

Deceased Management Advisory Group

Cremation Forms in England and Wales

To help members understand the requirements relating to electronic transmission of cremation and burial forms, DMAG has put together this guidance note.

Q. Can cremation paperwork be sent electronically?

A. Yes. The Cremation Regulations 2008, as amended, provides for crematoria to accept forms electronically. The Ministry of Justice has issued [guidance](#) to cremation authorities and crematorium managers that details what is required for the electronic submission of forms. Medical referees can receive the forms electronically to save them having to visit the crematorium. Any electronic communications must be via a secure system and not a social media app, for example. The Guidance requires that forms come from a reliable source. Should somebody completing the forms give misleading information, the onus will be on them and not the cremation authority. Before authorising a cremation, a Medical Referee needs to check and be satisfied that the forms have come from a reliable source; if so, the forms would be deemed to have been signed and the Medical Referee can accept them.

Q. Can the Registrar's Certificate for Burial or Cremation (Green Form) be sent electronically?

A. Yes. The [Coronavirus Act 2020 \(Commencement No. 1\) Regulations 2020](#) enables Registrars to send the disposal certificate to a cemetery or crematorium. The Deputy Registrar General issued initial Guidance on this subject, which can be viewed [here](#). The guidance states that:

- It is not envisaged that scanned documents should be received via a third party.
- Disposal forms can be completed manually and scanned or photographed for onward sending. Registrars should engage to find an email address for the relevant authority (local burial and crematorium authority); which could be a local authority shared mailbox (as long as the relevant person at the crematorium or cemetery can access it) as well as an address for returning counterfoils.
- After the emergency period, arrangements should be made to have all original forms sent to the register office to be processed in the normal manner.

However, clarification from the General Register Office to registrars on the Transmission of Greens states:

Q. What is meant by a 'relevant authority' when transmitting Greens?

A. The relevant authority is either the burial authority or the crematorium where the funeral is to take place however depending on the circumstances the Green may also be copied to the relevant funeral director (as long as arrangements have been made for secure receipt company mailbox etc).



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Q. We are told the green form should be transmitted directly to the burial or cremation authority but Funeral Directors use this paperwork, producing it to mortuary staff as evidence that they have permission to take the body. How would they and the mortuary staff overcome this?

A. Depending on the circumstances the Green may also be copied to the relevant funeral director (as long as arrangements have been made for secure receipt, eg company mail box etc).

Q. Can a funeral director sign a Cremation Form 1?

A. Yes. However, ideally the funeral director would not sign a Form 1, but would advise the applicant to complete it electronically and email it to the crematorium. The Medical Referee would need to be satisfied that such a form has come from a reliable source; if so the form would be deemed to have been signed. In cases where it is not possible for the applicant to complete a Form 1 electronically, the funeral director can apply instead. In these circumstances, the funeral director should take the relevant details over the phone, complete the Form 1 and sign it, stating the reason why the near relative/executor is unable to do so. The funeral director should include the contact details for the person who would have been the applicant. The Medical Referee can then make any enquiries that they deem necessary.

Can the applicant or somebody nominated by them inspect Cremation Form 4

The [Coronavirus Act 2020 \(Commencement No. 1\) Regulations 2020](#) removes the requirement for a Cremation Form 5. Revised Guidance issued by the Ministry of Justice states that the Applicant or somebody nominated by them can inspect Cremation Form 4. This may be difficult to achieve for crematoria that have closed their offices due to Government requirements to work from home wherever possible.

Should the applicant wish to exercise their right to inspect the Form 4, the cremation authority should seek to achieve this via a video conferencing facility such as FaceTime, Skype, GoToMeeting etc. This will allow the crematorium officer to speak with the family and help them with any questions they may have relating to the form. If it is not possible for such a method to be used, any personal data relating to those that attended the deceased, and any other personal details of living people except the applicant, should be blanked out, and the form emailed to the applicant with a clear instruction that the form must be deleted after inspection.

Once the applicant has inspected the Form 4, they should confirm by email that they are satisfied and that the cremation can go ahead; this will provide an audit trail in case of future enquiries.



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Summary

	Can you accept a digital copy of this form (completed downloadable form, scan or photograph), if it is completed accurately, and bears all information in its entirety and bears an appropriate digital or 'wet' signature or has come from a reliable source?	When received by the cremation authority, who can this digital form (whether original or scan/photo) be accepted from?
Preliminary Application for Cremation	Yes	Applicant or funeral director acting on the family's behalf.
Form Cremation 1 – Application for cremation of remains of a deceased person	Yes	Applicant or funeral director acting as the applicant on the family's behalf.
Form Cremation 2 – Application for cremation of body parts	Yes	Applicant or funeral director acting as the applicant on the family's behalf.
Form Cremation 3 – Application for cremation of a stillborn baby	Yes	Applicant or funeral director acting as the applicant on the family's behalf.
Form Cremation 4 – Medical Certificate	Yes	Applicant or funeral director acting on the family's behalf.
Form Cremation 5 - Confirmatory Medical Certificate	No longer required (if one is received, it can be destroyed)	N/A
Form Cremation 6 – Certificate of Coroner	Yes	Applicant or funeral director acting on the family's behalf.
Form Cremation 7 – Certificate following anatomical examination	Yes	Applicant or funeral director acting on the family's behalf.
Form Cremation 8 – Certificate releasing body parts for cremation	Yes	Applicant or funeral director acting on the family's behalf.
Form Cremation 9 – Certificate of Stillbirth	Yes	Applicant or funeral director acting on the family's behalf.
Form Cremation 10 – Authorisation of cremation of deceased person by Medical Referee	Yes	Directly from the Medical Referee
Form Cremation 11 – Certificate after post mortem examination	Yes	Applicant or funeral director acting on the family's behalf.
Form Cremation 12 – Authorisation of cremation of body parts by Medical Referee	Yes	Directly from the Medical Referee



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Form Cremation 13 – Authorisation of cremation of remains of stillborn baby by Medical Referee	Yes	Directly from the Medical Referee
Registrar's Disposal Form (Green)	Yes	Directly from the Registrar's Office (Registrar may also copy to the funeral director)

Burial Forms

	Can you accept a digital copy of this form (scan or photograph), if it is completed accurately, and bears all information in its entirety and bears an appropriate digital or 'wet' signature?	When received by the local authority, who can this digital form (whether original or scan/photo) be accepted from?
Preliminary Notice of Interment	Yes	Applicant or funeral director acting on the family's behalf.
Coroner's Disposal Form	Yes	Applicant or funeral director acting on the family's behalf.
Registrar's Disposal Form	Yes	Directly from the Registrar's Office



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