

**USEFUL
INFORMATION**

**WHEN
YOU LOSE
A
LOVED ONE**



INTRODUCTION

The death of a loved one can be one of the most traumatic experiences of our lives. Our world is turned upside down. We are plunged into sadness and grief, yet there are so many arrangements to be made and so many things to do. It can be a difficult time.

WHO SHOULD I CONTACT?

What you need to do when someone you love dies depends on the circumstances of death.

If the death is expected

- Contact the doctor who has been attending your loved one. The doctor will issue a medical certificate of the cause of death.
- Contact the funeral director.
- Contact the clergy, if not already in attendance when your loved one passed away.

If the death is unexpected

- Contact the doctor who has been attending your loved one. The doctor may issue the medical certificate if he or she is satisfied as to the cause of death and has been in attendance within the previous 28 days.
- Contact the funeral director.
- Contact the clergy.

THE ROLE OF THE FUNERAL DIRECTOR

After the death of a loved one, there are many decisions that will have to be made. The funeral director will assist you with the detailed planning of the funeral so that you can be with family and friends comforting one another. It is not disrespectful of a relative to contact a funeral director before a loved one dies for guidance and advice on future arrangements. The funeral director will co-ordinate the funeral arrangements to include:

- Liaise with clergy and medical professionals.
- Assistance in the selection and style of the coffin.
- Preparation and dressing of the body.
- Provision of hearse and transport for the removal to the funeral home, the church and the cemetery.
- Grave opening and/or the purchase of a new grave if required.
- All cremation arrangements.
- Arrange disbursements such as clergy and service gratuities, flowers, catering.
- Newspaper and radio obituary notices.
- Full attendance at repose, removal, service and burial.

The funeral director will also attend to any special requests for which the deceased may have left instructions. It is important to know or enquire about your loved one's final wishes.

It is important that you feel nothing more is needed and nothing less is expected

If , however, the doctor is unable to issue the medical certificate, you must:

- Contact the gardai, who will in turn contact the coroner. The coroner will instruct a pathologist to examine the body and report the cause of death to him. If the pathologist's report to the coroner shows that the death was due to natural causes, the coroner will issue the Medical Certificate.
- In the case of death by accident, or in suspicious circumstances, there will be a post mortem examination. If the cause of death is still unclear, the coroner may call for an inquest.
- The funeral director cannot remove the body or proceed with the funeral arrangements without the knowledge that the medical certificate will be issued.

Cremation

If the death is expected

- If the body of your loved one is to be cremated, the deceased's doctor must have attended within 28 days before the death, and must first view the body after death and fill out documentation before the funeral director can proceed with the arrangements.

If the death is unexpected

- The coroner will arrange the necessary medical documentation for the cremation authority with the funeral director.