

Assisted funerals



Under section 46 of the Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984 we have a duty to cause to be buried or cremated the body of any person who has died or 'found to be dead' in the Rochford area in any case 'where it appears to the authority that no suitable arrangements for the disposal of the body have been or are being made'.

This means that we are responsible for making sure that anyone who dies in (or is found dead in) Rochford is properly buried or cremated if suitable arrangements have not been made.

We are also responsible for making sure that anyone who dies while being provided with accommodation under Part III of the National Assistance Act 1948 is buried or cremated properly.

If we arrange a funeral, we can recover the costs from the estate of the person who has died (the deceased).

Unless we know that the deceased wanted to be buried, we will arrange a cremation.

The funeral director will provide a dignified funeral, including a coffin that looks respectable, and will be taken to the ceremony or crematorium in a hearse attended by bearers.

The funeral will be conducted in a respectable way so that anyone who sees it, could not see it as being different from any other funeral service.

Exclusions

We will not provide a funeral for anyone who dies in hospital, or in an ambulance on the way to hospital. In these circumstances, the health authority is responsible for arranging the funeral.

We will not usually become involved if funeral arrangements have already been made or the funeral has already taken place. Anyone making arrangements with a funeral director will be responsible for any costs involved.

Help from the Department for Work and Pensions

If you are having trouble paying for a funeral that you have arranged, you may be able to get a Funeral Payment from the Social Fund to help you with the costs.

To qualify, you or your partner who you live with, must reasonably be expected to pay for the funeral and be receiving one of the following state benefits or tax credits.

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit at a rate higher than the family element or Working Tax Credit where there is a disability or severe disability element included in the award

- Housing Benefit
- Council Tax Benefit
- Employment and Support Allowance

To claim from the Social Fund

You can claim a Funeral Payment from the date of the person's death and up to three months after the date of their funeral. Funeral Payments are usually made by cheque in the funeral director's name.

For more information please visit the directgov website and search for 'funeral payments' website www.direct.gov

To claim, ask your local Jobcentre Plus office for form SF200, or you can get a form off the direct.gov.uk website.

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