

Bereavement Process

Step 1 - Contact the Funeral Service or CSMA Birmingham

Contact the funeral services or CSMA Birmingham as soon possible after the death, so that correct advice and support can be given to prepare for funeral.

Step 2 - Get a Medical Certificate of Cause of Death (MCCD) from the doctor

Next step is to get a Medical Certificate of Cause of Death (MCCD) from the doctor:

If the death was expected

This is when the person died at home or in a hospital with the doctor being aware of the situation before death. If death at home the patient has to been seen alive within the last 14 days before death by the doctor or if at hospital treated by the last doctor in care when alive.

If all satisfactory then the doctor will issue a Medical Certificate of Cause of Death (MCCD) saying how the person died. If the body is in hospital the doctor or bereavement department will issue a body release slip (Rapid Release) for the funeral service so they can get the body released.

The Medical Certificate of Cause of Death (MCCD) has to be taken to the Register Office to register the death, follow Step 3.

If the death was unexpected

If the cause of death was unexpected either at home or in hospital and if the doctor cannot verify the cause of death then they can't issue a Medical Certificate of Cause of Death (MCCD) and they may refer the case to the Coroner for further investigation which can lead to a post-mortem if required as a last resort if no results are found from any doctors records. On religious grounds you can request for a digital autopsy (MRI Scan) rather than post-mortem. Either way the Coroner will need to find the cause of death.

After the cause of death is found, the Coroner may do the following below:

- a) If the death was due to natural causes, the Coroner will send a form called Form 100A to the Register Office or sometimes will ask the doctor to issue MCCD, which says how the person died which the family can collect to register the death.
- b) If an autopsy takes place and the Coroner is satisfied with the cause of death, then the necessary paperwork will be sent to the Register Office and/or may ask the family to collect the paperwork too to take it with them to register the death.
- c) If an autopsy takes place and there is an Inquest to follow then the Coroner may issue a Burial Order which means that the burial can take place but the Registration is done afterwards until the Inquest is complete, such happens in cases such as Murder, Suicide or any un-natural death.

Either option the Coroner takes, the funeral director can now collect the body if in hospital and continue with the funeral process. Follow step 3.

If no cause of death is found even after the autopsy then it is the Coroner's decision to either close the case and release the body or ask for an inquest and not release the body.

Why does the Coroner get involved?

If the person died has not been seen by their GP whilst alive within last 14 days before the death or the Hospital Doctor cannot verify the death if death in hospital.

Other reasons may be if the death had occurred by:

- an accident, murder or suicide
- during a surgical operation
- if the cause of the death was unknown
- if the death was sudden and unexplained

Step 3 - Register the death

When the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death (MCCD) has been issued, contact the Register Office to make appointment to register the death.

What do I have to take to the Register Office?

- The Medical Certificate of Cause of Death (MCCD)
- ID of the deceased (Passport etc)

You will need information about the deceased:

- Deceased's full name
- Date and place of birth
- Date and place of death
- Deceased's last address
- Deceased's occupation
- If the deceased was getting a pension or allowance from public funds
- If the deceased was married, the date and birth of the surviving spouse

What do I need to get from the Registrar?

- Certificate for Burial (known as the Green Form) for the funeral director for burial.
- Certificate of Registration of Death, this is for official use e.g. banks, social security.

How do I register a stillborn baby?

In UK a baby is considered stillborn if born dead after the 24th week of pregnancy. The doctor or midwife will issue a Medical Certificate of Cause of Death (MCCD) of Stillbirth. Take this to the Registrar to register the death. The Registrar will give you;

- Certificate for Burial, for the funeral director for burial.
- Certificate of Registration of Stillbirth, for official use.

Step 4 - Funeral

Once all registration or burial order paperwork is done, pass the paperwork to the funeral director so that they can reserve the burial plot and proceed with the funeral.

Please note these are basic guidelines and can change anytime.

For more info or support contact: **CSMA Birmingham - 07853 208 506**