



Bereavement Information for Relatives – Procurator Fiscal Referral

We are very sorry for your loss, and we aim to make the next part of the process as easy for you as we can.

Due to the circumstances of your relatives death, we are unable to issue the death certificate at this time. In such circumstances it is normal practice for us to refer the death on to the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS).

COPFS investigate all sudden, suspicious and unexplained deaths in Scotland. When we refer a death to the COPFS we are unable to issue the death certificate without their agreement.

The COPFS will review the circumstances around the death. They will then decide either that there is enough evidence to agree that the death of the person was due to natural causes, or that further investigation is required. Sometimes the Procurator Fiscal's Office will contact you directly to discuss the circumstances in more detail, other times they are satisfied with the medical information supplied to them

If the death is felt to be due to natural causes then they will allow the Emergency Department to issue the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death. If this is the case we will contact you to let you know of this outcome. This will then be scanned and emailed directly to the Registration office. Once received by the Registration office, the registrar will contact you directly to arrange to register the death.

If further investigation is required, the Procurator Fiscal's Office will ask Police Scotland to complete a report. This doesn't necessarily mean that the death is suspicious or that something is wrong, but more information is required. In this circumstance the Procurator Fiscal's Office will formally take over and the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death will be issued by them, once the investigation is complete. They can be contacted on 0300 020 3000.

They also have some useful online information to guide you through this process (link below)



<https://www.copfs.gov.uk/services/bereavement-support/guide-for-bereaved-family-members/>

If you require any further information our contact details are below.

Our contact details are:

Catherine Scott, Emergency Department PA. 0131 242 1340 (weekdays 8:30-16:30)

Emergency Department Charge Nurse 0131 242 1330 (24/7)

Bereavement Information for Relatives			Version 2	Page 1 of 1		
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