrar may refer the death to the coroner. The coroner will then respond in one of three ways;

- after speaking with the doctor he may instruct the registrar to proceed with the registration,
- he may decide a post mortem needs to be carried out and
- in exceptional circumstances he may decide he needs to hold an inquest.

This may delay the registration process.



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**What will I obtain from the Registrar?**

You will receive a form to take to the undertaker (if the coroner is involved other arrangements will be made). You will also receive a form for the Department for Work and Pensions to notify them of the death. Both of these are free.

Further information on registering a death in England and Wales, removing a body from England or Wales and what to do if the death occurred abroad can be found by contacting the General Register Office for England and Wales which is the advisory organisation for the Registration Service. You can find information on their website [www.gro.gov.uk](http://www.gro.gov.uk).



# STANDARD DEATH CERTIFICATES

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You may also need to buy some death certificates. A death certificate is a certified copy of the entry in the register and has to be paid for. You may need copy certificates for banks, building societies, solicitors, or for pension or insurance claims. You may want to ask for extra death certificates at the time of registration as after the registration of the death a higher fee is charged for a copy certificate.



# CEMETORIES AND CREMATORIA

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## **Cemeteries and Crematoria**

You may have already contacted a funeral director with regard to the next stage following death registration. If you have decided on burial or cremation within the Gateshead Borough, your funeral director will contact us to arrange the time, day, date and location of the funeral service.

Gateshead Council manages two crematoria and ten cemeteries within the Borough. Our primary function is to ensure that the proper procedure for burial and cremation is followed and all necessary paperwork is correct before a burial or cremation can take place.

## **Memorials - Crematoria**

We offer a Book of Remembrance at both Saltwell and Birtley Crematoria; this provides a lasting memory to loved ones and can be viewed on the first anniversary and each year thereafter. We also have screens at both locations, available all year round to allow the public access to entries within the pages of the original remembrance books.

We offer a memorial wall plaque and memorial kerbside plaque scheme at both crematoria. Your funeral director will ask you at the time of arranging the funeral if you would be interested in receiving information about memorial plaques. If you are, they will pass your request on to us. You can also contact us for more information.

## **Memorials - Cemeteries**

When considering a memorial within any of the Council's ten cemeteries, various permits and or permissions must be sought. Only qualified masons are allowed to carry out any memorial work within our cemeteries. A memorial needs to be approved by us before being fixed or placed onto any grave.



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## **Contacts**

### **Gateshead Registration Service**

Gateshead Register Office is located in Gateshead Civic Centre, Regent Street Gateshead, NE8 1HH. There is an appointment system in place at the Register Office, please call for an appointment on telephone number 0191 433 3000. If the appointment is urgent please contact us by telephone.

### **Cemetries and Crematoria**

The Gateshead cemetries and crematoria service is located in the Civic Centre. Telephone: 0191 433 3811/3815/3816

### **Coroner's Office**

In certain circumstances you may need to contact the Coroner's Office. There is a joint Coroner's Service for Gateshead and South Tyneside. Telephone 0191 221 9054



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