

FUNERALS (COVID-19)

To stop the spread of Covid-19, the Government is stopping all public gatherings of more than two people. This excludes funerals, which can be attended by **immediate family only (spouse, children, parents, grandchildren, grandparents)**.

At the moment, it is not possible to celebrate any funerals in church. Funeral services have to take place **at the graveside or at a crematorium**. However it can be possible for a Memorial Mass to be celebrated after the funeral service has taken place and when congregations are allowed to gather again.

Please remember that everyone who has been in contact with someone with Covid-19 has to self-isolate and cannot attend a funeral, and everyone over 70 should self-isolate because their chance of surviving the coronavirus is much weaker.

Immediate family attending a funeral have to follow the government social distancing rules and stay 6ft (2 meters) away from each other. This means physical comforting (hugging, kissing) is not allowed. This is extremely heartbreaking and difficult but it will save lives so everyone should follow these rules.

Extended family members such as cousins, aunts, uncles and friends should not attend funerals in order to prevent covid-19 from spreading.

If you don't follow government social distancing and isolation rules you can be issued a £60 penalty which will double with every incident up to £960.

You can ask the possibility to live stream the funeral on Facebook or other channels and invite all to join the funeral virtually and post text or video.

If the number of people who die from covid-19 significantly exceeds the capacity to manage the deceased locally, local government will have the power to take control of some of the death management process in their area. Activating these powers will ensure the local death management system continues to work effectively to protect public health and the dignity of the deceased. **Personal choice will be respected as far as possible, especially in regard to how we handle loved ones after they have passed.**

If you are religious and feel it is against the faith of your loved one to be cremated, contact your local authority and refer to the amendment in the government's emergency bill that gives those from Muslim, Jewish and other faiths the right to not be cremated if they die from Covid-19.

Find your local council using this website <https://www.gov.uk/find-local-council>