



CROWN OFFICE
& PROCURATOR
FISCAL SERVICE

SCOTLAND'S PROSECUTION SERVICE

Finding out more about why someone died



We are the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service.

This booklet tells you what will happen if we look into why someone in your family died.



Who we are

We are called the
Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service.

What this booklet is about



This booklet may help if someone close to you
in your family has died.



Sometimes we need to look into why the
person died.

This booklet tells you why we do this and what
will happen.

Why we may look into why someone died



Sometimes it is not clear why someone died. Or there needs to be more information.



This may happen if

- a person died very quickly even if they were ill before
- there is something strange or worrying about the death.



We may need to find out more if this happens.



We need to do this before the funeral can happen.



The law says this.

What happens if we look into why someone died



1. A doctor or the Police may ask us to find out more about why someone died.



2. We decide what to do next.



Sometimes we talk to the doctor and decide that nothing else needs to be done.

Sometimes we decide we need to find out more.

If we decide we need to find out more



3. We usually ask the Police to do some checks first

The Police will get in touch with you.



They will ask you some questions.

This is nothing to worry about.



Tell the Police if you are worried or have any questions.



The Police may do some checks and decide they know why the person died.



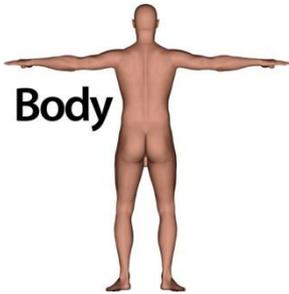
You can then get a piece of paper from the doctor to say why the person died.

This is called a **death certificate**.



You need to get a death certificate before the funeral can happen.

If the Police need more information or think something may be wrong

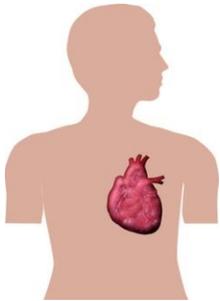


4. A doctor may need to check the body of the person who died.

This is to find out more about why they died.



This check is called a **post mortem**.



Sometimes doctors may need to take some parts of the body away to do more checks.



Someone will tell you what will happen.



You or someone else may have to go along first to look at the person's body and say that you know them.



This can be upsetting. Staff will help you when you get there.



Tell the doctor or Police if you are unhappy about the post mortem check.

They will listen to you and try to help.



Sometimes the post mortem check must happen.

But it will be done as soon as possible so you can have the funeral.

After the post mortem check



5. You or your family will need a piece of paper to say why the person has died.

This is called a **death certificate**.



Someone will tell you how to get this.

The death certificate will say why the person died.



But sometimes this may change.



The doctor who did the post mortem check may find out more later on about why the person died.



This means there needs to be a new death certificate.



You will get some letters to tell you more about this if it happens.



6. Sometimes a court needs to look into why the person died as well.

This may be if the person died

- at work
- at a police station or in prison.



You will be told if this needs to happen.

How to find out more



You can ask the Police or your doctor any questions.



If we look into the person's death we will tell you what is happening.



You can also phone us on **0300 020 3000**. Ask to speak to **SFIU**.

We can also tell you the names of people who can help if someone in your family has died.



You can ask us for a copy of any information that is made about why the person died.



Your doctor may be able to help you if the information is very hard to understand.