

COVID-19

GUIDANCE FOR FUNERALS

3rd April 2020

During the coronavirus pandemic, it is necessary to put in place different arrangements for funerals to further protect the community from the risk of COVID-19.

We recognise this may have additional emotional impact on the family and friends of the deceased, but these are necessary measures being taken in these extraordinary circumstances.

Funeral service, burial and cremation arrangements are as set out below

Current permitted arrangements are as follows:

- Burials and Cremations are permitted and available in Guernsey.
- Burials are permitted in Sark and Alderney. Cremation may not be an option as it might not be possible to transport a deceased person with COVID-19 to Guernsey.

The following recommendations should be taken into consideration in relation to the arrangements for any funeral ceremony, gathering or burial:

- In relation to burials, it is advised that a service is held at the graveside.
- Attendance at a funeral ceremony is limited to immediate family only or, if none, to a close friend(s). Immediate family is defined as spouse or partner, children, parents and grandchildren. A strict limit on the number of immediate family members who can attend within the definition will not be applied, but will be subject to the discretion and agreement of both the Funeral Director and person leading the ceremony.
- In addition to a shortened funeral ceremony for immediate family members only, families should be invited to consider a memorial service or thanksgiving service at a later date when the COVID-19 pandemic is over.
- Social distancing must be maintained (people must be two metres apart) and relevant hygiene guidance followed. Hugging, kissing and hand holding should not take place in order to minimise the risk of infection. Attendees should avoid touching their eyes, nose and mouth and cough or sneeze into a tissue or elbow.
- Those who are medically vulnerable or at risk of infection should be strongly discouraged from attending.



- Anyone who is confirmed to currently be positive to COVID-19, awaiting results of a COVID-19 test, or is in self-isolation, must not attend a funeral.
- Anyone who is unwell with a fever or respiratory symptoms must not attend.

Please note that the above restrictions are put in place in order to protect our community from further infection.

Specific Cultural and Religious Concerns

The cemetery at Le Foulon in St Peter Port allows non-denominational burials. Non-denominational burials may also be allowed at other parochial cemeteries and details of these are available from local funeral directors.

Some religious beliefs require the deceased to be buried within 24 hours of death. Every effort will be made to accommodate such requirements, however please communicate this at an early stage of the process to ensure that the necessary arrangements are put in place.

The emerging evidence base on COVID-19 is rapidly evolving. This guidance is subject to review at any time and further updates may be made as new details or evidence emerges.