

How to apply for a correction to a death registration

1. General Information

A correction can only be made when the information on the certificate is wrong.

A correction is always made in the register held at the office responsible for the area where the death occurred.

Generally, corrections fall into **two** categories :

1. Corrections that can be made at the register office for the area where the person died – these tend to be minor mistakes made in a date of death, a place of birth, an address, an occupation etc
2. Corrections that need to be sent to the General Register Office (GRO) – these tend to be mistakes involving names.

Please note : The guidance contained in this leaflet will not apply if you want to correct a death registration which was originally registered following a Coroner's Inquest. For further advice on how to apply for a correction where there has been an inquest, you should contact the register office for the area where the death occurred.

2. How do I apply for a correction?

First of all, you should contact the register office for the area where the death was registered to find out if it is a mistake that they can correct. Alternatively, you can ring GRO on **0300 123 1837** who can also confirm where your application needs to be sent.

If the local register office can make the correction, you will need to arrange an appointment with them.

If it is an application that must be sent to GRO, you will need to complete an application form.

3. Where can I get an application form?

- by downloading it from www.direct.gov.uk
- your local register office may be able to supply you with one
- you can get one from GRO by ringing **0300 123 1837**

4. Who can apply for a correction?

- a relative of the deceased
- a person who would have been able to register the death in the first instance

5. What does a correction look like?

The original information will always be shown as it was first given, but a note will be written against the registration explaining what the correct information should be and the date when the correction was made. Any certificates issued from that point on will include the note in the margin.

6. Do I need to prove that the death certificate is wrong?

You need to show that the information originally given at the time of the registration was wrong. You will have to produce document(s) that clearly shows what the correct information should have been.

It is not possible to list every example of what will be acceptable but it should be an official document which shows the correct information and where relevant should be dated or valid at the time of the death. Typical examples will include :

- passport
- identity card
- photocard driving licence
- letter from a government department
- birth and/or marriage certificate
- utility bill
- credit card statement
- NHS medical card
- bank/building society statement

If you cannot send us any proof, then normally a correction will not be possible. Further advice can be obtained by ringing **0300 123 1837**

7. Do I need to send in original documents?

You should only send in documents which have been certified by a professional person or a person of good standing in the community as a true copy of the original. A list giving examples of the type of person that would be suitable can be found at:

www.direct.gov.uk/en/TravelAndTransport/Passports/Applicationinformation/DG_174151

Acceptable certifiers are listed in the section 'Who can countersign your application'.

The person should not be related by birth or marriage to the applicant(s), be in a personal relationship with the applicant or live at the same address.

The person certifying documents should :

- include the words -

"Certified to be a true copy of the original seen by me"

- sign
- print their name
- confirm their occupation
- add their address and telephone number

However, the General Register Office reserves the right to ask you to submit the original document if requested.

8. Do I have to be there when the registration is corrected?

If the correction is being carried out by the register office in the area where the person died, you need to organise with them a time when you can go to witness the correction being made and to sign the note in the register.

If it is a correction that needs to be sent to GRO, you can indicate on the application form whether or not you want to be present when the correction is being made.

However, if the correction involves a serious mistake you may be asked to make a statutory declaration. This declaration must be signed by someone who is legally qualified to attest an oath – a solicitor or a magistrate for example – a fee may be charged for this service. In these cases, you will not have to be present when the correction is made.

9. How long does a correction take?

For corrections that can be done at the register office in the area where the person died, you will need to contact them to arrange an appointment. As local register offices vary from office to office, we cannot give precise timescales.

For corrections that have to be sent to GRO, if there are no problems with your application, you can expect the paperwork authorising the correction to be sent out within **5 working days**. If GRO ask you for more information or you need to send in more paperwork or make a statutory declaration, each further reply may take up to **20 working days**.

However, you should be aware that in exceptional circumstances, it may not always be possible to meet these targets.

10. Where can I find out more?

You can contact the register office in the area where the person died. They will be happy to explain what you need to do.

Alternatively, you can telephone GRO who will advise you on your individual circumstances and how to apply for a correction.

Our contact details are :

Address: GRO Casework Team, PO Box 476, Southport, PR8 2WJ

Phone: 0300 123 1837

E-mail: corrections.re-reg@ips.gsi.gov.uk

Internet: Go to <http://www.direct.gov.uk> and search for "*Correcting a record*" to find forms for downloading.

The information contained in this leaflet is based on the **Births and Deaths Registration Act 1953** but is not a full statement of the law.

For the purpose of detecting and preventing crime, information relating to an application may be shared and verified with other government departments or law enforcement agencies