



Bereavement advice guidelines

May we offer you our deepest

sympathy

It is regrettable that we
have to meet under such circumstances,
and you may not be aware of why the police
have to be involved.



During this booklet we will refer to the deceased as them or they.

There are many arrangements for you and your family to make, and this may not be easy at a time of personal distress. We understand this, and hope this leaflet will answer some of the questions you may want to ask.

Why have police attended?

You may be surprised to find the police involved in your bereavement. However, the death of any person which is sudden, unexplained or results from violence or injury must be reported to police and the Coroner.

Police presence doesn't mean the death is suspicious. We will make inquiries into the circumstances of the death and prepare a report for the Coroner. At this point we are acting on behalf of the Coroner.

The police may request the attendance of a forensic medical examiner to verify death. It may be necessary to take photographs of the location where they was found.

Someone (usually the next of kin) will be asked by the police or the Coroner's officer to identify the person and sign a statement to confirm their identity. This can be a difficult thing to do, so consider having a friend or relative with you.

Although this may not happen immediately, the police or the Coroner's officer may need to take statements from people who can help with the investigation, such as family, friends, the person or people who found them and any witnesses to the death.

Can I see the deceased?

Yes, at some stage you and your family or friends may see them but you should make arrangements with the Coroner's Office. They will provide you with details.

Are all deaths reported to the Coroner?

No, if a doctor has seen them during their last illness and within 14 days prior to their death, and the death is entirely natural and the cause of death is known, then that doctor can issue a medical certificate for cause of death so that funeral arrangements can be made.

What if a death certificate cannot be issued?

When someone dies suddenly and the cause of death is unexplained, the deaths, by law, have to be referred to the Coroner. The police will make arrangements for the person to be taken to hospital. A post mortem examination may be carried out by

a highly qualified specialist, known as a pathologist, to find the exact cause of death. The Coroner's Officer will contact you to explain if a post mortem examination is necessary and take you through the process.

The pathologist will report to the Coroner the exact cause of death. If the death is entirely natural, the coroner will then arrange for a death certificate to be issued by the registrar for the family for funeral purposes. If it is not a natural death or the death cannot be explained, the Coroner is obliged to hold an inquest.

When can a funeral be held?

You are free to contact a funeral director of your choice to make the funeral arrangements. On the following working day, an officer from the Coroner's office will contact you to take you through the procedure. If a post mortem is to take place, there may be a delay in releasing them to the family. The Coroner's officer will be able to advise on a timescale so that you can make funeral arrangements.

What is a death certificate?

If no inquest has to be held, and cause of death has been established, the Coroner will sign and authorise papers which will allow two things

to happen. Firstly, they will allow the funeral to be held and, secondly, they will authorise the registrar of deaths to issue a death certificate. This whole procedure usually takes a few working days and the Coroner's officer will contact you when the procedure has been completed. The Coroner's officer will give you information about attending the registrar's office and collecting the death certificate.

However, if an inquest has to be held, this will delay obtaining the death certificate. In these circumstances, an interim certificate will be issued by the Coroner which will allow the funeral to be arranged. This certificate will enable you to access bank accounts and insurance policies.

What is a Coroner?

The Coroner is an independent Judicial Officer, appointed by the Crown to investigate deaths where a death certificate cannot be issued immediately. They are usually lawyers, a few are doctors, and they are impartial and will act in the public interest. They are not in a position to apportion blame in respect of a person's death or determine matters of civil liability.

What is a Coroner's officer?

The Coroner's Officer is a specially trained person who provides a link between the Coroner, the relatives and the police officers who have visited you.

What is the Police's role?

The police who have been called to deal with the death will ask for certain details about the person and they will prepare a report for the Coroner.

What is an inquest?

An inquest is a public, legal inquiry into the circumstances surrounding a person's death. The Coroner will decide if a particular death requires an inquest and can, if required, call a jury together to hear the case.

Some of the reasons the Coroner would hold an inquest are; if a death is caused by industrial disease, is a violent or unnatural death, or if death is the result of an accident.

It is not a trial and is not intended to blame anyone. It is usually held in a courtroom, which some people find intimidating. You could ask the Coroner's officer to arrange for you to visit the court room beforehand and explain what to expect.

The funeral director

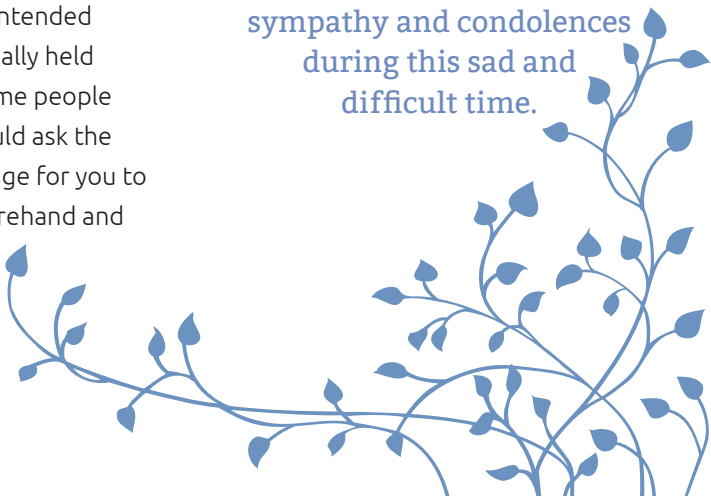
The funeral director you choose will have experience of working with the Coroner's office. They will require certain documents to be signed by the Coroner. They will liaise with the Coroner's officer and these documents will normally be completed within five working days, however in more complex cases this may be longer. The Coroner's officer will advise you.

Further advice

You may find that you need help and support with registering the death, arranging the funeral or coping with the bereavement.

There are organisations that can help you with advice and provide information on these matters.

On behalf of
Derbyshire Constabulary
may we express our sincere
sympathy and condolences
during this sad and
difficult time.



What to do after someone dies

Useful contacts:

Derby Coroner's office
St Katherines House
St Mary's Wharf · Mansfield Road
Derby DE1 3TQ
01629 535050

Chesterfield Coroner's office
Town Hall · Rose Hill
Chesterfield S40 1LP
01629 533405

Tell Us Once - GOV.UK
<https://www.gov.uk> › after-a-death › organisations-you

Tell Us Once is a service that lets you report a death to most government organisations in one go.

The Department for Work and Pension produce several leaflets which will assist you and are available from your local benefits office, online or 0845 606 0265

Derbyshire County Council can pass on details to all relevant agencies including the Department for Work and Pensions and HM Revenue and Customs
01629 533073

Derby City Council also have guidance available
01332 293111

Cruse Bereavement Care offers counselling and support
0844 477 9400
www.crusebereavementcare.org.uk

Chesterfield Royal Hospital offers practical help, advice and support after a bereavement
01246 512711

Royal Derby Hospital
Bereavement Centre
01332 785557

To be completed by the officer attending

Name	Collar number
Location stationed	
Officers direct contact number	
Email	
Incident number	

Notes

Notes



This bereavement guide has been produced in the memory of Ryan Cox

 @DerbysPolice |  derbyshireconstabulary

 101 non-emergency in an emergency always call 999
www.derbyshire.police.uk

Making Derbyshire Safer **Together**

