
Searching for a death certificate

Cancer Genetics

Patient Information



Searching for a death certificate

We routinely confirm some of the diagnoses listed on the family history questionnaire so that we can provide an accurate risk assessment. If we can request the information from the Cancer Registry, we can do this on your behalf. We can also request the pathology records, when we have the appropriate consent.

However, there will be occasions where we are not able to check the cancer history in this way. In these situations, and when the information is essential to providing an accurate risk assessment or determining if genetic testing is possible, we will you to obtain a copy of your relative's death certificate to check the cancer diagnosis.

A family member may already have a copy of the death certificate and could provide you with a copy to forward to us. Sometimes it is not possible to ask relatives for this document, but it is still possible to obtain the death certificate. You do not need consent from their next of kin because death certificates are public records.

There are several online companies which offer this service and you do not need to pay a company a fee for this information. You can request it directly from the General Registry office using their online service:

www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/certificates/

(This website provides information for deaths registered in England and Wales. For information about deaths registered in Scotland, Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland, the Isle of Man, Jersey and Guernsey, please refer to the next few pages).

You will need to register your details when you first log in, providing your name, address and email address.

You will need to know the approximate year that your relative died. You will then be asked for:

- year death was registered
- surname of the deceased
- forename of the deceased
- date of death
- age at death in years
- place of death or last known address
- occupation of the deceased
- marital status (if female).

These fields correspond to the information listed on a death certificate, so the more details you know the more likely it is that you will find the correct death certificate. You can still complete the form even without all these details and see what the search produces. You may need to enter the details more than once, trying different years, or leaving out details you are not sure about (for example if you do not know exactly how they spelled their first name) to locate the correct certificate.

If you are not sure of these details but you know other information about the person, such as the name of their spouse or their parents you can search for their marriage certificate or birth certificate online to help find the missing details.

There is a charge for ordering a certificate but you are not charged for each search.

For information about deaths registered in Scotland, Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland, the Isle of Man, Jersey and Guernsey, please see below:

Scotland

The Registrar General
New Register House
3 West Register St
Edinburgh
EH1 3YT

Tel: +44 (0) 131 314 4411

Website: www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/certificate-search

Information required:

- full name of the deceased
- date and place of event
- if a common surname, further details such as parent's names are required.

Abbreviated certificates do not provide cause of death; therefore the full certificates must be ordered.

Northern Ireland

Colby House
Stranmillis Court
Belfast, BT9 5RR

Tel: 0300 200 7890

If calling from outside of Northern Ireland:

Tel: +44 300 200 7890

Website: www.nidirect.gov.uk/services/order-death-certificate-online

Information required:

- full name of the deceased
- date and place of death (district or street and town), from 1864 to present – the district or full address of death must be supplied
- the usual address of the deceased if different from the place of death.

Please note that deaths before 1922 cannot be traced if the district where the death was registered is not known. For deaths within the last three years, the applicant must indicate whether the coroner was notified.

Republic of Ireland

The Registrar General, Government House in Dublin:

General Register Office
Government Offices
Convent Road
Roscommon, Eire

Tel: +353 (0) 906 632 900

Website: www.gov.ie/en/service/124a70-apply-for-certificates/

Information required:

- forename and surname of the deceased
- year of death
- in many cases further detail/s such as an exact date, the location of the event, other forenames, and parents' names may be needed.

The more information provided, the more chance of finding the records required (index and records are date based and are in a manual format, so accurate dates [correct year at least] are needed).

Isle of Man

Civil Registry (records from 1878)
Deemsters Walk
Bucks Road
Douglas
Isle of Man, IM1 3AR

Tel: +44 (0) 1624 687 039

Website: www.gov.im/categories/births-deaths-and-marriages/order-copy-certificates/

Information required:

- forename and surname of the deceased
- year of death
- in many cases, further detail/s such as an exact date, the location of the event, other forenames and parents' names may be needed.

The more information provided, the more chance of finding the records required (index and records are date based and are in a manual format, so accurate dates [correct year at least] are needed).

Jersey

General Registry (records from 1842)
Office of the Superintendent Registrar
10 Royal Square, St Helier, Jersey
Channel Islands, JE2 4WA

Tel: +44 (0) 1534 441 335

Website: www.gov.je/Government/Departments/CustomerLocalServices/OfficeSuperintendentRegistrar/pages/home.aspx

Information required:

- forename and surname of the deceased
- year of death
- in many cases, further detail/s such as an exact date, the location of the event, other forenames and parents' names may be needed.

The more information provided, the more chance of finding the records required (index and records are date based and are in a manual format, so accurate dates [correct year at least] are needed).

Guernsey

Register Office (records from October 1840)

H.M. Greffier

The Royal Court House

St Peter Port

Guernsey, GY1 2NZ

Tel: +44 (0) 1481 725 277

Website: www.guernseyroyalcourt.gg/article/1909/Registration-of-Deaths

Information required:

- forename and surname of the deceased
- year of death
- in many cases, further detail/s such as an exact date, the location of the event, other forenames and parents' names may be needed.

The more information provided, the more chance of finding the records required (index and records are date based and are in a manual format, so accurate dates [correct year at least] are needed).

Notes and questions

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References

This booklet is evidence based wherever the appropriate evidence is available, and represents an accumulation of expert opinion and professional interpretation.

Details of the references used in writing this booklet are available on request from:

The Royal Marsden Help Centre
Freephone: 0800 783 7176
Email: patientcentre@rmh.nhs.uk

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Should you require information in an alternative format, please contact The Royal Marsden Help Centre.

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