

# What to do when someone has just died in Guernsey

A brief guide on what to do  
in the first week

**citizens  
advice**



**The Queen's Award  
for Voluntary Service**

*The MBE for volunteer groups*

**free, friendly and  
completely confidential advice**

When someone has died there are a lot of things that need to be done at a time when we may find it difficult to think clearly. Some things can be done by a relative or friend; others need to be done by the executor or administrator of the estate.

This checklist can help guide you through the process.

- **Contact the person's doctor** if they were not in hospital. In an emergency call an ambulance or the police. The doctor will provide a medical certificate of the cause of death. If the person is going to be cremated then a second certificate from another doctor will be needed, but this can be organised later.
- **Inform relatives and friends**
- **Contact a Funeral Director** if you wish to use one, who can organise the death certificate, death notices, flowers and cars.  
Please be aware that the person who arranges the funeral is responsible for the costs, if there are not enough funds in the estate.
- **Check the person's premises are secure** such as locking doors and windows, check the gas and electric appliances are switched off, stop deliveries of milk, papers or mail.
- **Register the death** at the Greffe within 5 days. The funeral director or a close relative will need to complete a form called 'Declaration of death' and will take this along with the medical certificate signed by the doctor. The Greffe will then issue the 'Death Certificate'. Sometimes a post mortem may be ordered. This could be for many reasons, for instance when the person who has died was not seen recently by their doctor or the cause of death is uncertain. If the death is due to natural causes, with no suspicious circumstances, the death can be registered in the normal way.  
An inquest can be held where further investigation is needed before the death can be registered.
- **Find the will.** This may be in a safe place at home or held by an advocate or bank. In addition to appointing an executor of the estate, this may contain an indication of the wishes of the person who has died about the funeral. Alternatively, there might just be a letter of wishes rather than a formal will.
- **Get a grant of probate** - contact the Executor or apply for a Grant of Letters of Administration (if there is no will) through the Ecclesiastical Court (721732).
- **Find important documents** such as
  - Birth and marriage certificates
  - Passport
  - Driving licence
  - States Insurance number
  - Tax number
  - Bank account numbers
  - Any creditors or debtors
- **Inform other people** such as:
  - Employer (there may be an occupational pension)
  - Landlord
  - States Housing 713456
  - Advocate
  - School

Utility companies, if in the name of the person who has died

Post Office if mail needs to be redirected  
TV or Sky  
Mobile phone or internet companies

States Income Tax	724711
Social Security	732500
Passport office	741410
Driving licensing and vehicle registration	243400

Insurance companies (including where there are joint policies)  
Pension providers or life insurance  
Bank, mortgage provider or loan companies  
Credit card companies

Social group or trade unions  
Place of worship  
Doctor, dentist or optician  
Community Health Services  
Guernsey Voluntary Service (Meals) 247518

- **Stop unwanted (junk) mail**

use the Deceased Preference service free on 0800 068 44 33 or go to [https://www.deceasedpreferenceservice.co.uk/unwanted\\_mail.html](https://www.deceasedpreferenceservice.co.uk/unwanted_mail.html)

- **Arrange the funeral**

Most people choose to use a funeral director, but you can make your own arrangements.

Check whether there is a funeral plan, life insurance policy or pension plan that will pay towards funeral costs.

Check whether the will indicates the wishes of the person who has died.

Choose the place of burial or disposal of ashes.

- **Financial help**

Apply for Bereavement Benefits from Social Security Pensions & Allowances helpline (732506) to check eligibility for a grant or pension. Delay may lead to loss of benefit.

- **Bereavement Counselling**

Guernsey Bereavement Service 257778

### **General disclaimer**

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**Open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday 9.30 am to 4.00 pm  
Wednesday 9.30am to 6.30pm and Friday 9.30 am to 12.30 pm**

**[citizensadvice.org.gg](http://citizensadvice.org.gg)**

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