

What is a Death Certificate?

A Death Certificate is a legal document which declares that a person is officially deceased. It is useful in settling the deceased person's affairs, such as transfer of property through inheritance and/or insurance matters.

Who Can Register a Death?

The occupier of the house in which the person died;

Adult(s) causing the body of the deceased to be buried or cremated;

Any adult, including the nearest relative, who was present at death;

When Should Deaths Be Registered?

Deaths deemed to have occurred from natural causes are to be registered within five days, however the registration of sudden/violent deaths is dependent on the completion of several government processes and therefore has no time requirement.

What You Should Know?

Deaths are classified under two categories: sudden/violent and natural causes. [Natural deaths](#) are those where the deceased was being regularly attended to by a medical doctor (at least three months before death) and where the cause of death is not under reasonable doubt by the medical doctor.

[Sudden deaths](#) are those for which the deceased was not under the care of a medical doctor and whose cause of death may be under suspicion of foul play.

[Violent deaths](#), as the name suggests are those that occurred under violent circumstances.

If a person dies of natural causes at home:

- Report the death to the police
- Visit the last doctor to examine the deceased (at least three months before the death.) The physician will complete and sign a [Medical Certificate of the Cause of Death](#)
- The [Medical Certificate of the Cause of Death](#) should then be taken to the [Local District Registrar](#) (LDR) where the death will be registered.
- At the LDR the person responsible for the burial may then complete the application form for the death certificate, and pay a fee of \$850.

- The death certificate will be sent to the family member's address within six weeks.

If a person dies of natural causes in a hospital:

- After a death occurs in the hospital, the attending physician completes and signs a [Medical Certificate of the Cause of Death](#).
- The Medical Certificate will be issued to a relative or the person responsible for the burial, and that person must take it to the LDR, where the death will be registered.
- At the LDR the person responsible for the burial may then complete the application form for the death certificate, and pay a fee of \$850.
- The death certificate will be sent to the family members address within six weeks.

In the Case of Sudden or Violent Deaths:

- An autopsy or post mortem will be required and will be ordered by a police officer.
- After the post mortem is completed the police officer will issue the [Burial Order](#) to the

person responsible for burial.

- The police will then deliver the [Post Mortem](#) signed by the Pathologist or Medical Doctor to the Coroner's Court.
- The person responsible for burial may then request a Certificate of Coroner (Form D) from the Coroners Court, which is to be taken to the LDR and used to register the death.
- At the LDR the person responsible for the burial may then complete the application form for the death certificate, and pay a fee of \$850.
- The death certificate will be sent to the family member's address within six weeks

For further information please contact:

The Registrar General's Department

Twickenham Park

St. Catherine

Tel: (876) 749-0550

Website: www.rgd.gov.jm