

# Bereavement advice



## We're sorry for your loss

When someone dies, there are many decisions and arrangements to be made. Unfortunately these decisions and arrangements are required at a time of great personal distress and sadness.

Coping with bereavement is something that we will all experience at some point in our lives. Different people react in very different ways and it is common to feel a whole variety of emotions, which can be unnerving and at times overwhelming.

## What next?

During the current Coronavirus pandemic, there is unprecedented demand on the health system and in turn, the process of registering and administering of deaths.

We understand that you may want time to consider how best to celebrate the life of your loved one or may have specific requirements. In order to help reduce the pressure on the NHS and other healthcare workers we need to ask that at this difficult time you help us in this endeavour and act as quickly as possible.

As we deal with higher volumes of deaths, we must ensure that decisions are made as quickly as possible, while remaining mindful of the individual circumstances and wishes of each deceased person and their family.

## What support is available?

We're working with local funeral directors, faith groups and supporting charities and they will be able to support you through the process in the coming days.

It's more important than ever that you take the time to look after your own needs too. When faced with bereavement we look to our friends and family for support. Unfortunately due to the ongoing situation this may not be as easy as it normally would. We've joined up with our local communities to try to do our best to support you through this difficult time.

## Who can I call?

If you need help or support with things such as picking up shopping, collecting prescriptions the Surrey County Council Community helpline may be able to help.

You can find more information at: [www.surreycc.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/coronavirus)

Call **0300 200 1008** (Monday to Friday: 8am to 6pm, Saturday and Sunday: 10am to 2pm)

# Processes and paperwork

Unless the death has been referred to the coroner, it is a **legal requirement** to register the death within five days, but the sooner you can begin this process the better.

You can register a death over the phone typically the day after the death but you will still need to book a registration appointment on the Surrey County Council website.

Please book an appointment online at [www.surreycc.gov.uk/registration](http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/registration)

If you are unable to book online, you can call **0300 200 1002**

The medical certificate of cause of death must have been issued and sent to the Register Office in order to book an appointment to register the death.

You will also need additional information including:

- the date and place of death;
- the deceased's full name and surname. This should be the name they were known by at the time of their death. You should also establish if they are known by any other name currently, or previously, including a maiden name.
- the deceased's sex
- the deceased's date and place of birth (town and county if born in the UK, and country if born abroad);
- the deceased's occupation and the name and occupation of their spouse or civil partner;
- the deceased's last (usual) address;
- if the deceased was married or a civil partner, the date of birth of the surviving widow, widower or civil partner.

The Registration Service will:

- Issue the Certificate for Burial or Cremation (known as the Green Form) and email it directly to the Funeral Director, unless the coroner has issued an Order for Burial or a Certificate for Cremation already.
- Register you for the Tell Us Once service and give you a reference number, enabling you to inform multiple local and central government departments of the death in one contact.

If the death has been **referred to the coroner**, they will inform you when you are able to make an appointment to register the death.

## Organising a funeral

During the current Coronavirus pandemic, there is unprecedented demand on the health system and in turn, the process of registering and administering of deaths.

We understand that you may want time to consider how best to celebrate the life of your loved one or may have specific requirements. In order to help reduce the pressure on the NHS and other healthcare workers we need to ask that at this difficult time you help us in this endeavour and act as quickly as possible.

Organising a funeral can be a complicated process but a Funeral Director may be able to help you through the process.

Friends, family, clergy or your doctor may be able to suggest local funeral directors with a good reputation for you to use. You may be able to find a local funeral directors through one of the two trade associations, but as funeral directors do not have to be in a trade association to provide a service your local telephone directory or newspaper may help provide contact details.

National Association of Funeral Directors  
**0121 711 1343**  
**[www.nafd.org.uk](http://www.nafd.org.uk)**

National Society of Allied & Independent  
Funeral Directors  
**0345 230 6777**  
**[www.saif.org.uk](http://www.saif.org.uk)**

During this time when is an unprecedented demand on all services you may wish to consider a direct cremation with a celebration of life service at a later date. This is something that your funeral director will be able to discuss with your further.

Due to the current Coronavirus pandemic the Government have restricted the number of mourners attending a funeral service.

Some locations for burials and cremations may also be putting in additional restrictions, your funeral director will be able to assist you in incorporating this into your plans.

## Financial Support for Funerals

Funerals can be expensive and if you are experiencing difficulties paying for a funeral additional support may be available from Government:

**0800 731 0469**

**[www.gov.uk/funeral-payments](http://www.gov.uk/funeral-payments)**

## Where does the deceased's body go?

The NHS, local authority, funeral directors and faith leaders have been working closely to ensure that the deceased are treated with utmost respect and religious requirements have been considered. This includes during the transportation and storage until such time as a funeral, burial or cremation can be organised.

## Help and support

Dealing with a death is an incredibly difficult time for everyone, and it may be even harder during the Coronavirus pandemic. When faced with bereavement we would look to our friends and family for support but due to the ongoing situation this may not be as easy as it normally would. We've joined up with our local communities to try and do our best to support you through this difficult time.

If you need help or support with things such as picking up shopping, prescription collections the Surrey County Council Community helpline maybe able to help.

You can find more information at:  
[www.surreycc.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/coronavirus)

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### Coping with bereavement

The death of someone close can be shattering. Everyone experiences grief differently; there is no 'normal' or 'right' way to grieve.

How we react will be influenced by many different things, including our age and personality, our cultural background and religious beliefs, our previous experiences of bereavement, our circumstances and how we cope with loss.

### Religious groups

Some people may find a local religious or faith group supportive during this difficult time.

If you're struggling to access support from your faith or religious leaders the Community Helpline can ask a local faith group to contact you directly.

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

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## Cruse Bereavement Care

Cruse is a national charity that provides advice, information and support to anyone who has been bereaved (children, young people and adults), whenever or however the death occurred.

The service is provided by trained experienced volunteers and is confidential and free.

Cruse website: [www.cruse.org.uk](http://www.cruse.org.uk)  
National Helpline: **0844 477 9400**  
Email: [helpline@cruse.org.uk](mailto:helpline@cruse.org.uk)  
Cruse young people's Helpline:  
**0808 808 1677**  
Cruse young people's  
website: [www.RD4U.org.uk](http://www.RD4U.org.uk)

Specific information regarding bereavement during the Coronavirus can be found at [www.cruse.org.uk/coronavirus](http://www.cruse.org.uk/coronavirus)

**Cruse also have local offices across the county.**

**Surrey Cruse: Surrey North Area** (including Elmbridge, Runnymede, Spelthorne and Woking)  
Helpline: 01932 571177  
Email: [surreynorth@cruse.org.uk](mailto:surreynorth@cruse.org.uk)

**Surrey South West Area** (including Guildford, Surrey Heath and Waverley)  
Helpline: 01483 565660  
Email: [southwestsurrey@cruse.org.uk](mailto:southwestsurrey@cruse.org.uk)

**Epsom, Ewell and Mole Valley Area**  
Helpline: 020 8393 7238

**South East Surrey Area** (including Reigate, Godstone, Redhill and Lingfield)  
Helpline: 01737 772 834  
Email: [southeastssurrey@cruse.org.uk](mailto:southeastssurrey@cruse.org.uk)