



Department for

Communities

An Roinn

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Commonities

www.communities-ni.gov.uk

Northern Ireland Bereavement Service

Freephone 0800 085 2463 Textphone 0808 100 2198

CONTACT THIS SERVICE TO:

Report a death (you will be asked for information about the deceased):

- date of death
- date of birth
- National Insurance number, if available
- your relationship to the deceased
- address of the deceased
- benefits the deceased had been receiving

You can also:

- get advice on potential benefits or other support that may be available
- make a claim for Bereavement Support Payment
- check for help with funeral costs

Reporting a death

The Bereavement Service will:

- record the date of death and tell each office that paid benefit to the deceased
- offer you an eligibility check, as you may be entitled to claim benefits

If you are eligible to make a claim for Bereavement Support Payment and/or a Funeral Expenses Payment or a Child Funeral Fund payment, the Bereavement Service can take the information for your application over the phone and forward this to the relevant office.

Bereavement Support Payment

We refer to the person who has died as ‘your partner’. By this we mean either your husband, wife, civil partner, or partner that you lived with as if you were married to them.

This gives financial support to people for a period after the death of a partner. You do not need to be in receipt of benefit or on a low income to apply. Payments are tax-free, however in some circumstances they may be treated as savings for other benefit(s). Payments may consist of an initial payment followed by a series of smaller monthly payments for up to a maximum period of 18 months unless you reach State Pension age during this period.

A claim should be made within 3 months of the date of death to receive the full award.

You may be eligible for Bereavement Support Payment if at the time of death:

1. You were married or in a civil partnership – you could be awarded at **Standard rate** (without children) or **Higher rate** (with dependent children under the age of 20 or pregnant at the time of your partner’s death); **OR**
2. If you were not married or in a civil partnership with your partner but living as though married, you can only be awarded **Higher rate** and you must either have dependent children under the age of 20 or were pregnant when your partner died;

AND

- You were under State Pension age when your partner died
- You were resident in the UK at the time of the death or live in a country where the UK has a relevant European Union or reciprocal agreement
- Your partner paid National Insurance Contributions for at least 25 weeks in any one tax year - exceptions to this may apply: if your partner died as a result of an industrial accident or prescribed disease or was unable to work their entire working life due to a disability

How to claim Bereavement Support Payment and the details you will need

You can complete a claim online, or download an application form from www.nidirect.gov.uk. Alternatively you can claim over the phone by contacting the Bereavement Service on **0800 085 2463** and select option 1.

You will need details about:

- you (contact details, date of birth and National Insurance number)
- your partner (date of birth and National Insurance number)
- your children, if applicable (name, date of birth and where they live)
- the date of your marriage/civil partnership (if applicable)
- your account details

Funeral Expenses Payment

If you are on a low income and need to pay for a funeral you are arranging, you may be able to get a Funeral Expenses Payment.

You might have to repay some or all of it from the deceased person's estate.

You may be eligible for a Funeral Payment if you or your partner is getting any of the following:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance

- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Pension Credit
- Housing Benefit
- Working Tax Credit which includes disability or severe disability element
- Child Tax Credit
- Universal Credit

You might also be eligible if you are getting a Support for Mortgage Interest loan.

The term ‘partner’ is used here to mean:

- a person you are married to, or a person you live with as if you are married to them;
- a civil partner, or a person you live with as if you are civil partners.

To claim a Funeral Expenses Payment you will need details about:

- you, your partner and the deceased (address, date of birth, National Insurance number and surviving partner)
- benefits you, your partner and surviving relatives are receiving
- responsibility for the funeral (including payment);
- the funeral director’s details
- the estate (including probate solicitor details)
- money to pay for the funeral
- your account details

Child Funeral Fund

The Child Funeral Fund provides a one-off lump sum payment to cover the expense of a funeral after the death of a child under the age of 18, or stillborn after the 24th week of pregnancy.

The Child Funeral Fund is available regardless of the income of the claimant but is dependent on certain criteria. The claimant must have accepted responsibility for the funeral costs.

You can get help towards the expenses of a funeral if you meet the following eligibility criteria:

- the child had not reached their 18th birthday at the time of their death
- the child was stillborn after the 24th week of pregnancy
- the claim can be made for a funeral that has taken place on or after 1 June 2022
- the claim is made within 6 months of the date of funeral
- you have taken responsibility for the funeral expenses

To claim a Child Funeral Fund payment you will need details including:

- your address, date of birth, National Insurance number
- responsibility for the funeral, including payment
- the Funeral Director and bill
- your account details

