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## What Happens First?

You need to obtain the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death. If a death occurs in the community the GP surgery will issue this. If the death occurs in Hospital the certificate is provided by the Doctor who has been treating the deceased. Should the Coroner be involved, his officers will advise the family.

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## Notify the Funeral Director of your choice

When you contact the Funeral director, you will need the name and address of the deceased and the person to contact for arrangements (name and telephone number). Whether the funeral is to be a burial or a cremation is not essential but is helpful if known.

Funeral directors usually operate a twenty four hour telephone service and will arrange to collect the deceased.

Should you wish for special arrangements for the funeral i.e. for religious reasons, the authorities will help. Notify the funeral director at the time and they will advise.

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## What happens if the Coroner is involved?

In the case of an unexpected death it may be necessary for a Coroner's inquest in which case **there may be a delay in arranging the funeral.**

This happens when:

- no doctor has treated the deceased during the last illness
- when the doctor attending the patient did not see him, or her, within 14 days prior to death
- Death was sudden, unexplained or attended by suspicious circumstances

- Death occurred during an operation or before the recovery from the effect of an anaesthetic
- Where they may have been an occupational cause for death or the deceased was in receipt of certain occupational disability pensions

In this situation the Coroner will be contacted and his officers will then liaise with the family and advise them accordingly.

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## You will need to Register a death with the District Registrar.

You are required by law to register a death with the Registrar of Births Marriages and Deaths, within 5 days of a death. A list of persons qualified to register a death are listed in order of preference on the back of the Death Certificate.

To make an appointment to register a death please telephone: **03000 41 51 51.**

Appointments will be held by the Kent Library Service at either:

**Canterbury:**

The Beaney Institute, 18 High Street, Canterbury, Kent, CT1 2RY

**Herne Bay:**

124 High Street, CT6 5JY

**Whitstable:**

31-33 Oxford Street, CT5 1DB

**Please note it is necessary to telephone for an appointment prior to attending.**

It is necessary to have the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death, which can be collected from the deceased's GP surgery (or will be supplied by the Coroner) and it is wise to obtain this prior to making an appointment with the Registrar.

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## What to take with you

When registering a death, the procedure is very straightforward. The following questions will be asked:

- Date and place of birth and death
- Full name of deceased
- Marriage status of Deceased
- Home address of the deceased

If the deceased is:

- Male (even if retired) his last occupation
- Female (either married or a widow), her maiden name and her husband's full name and occupation.
- Female, her occupation if any.
- If married the date of death, the date of birth of the surviving partner.

Take with you any documents relating to the deceased, such as: Birth Certificate, Marriage Certificate, NHS card, Pension book. Do not worry if you cannot find the necessary documents, however, it is helpful.

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## The Registrar will issue you with the following Certificates:

- **A Green Certificate** which is required by the Funeral Director for either Cremation or Burial.
- A copy of the certified entry of Death (otherwise known as the **Death Certificate**). It is sensible to have additional copies of this (although not essential) and they may be obtained from the Registrar upon payment of the appropriate fee as original copies of this certificate are required when notifying banks, building societies, insurance companies, solicitors etc. Remember to take money/cheque book with you.
- **A White Certificate** which is required should you wish to claim any NI benefits.

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## Is there a Will?

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If it is known that a will was made it is important that the contents should be ascertained as soon as possible after death, as it may contain directions as to the funeral arrangements etc. This may be among personal papers at home, or with a bank or solicitor for safe custody.

## What shall I do?

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Perhaps the simplest procedure is to instruct a solicitor or bank to act for you. This will not necessarily involve you in heavy expense and will almost certainly relieve you of many worries. (It is advisable to enquire regarding their current charges).

If you decide to use a Solicitor or Bank Manager, he will need to see a copy of the death certificate.

He will also require such items as

- Share Certificates
- Deeds
- National Savings Bank Books
- Savings Certificates
- Premium Bonds
- Pension Books
- Insurance Policies – in the name of the deceased.

He will also need to have particulars of any debts that may be owing. You need not worry about paying these immediately. They can be dealt with in due time. Should you find yourself in temporary difficulty with regard to finance, a Solicitor or your Bank can usually make arrangements for you to draw sufficient money to meet your immediate need.

## You need to talk to someone about your loss.

Your GP will always help, but there are other organisations that can also assist you:

**CRUSE** is a counselling service dealing specifically with bereavement. The telephone number for the Canterbury and Thanet area is: 0845 6030024. If no-one can come immediately to the telephone, an ansaphone will ask your name and telephone number. Someone will return your call very quickly.

**THE SAMARITANS** operate a 24 hour service and their telephone number is: 0845 7909090.

For online support and advice visit: -

- [www.bereavement.org.uk](http://www.bereavement.org.uk)
- [www.healthandage.com](http://www.healthandage.com)

## Bereavement Payment

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If your spouse has died you may be able to obtain a Bereavement Payment, a one-off, lump-sum payment of £2,000 which is tax-free.

You may be able to claim Bereavement Payment if your husband, wife or civil partner had paid their National Insurance contributions (NICs) or their death was caused by their job and either:

- You were under State Pension age when they died
- Your husband, wife or civil partner was not entitled to Category A state Retirement Benefit when they died

To fill out a claim form, download a Bereavement Benefits Pack (BB1) from the Department of Work and Pensions website.

Further detailed information can be obtained from the following websites:

- [www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk](http://www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk)
- [www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk)
- <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/international/benefits/bereavement-benefits-and-widows/>



# BEREAVEMENT

We would like you to know that we sympathise with you in your bereavement and hope that this leaflet will be of help with some of the practicalities at this difficult time.

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