

## **COVID-19 Briefing for the Funeral Industry – Death and Still-birth Registrations During the Pandemic Period**

- Scotland has now started a period of ‘remote’ registration in order to cut down unnecessary physical contact during the pandemic period
- This will last until further notice, and be under active review
- Powers were taken in the recent Coronavirus Act 2020 to allow the provision of information to registrars by telephone or other electronic means (such as e-mail), the use of scanned electronic copies of key documents, and attestation by the use of transcribed informant signatures
- A power was also taken to allow funeral directors, where they are willing, have the family’s permission and are already arranging the deceased’s funeral, to serve as an informant to a death registration as a first choice
- It is important to note that this does not place any duty on a funeral director to serve in this capacity
- NRS has designed the remote registration process to feel and operate as much like ordinary registration as possible, and will make contact details for council registrars widely available
- Relevant aspects of the new system for the funeral industry are:
  - The ability of funeral directors to serve as informant to a death on behalf of a family
  - The fact that informants will be asked during the registration process if they know who is to be making the funeral arrangements, and if so, to provide an e-mail address and telephone number for that funeral director
  - Where the informant is able to give these details, the registrar will e-mail a scanned copy of the Form 14 to the funeral director to allow arrangements to be made
  - The scanned copy of the Form 14 can also be shared electronically by the funeral director with the relevant burial or cremation authority.
- As these arrangements are new, we may experience some initial difficulties in bottoming out unexpected issues. Please contact NRS on the details below and we will advise as soon as possible,.

**National Records of Scotland (NRS)**

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