



UK Health
Security
Agency

Coronavirus (COVID-19): guidance for funerals and other events during the coronavirus pandemic – Easy read

November 2021

Who this guidance is for



This guidance is for:

- people who might be going to a funeral or other event to remember someone who has died
- people who might be arranging a funeral or other event to remember someone who has died
- people whose job is to arrange or manage funerals or other events to remember someone who has died

About this guidance



In this guidance 'other events' include things that might happen before or after the funeral such as:

- scattering ashes
- wakes

There are no legal limits on the number of people that you can invite to the funeral or other event.

When you are thinking about how many people to invite, remember that it is harder to stop coronavirus spreading in crowded places.

The people in charge of the place where the funeral or other event will happen might tell you that only a certain of number of people can attend.

Organisers should check the [guidance about working safely](#).

It is important to keep yourself and others safe from coronavirus.



There are special changes to the rules that mean people who might have coronavirus have special permission to go to funerals.

[You can find further information about these changes later in this guidance.](#)

Because there might be people who have coronavirus at a funeral, [it is particularly important to make sure that you do things](#) that can stop coronavirus from spreading.

Anyone who has coronavirus symptoms should not go to a funeral unless there are special permissions that apply. The main symptoms of coronavirus are:

- a new cough where you keep on coughing
- a high temperature
- losing or a change to your normal sense of smell or taste

If you have symptoms, you should:

- stay at home straight away and follow the [stay at home guidance](#)



- [arrange to have a coronavirus test online](#) or by phoning NHS 119 if you do not have the internet

There is more [guidance about staying safe and stopping the spread of coronavirus](#) available.

Important things everyone needs to do



Wash your hands with soap and water or hand sanitiser (gel) through the day.



Try not to touch your eyes, nose, or mouth.



If you must touch your face, wash your hands before and after.



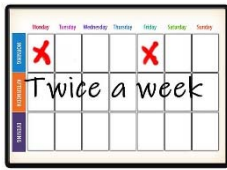
Cover your mouth and nose with tissues when you cough or sneeze.



If you do not have a tissue, cover your mouth and nose with your arm not your hand.



Put dirty tissues in a bin and wash your hands straight away.



Test yourself with a rapid test (lateral flow test) 2 times a week even if you don't have any symptoms.

Let fresh air in and follow the guidance about [letting fresh air in to indoor spaces to stop the spread of coronavirus](#).

Think about having the funeral or other event outside.

Use the NHS COVID-19 app.

Wear a face covering in crowded spaces.

If you have been in another country in the last 10 days, follow the guidance on [what you need to do after international travel](#) before attending the funeral.

Stay at home if you have coronavirus symptoms, are self-isolating, or are in quarantine



You should not go to the funeral or other event if you have [coronavirus symptoms](#). This is because you are a risk to other people.



Anyone who has coronavirus symptoms should stay home and away from other people (self-isolate) straight away.



Follow the [stay at home guidance](#), and [get a PCR test](#), even if you do not feel very poorly.



The law says you must self-isolate if a test says you have coronavirus, or if you are told to by NHS Test and Trace.



If you are told you have been close to someone who has coronavirus, but you do not need to self-isolate (for example because you have had 2 coronavirus jabs), think about being extra careful if you go to a funeral.



Follow the [guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection if you live with the person who has coronavirus](#).



Follow separate [guidance if you have had contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 but you do not live with them.](#)

Some people are [allowed to stop self-isolating or quarantining after travelling abroad to go to a funeral.](#)

This does not apply to going to other events, such as wakes or scattering ashes.

Unless you have special permission, you must not go to a funeral if you can say yes to any of the things on this list:



- you are self-isolating after a positive test result
- you have been told to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace
- you are in quarantine at home because you have [recently travelled to England from a country that is not on the red list, and you are not fully vaccinated](#)



- you are in a quarantine hotel because you recently travelled to England from [a red list country](#)

For more information see the section below on [attending a funeral if you are self-isolating or in quarantine after travelling to England from abroad](#).

Think about reducing the amount of time you are close to other people



You do not need to stay 2 metres away from other people at a funeral or other event.

However, not getting close to too many people makes the risk of catching or passing on coronavirus smaller.

Some people who might have coronavirus have special permission to leave self-isolation or quarantine to go to a funeral.

Because of this, you might want to stay away from people you don't usually live with when you are at a funeral or other event.



Think about taking a rapid lateral flow test for coronavirus to reduce the chance of you passing coronavirus onto other people.

Some people might want to still be extra careful to not catch coronavirus, and everyone else should give them the chance to do this.

Though the law doesn't say you have to, you should wear face coverings in crowded and indoor areas.

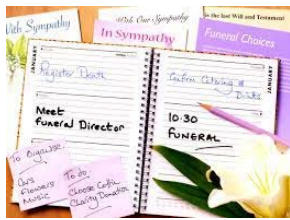
People who might get most poorly from coronavirus



People who might get very poorly from coronavirus should follow the guidance on [how to stay safe and stop the spread of coronavirus](#).

Some people who might get very poorly from coronavirus might have been told by their doctor to think about doing extra things to stop them from catching coronavirus.

You might want to think carefully about how to keep yourself safe if you go to a funeral.



If you are arranging a funeral or other event and know that someone who might get very poorly from coronavirus is going you should:

- try to help them join in online if they want to, for example by recording the funeral while it is happening and showing it online
- think about reminding others that people who may get very poorly from coronavirus will be at the funeral and they may need to keep a safe distance
- it is important that you don't single anyone out or give away private information

Religious or other beliefs that involve being close to the person who died



If you do not know if the person had coronavirus when they died, you are still advised not to get too close to their body. It is likely that you could still catch coronavirus from them.

If your religion or your beliefs mean you need to get close to the person who died, you should:



- wear personal protective equipment (PPE)
- make sure that someone who is trained to use PPE shows you how to use it properly
- follow the [guidance on care of the deceased](#)



It is not a good idea for people who might get very poorly from coronavirus to be close to the body of the person who died, even if they are wearing PPE.

Thinking about the place where the funeral will happen if you are arranging a funeral



You do not need to make sure that everyone is 2 metres away from other people all the time at a funeral or other event.



You may want to think about how you will help people who still want to keep a safe distance from others, especially those who have been in quarantine or self-isolating because of coronavirus.



All businesses and places where people work should follow the [working safely guidance](#). It is still the law that people whose job is to arrange funerals have to manage the risks of having the funeral.



They should do this by doing a health and safety risk assessment which includes the risk of coronavirus.

If you are told that someone will be at the funeral who has special permission to leave self-isolation or quarantine, you must include this when you are looking at risks.

People going to the funeral during their self-isolation or quarantine time should stay at least 2 metres away from everyone else, all of the time.

Follow the advice in the section [on attending a funeral if you are in self-isolation or in quarantine after travelling abroad](#).

Think about whether the funeral or other event can be held outside, as there is less chance of passing on coronavirus in outdoor places.

Going to a funeral if you are self-isolating or have been in quarantine after being in a foreign country



If you are fully vaccinated (double jabbed) and are [coming to England from another country that is not on the red list of countries](#), you do not need to quarantine at home or the place you are staying for 10 days.

There are also special changes to the law that give you permission to go to a funeral even if you have been self-isolating because of coronavirus, or if you are in quarantine after being abroad.

These permissions allow you to:

- briefly leave self-isolation so you can go to the funeral of a close family member (for example a partner, parent, brother or sister, child, or grandparent)
- briefly leave home quarantine after being abroad to go to the funeral of a close family member, or a household member, or a friend (if neither a close family member or a household member can attend)

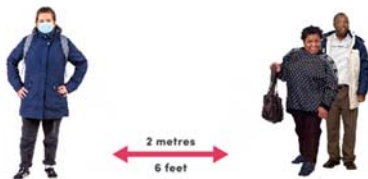


- ask permission to leave quarantine after arriving in England from [a red list country](#) to go to the funeral of a close family member or a household member only. This will mean agreeing a specific time with the hotel for returning to your room. There is more information about this in the [managed quarantine hotels guidance](#)

These changes to the rules are only for going to a funeral. You must not leave your home or quarantine to go to another event to remember the person who died.

You would be breaking the law and you may be fined. This means paying money because you broke the law.

Some people coming to England from a red list country are allowed to quarantine at home instead of in a quarantine hotel, as long as the rest of their household quarantines at home too. In this case, the household also has special permission to go to a funeral.



Even if you are allowed to go to a funeral, you are strongly advised to avoid attending in person. Instead, think about joining the funeral over the internet. This will help to reduce the risk of spreading coronavirus.

If after thinking very carefully about the risks, you still want to go to the funeral, it is essential you read the following guidance and do all of the things that are suggested.

Tell the people managing the funeral and the people who are going that you have left self-isolation or quarantine to be there.

Other people will need to know before they go to the funeral that there will be someone at the funeral who has left self-isolation or quarantine to be there. Telling the funeral manager means they can put things in place to reduce the risks.

Always keep at least 2 metres between yourself and other people, this includes when you are travelling to and from the funeral.



Some people going to the funeral may get very poorly from coronavirus and the funeral manager needs to make sure they are safe.



Wear a properly fitting surgical-grade face mask (Type IIR).



If you are wearing a respirator mask (for example N95), this should not have a valve. You can get Type IIR or N95 masks from chemists, supermarkets and online.



Bring your own face mask. Event organisers and those organising the funeral may also want to make sure they have some available.



Avoid singing or raising your voice, as this puts more coronavirus into the air. It is more risky to sing or raise your voice indoors than outdoors.



Wash your hands more often than usual with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or use hand sanitiser.



Try not to touch your eyes, nose and mouth.

If you need to cough or sneeze, cover your mouth and nose with a tissue that you then throw away, or cover your mouth and nose with your arm.

Try not to use public transport or share transport, if possible.

Doing all these things will help you to protect others from coronavirus.

People organising the funeral or other event should support those going to a funeral from self-isolation or quarantine to follow the steps in this guidance.

Feeling very sad after someone has died



Losing a friend or loved one can be very hard.

This may be even harder if you have lost someone during the coronavirus pandemic.



Feeling sad when someone has died is called grief. Grief affects everyone in different ways. The important thing is to allow yourself to grieve, and to have the right support to help with this.

There are different types of support available, for example,

- [Cruse Bereavement Care](#)
- [AtaLoss](#)

If you are supporting a child or young person who has lost someone, the [Childhood Bereavement Network](#) has information and links to national and local organisations.

Other guidance and rules



This guidance applies in England only.

Guidance on funerals and other events is also available for [Scotland](#), [Wales](#) and [Northern Ireland](#).

There is [guidance on care of the deceased with suspected or confirmed COVID-19](#).

Rules about keeping safe and healthy



This document is guidance. You can read about the law in the Health Protection Regulations for England in 2020:

- [The Health Protection \(Coronavirus, Restrictions\) \(Self-Isolation\) \(England\) Regulations 2020](#)
- [The Health Protection \(Coronavirus, International Travel and Operator Liability\) \(England\) Regulations 2021](#)

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