

The  Finding the RIGHT help at the right cost

Probate Department

Probate Brokers
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NB The Death MUST be register within 5 days and that includes weekend and bank holidays, so if there is a problem – RING THE REGISTRAR URGENTLY.

This general guidance does NOT cover deaths abroad.

Directory of local Registrars:

<https://theprobatedepartment.co.uk/death-near/>

If you don't register the death with the Registrar of the area the person died in, it will take a few extra days for the paperwork to reach that Registrar and then for them to post the death certificates to you.

Who can Register a death?

Important: Please note that in registration there is a difference between a 'civil partner' and a 'partner'. Your 'partner' (i.e. someone you are not married to) is not legally linked with you for registration purposes but may qualify under other headings. A 'civil partner' is someone of the same sex with whom you have been through a legal ceremony of civil registration.

According to Direct.Gov the list of who can register a death is as follows:

If the person died in a house or hospital, the death can be registered by:

- a relative
- someone present at the death.
- an occupant of the house
- an official from the hospital.
- the person making the arrangements with the funeral directors.

Deaths that occurred anywhere else can be registered by:

- a relative
- someone present at the death.
- the person who found the body
- the person in charge of the body.
- the person making the arrangements with the funeral directors.

Most deaths are registered by a relative. The registrar would normally only allow other people if there are no relatives available, so a common law spouse is able to register a death if they fall into one of the classes above and there is no relative available, but do check with the Registrar first.

What information will the Registrar need to Register the Death?

You must take with you the medical certificate of cause of death (though the certificate is normally sent directly to the registrar – which usually happens.)

If possible, you should also take the following documents. They are not absolutely essential but provide much of the additional information you need for the registration, but do not delay registering just because you cannot find this paperwork as you only have FIVE DAYS to do so, and that includes weekends and bank holidays.

The deceased persons:.

- NHS card (also called the medical card)
- Birth certificate
- Driving licence
- Council tax bill
- Marriage or civil partnership certificate (if applicable)
- If possible please take the National Insurance number of the deceased and the number of a surviving spouse or civil partner.
- Passport
- Proof of address (e.g. utility bill)

When you see the registrar, they will be as helpful as they can in registering the death. They will require the following information about the deceased:

- Date and place of the death
- The address of the person

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- Their full names (including the maiden name of a married woman). Any former married names or other names by which the deceased was known can also be recorded.
- Where and when they were born (the town or county is sufficient if the exact address is not known). Only the country of origin is required for people born outside the United Kingdom. The country is recorded according to its current name if this is different from how it was known at the date of birth.
- Their occupation
- Details of their wife or husband or civil partner
- Whether they had any government pension or other benefits

While it is not essential, you should also take supporting documents that show your name and address (e.g. a utility bill) but you can still register a death without them.

The registration process will take approximately 30 minutes. If a full Tell Us Once service is offered the appointment may be extended by about 15 minutes.

As at May 2025, the cost of death certificates is £12.50 each, and you will usually need more than you buy. Getting additional copies takes time, though most institutions will accept copies certified by a solicitor.

Who can register a Stillbirth

A stillbirth normally needs to be registered within 42 days, and at the latest within three months. In many cases, this can be done at the hospital or at the local register office.

You can find more advice in the parents' section at [Direct.gov](https://www.direct.gov).

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