

Registering a death

In Northern Ireland, a death should be registered within five days. This is with the exception of deaths which have been referred to the coroner. A death may be registered in any district registration office in Northern Ireland.

Who can register a death?

Most deaths are registered by a relative of the deceased. If the deceased has no relatives or none are available then any of the following can register the death:

- any relative of the deceased – including a relative by marriage
- a person present at the death
- a person taking care of the funeral arrangements
- the executor or administrator of the deceased's estate
- the governor, matron or chief officer of a public building where the death occurred
- a person living in and responsible for a house, lodgings or apartments where the death occurred
- a person finding, or a person taking charge, of the body

Information needed to register a death

To complete the registration you will need to know:

- full name and surname of the deceased
- deceased's usual address
- date and place of death
- marital status (single, married, widowed or divorced)
- date and place of birth
- occupation of the deceased
- if the deceased was a wife or widow, the full name and occupation of her husband or deceased husband
- if the deceased was a child, the full names and occupation of the father will be required, or where the parents are not married, the full name and occupation of the mother will be required
- maiden surname (if the deceased was a woman who had married)

- name and address of the deceased's GP
- details of any pension apart from a state pension that the deceased may have held

Completing the registration

You should register a death within five days, unless it has been referred to the coroner, you will need to:

- complete the registration of a death form
- provide the medical certificate of the cause of death, signed by a doctor
- bring the form and medical certificate to any District Registration Office in Northern Ireland

There is no cost for registering a death. The only cost will be for copies of the death certificates if required.

What you will receive

Once the registration is completed, you will receive:

- a GRO21 form giving permission for the body to be buried or for an application for cremation to be made
- a certificate of Registration of Death (form 36/BD8) - issued for social security purposes

Death certificates

You'll be able to buy one or more death certificates at the time of registration. These will be needed by the executor or administrator when sorting out the deceased person's affairs.

Death certificates, either short or full, may be purchased from the Registrar at the time of registration for £8.00 per copy.

After the registration, copies of death certificates can be purchased from the General Register Office at a fee of £15.00 for the first copy and £8.00 for each additional copy purchased at the same time.

If the death is referred to a coroner

Some deaths are referred to the coroner, this is usually because:

- the deceased had not been seen by doctor within 28 days before death
- the death was not caused by natural illness
- the cause of death was unclear, sudden or suspicious.

The death can only be registered and a death certificate obtained after the registrar has received the necessary certificate from the coroner.

When the registrar receives the certificate they will contact a relative of the deceased and ask them to call in at the office to register the death.