



Registering your child's death - special arrangements during the COVID-19 pandemic

A guide for bereaved parents,
families and carers

CHANGES TO DEATH REGISTRATION DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

We would like to offer you and your family our deepest sympathy at this difficult time. We hope this leaflet helps you to understand how to register the death.

The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has required changes to the normal process for registering deaths in Scotland. This leaflet explains the special arrangements that are currently in place across NHS Lothian. Although this is a very difficult situation, we hope that the information is helpful. Please contact the Bereavement Service if you require further advice or support (see back page for contact details).

How to register a death during the COVID-19 pandemic

Face to face appointments have been suspended until further notice, however you will be able to register the death remotely. **You do not need to collect the death certificate from the hospital / GP or go to a registration office in person to register the death.** Instead, the information will be sent electronically and the registration can be completed over the telephone.

- The doctor will complete the medical certificate of cause of death (often just referred to as the 'death certificate').
- The doctor will arrange for the certificate to be scanned and emailed directly to the registration office that you wish to use.
- The original certificate will be posted to the registration office.
- Once the scanned copy of death certificate has been received by the registrar, they will contact you to arrange a telephone appointment so the registration of the death can be completed over the phone. The next page has details of the information that the registrar will need, so it would be helpful to have this ready for the appointment.

For more information about this part of the process, please visit:

<https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk>

The registrar will ask:

- Your child's full name.
- Your child's usual address.
- Parents' full names and occupations.
- The name and address of your child's family doctor (GP).
- Your child's NHS number, if available.
- Details of your child's birth. If they were born in Scotland, the registrar can look up details on the Scottish Family History System. However, if your child was born outside Scotland, the registrar may ask you to email them a digital copy (e.g. a scan or photograph) of the birth certificate, if possible.

If you've not been able to register the birth:

Birth registration has been suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic. If you've not yet been able to register your baby's birth, the registrar will be able to help with this. In order to do this, you will need the original birth card from the hospital, as well as your own birth certificate and any marriage / civil partnership certificate.

Once the registration is complete, the registrar will:

- Email / post the Form 14 (certificate of registration of death) directly to your chosen funeral director.
- Post an abbreviated death certificate to you (free of charge).
- If you purchase a copy of the full extract this will be also be posted to you.

Death Certificate Reviews

The Death Certification Review Service normally carries out random reviews to check the quality and accuracy of Medical Certificates of Cause of Death. Certificates are selected at random during the registration process which occasionally can mean a short delay in completing registration. **This review process has been suspended during the COVID-19 pandemic.**

Tell Us Once Service

This optional service can help you to notify national and local government departments of your child's death, e.g. if they had a passport, blue (disabled parking) badge or received social security benefits. This usually takes place during registration. During the COVID-19 pandemic the registrar will issue you with a reference number which you can use to complete the process from home by telephone or online.

For more information about Tell Us Once, please visit:

<https://www.gov.uk/tell-us-once>

Contact details

NHS Lothian Bereavement Service:

Phone: 0131 242 6995

Email: bereavement.service@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk

Website: <https://services.nhslothian.scot/BereavementService/>

Local Registration Offices

City of Edinburgh Council

Email: registrars.city@edinburgh.gov.uk

East Lothian Council

Email: haddingtonregistrars@eastlothian.gov.uk

Midlothian Council

Email: registrar@midlothian.gov.uk

West Lothian Council

Email: registration@westlothian.gov.uk