

62777 Death Registration Times and Capacity

The average time (in days) taken to register a death in your local authority area for:

The most recent 12-month period available.

1-3 days.

Each of the preceding two years (if available).

The percentage of deaths registered within the statutory eight-day period for the same timeframes.

The number and proportion of deaths taking longer than eight days to register.

This information can be requested from the [National Records of Scotland](#).

The longest recorded registration time (in days) within the most recent 12-month period

This information is not held, as relevant notes are destroyed once the registration process is complete.

The number of registrars (full-time equivalent) currently employed.

18.

Any changes to registrar staffing levels over the past three years.

In 2023 there were 16 full-time equivalent staff, with one member of staff seconded to another department for a large part of the year.

Whether temporary staff, agency cover, or overtime arrangements have been used to manage workload.

Agency staff and overtime arrangements are utilised in other parts of the service. Death registrations are always undertaken by our own full/part time staff within our usual working hours.

Whether your authority has any formal or informal workload-sharing or mutual support arrangements with other local authorities?

Informal workload sharing with other local authorities struggling to cope has taken place on several occasions. This arrangement has always been short-term; it could not be sustained long-term due to staffing shortages and workload pressures within our own service.

Details of any significant process or system changes within the last three years that may have impacted registration times.

System failure has an impact on appointment dates and times, alongside a loss of qualified staff. The Council holds regular meetings with hospital staff and our own Bereavement Services department to manage processes effectively.

Any known factors currently contributing to delays in death registration.

- Medical certificate of cause of death has not been issued by the GP or hospital.
- Procurator Fiscal deaths taking longer to complete a postmortem.
- Unsuccessful attempts to contact the next of kin.

- Next of kin refusing to register and therefore having to find a secondary informant.
- Bereavement Services, social workers and/or police finding time in their schedules to undertake registrations.
- Medical Reviews going to Stage 2 and the Procurator Fiscal.
- Arranging for an interpreter to help families.

Details of any steps being taken, or planned, to reduce delays and improve performance.

Appointment availability for deaths is continually monitored. Where appointment capacity becomes fully booked for the next two full days, additional capacity is introduced where resources allow to ensure minimum wait times.

Whether your registration service engages with funeral directors or representative bodies regarding registration timelines or delays.

We engage with funeral directors and representatives throughout the registration process where appropriate. Prior to registration, we are generally unaware of which funeral director the family have chosen. Once the death has been registered, the Form 14 is emailed immediately to the funeral director.

If a funeral director contacts us before the registration has taken place, we will advise whether the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death has been received and, where appropriate, whether an appointment has been arranged with the informant.