Registration Services
What to do when someone dies

All deaths in England and Wales are independently scrutinised, either by a Medical Examiner (ME), who is a senior medical doctor or are referred to a coroner.

MEs are supported by Medical Examiner Officers (MEOs), and their independent scrutiny includes a review of medical records, discussions with the doctors who are completing the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death (MCCD) and also discussion with the family.

If the cause of death is not natural or not clear the death will be referred to the coroner.

The following information and relevant contact details provides a summary of what will likely need to occur in the event of a death taking place.

Key contact details during office opening times:

Medical Examiner's Office – **0121 507 3473** – 8am-4pm Monday to Friday. Email: swbh.me-office@nhs.net
Coroner – **0121 569 7200** – Monday to Wednesday 8am to 4pm, Thursday 9am to 4pm and Friday 8am to 3.30pm. Email: secure_coroners@sandwell.gov.uk

Register Office – **0121 568 7474** Monday to Wednesday 9am to 4.30pm, Thursday 10am to 4.30pm and Friday 9am to 4pm On-line enquiries: my.sandwell.gov.uk to raise an enquiry online or Contact Us
Bereavement services – **0121 569 6700** Monday to Wednesday 9am to 4.30pm, Thursday 10am to 4.30pm and Friday 9am to 4pm. Email: bereavement_services@sandwell.gov.uk

Occasionally, urgent funeral arrangements might be necessary. In this instance services in Sandwell will look to prioritise and support families in any way they can. Outside normal working hours, out of hours provision is available.

Out of hours provision:

Medical Examiner's Office – The Doctor completing the MCCD can call **0121 553 1831** ask for the on-call Medical Examiner - Every weekend and Bank Holiday excluding Christmas Day between 9am and midday.

Coroner – The Coroner is available on weekends and Bank Holidays to deal with Out of England requests between 10am and 1pm excluding Christmas Day. Contact with the Coroner will be made via the on-call Registrar.

Register Office – **07810 152159** 9am until 1pm - Every weekend and Bank Holiday excluding Christmas Day.
Bereavement services – **07391 414 254** - out of hours burial 9am-2pm between 1 October and 31 March and 9am-3pm between 1 April and 30 September. Every weekend and Bank Holiday excluding Christmas Day.

Support

It can be a difficult time when we lose a loved one. The link below provides access to the support available:

https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/births-marriages-deaths/new-someone-dies-bereavement-support



Death Occurs

Death occurs at hospital or hospice/care home. Medical Practitioner will confirm end of life and inform family

Death occurs at home – contact deceased GP or NHS helpline on 111 to confirm end of life.

Death occurs at any other location. If the death was unexpected it is likely West Midlands Ambulance Service (WMAS) and Police will attend. WMAS will confirm end of life and Police will ensure that there are no suspicious circumstances

It will be necessary in most cases to appoint a chosen funeral director who will take the deceased into their care.

It will be necessary in most cases to appoint a chosen funeral director who will take the deceased into their care. The Police or WMAS can do this on behalf of the family if necessary.

Medical Certificate of Cause of Death (MCCD) which is normally provided by a doctor who has attended/treated the deceased in their lifetime will discuss the case with a Medical Examiner (ME) who will scrutinise the records and discuss the cause of death with the family and then countersign the MCCD if they feel the cause of death is natural.

Is the cause of death natural

No

Yes

Coroner informed by Medical Examiner, Emergency Services or GP. Death is now in the coroners jurisdiction.

MCCD will be sent to the register office where the death occurred. In Sandwell we will contact the family to arrange a registration appointment.

Coroner makes enquiries with medical practitioners and family.

Is the Is the death violent, unnatural or unknown.

Yes

No

The coroner may open an investigation and/or arrange a post mortem examination to establish a medical cause of death.

The coroner will instruct the Medical Practitioner or the ME to issue the MCCD

Following examination death is natural

No

Yes

The coroner will issue paperwork to the Register Office so that the death can be registered

If the cause of death is unnatural the coroner will open an inquest and release the deceased for funeral. If the cause of death is pending further tests the coroner will continue the investigation and release the deceased for the funeral. The coroner can issue paperwork to allow a funeral to take place abroad.

Death is registered, Green Certificate is issued to the chosen Funeral Director to enable funeral arrangements to be made. Or by exception, handed to the family

If the case goes to inquest the coroners office will notify the family and keep them informed of progress. When the inquest concludes the coroner will issue paperwork to the Register Office to enable the death to be registered. Family do not need to attend. When the registration is completed the register office will contact the family to arrange for the purchase of certificates if required and complete tell us once.