

# Advice to executors or next of kin following the death of a tenant

Please accept our condolences on your recent loss.

This advice aims to support you in clearing the property and ending the tenancy. Our staff will endeavour to offer advice and guidance in a sympathetic and sensitive way.

## Ending the tenancy

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Please notify Wiltshire Council Housing Management on 0300 456 0117 (option 4) of the death of a tenant as soon as possible and please provide a copy of the death certificate.

You will need to give four weeks written notice to end the tenancy. This notice period is a condition of the tenancy agreement and rent is due during it. Outstanding rent can be paid from the proceeds of the tenant's estate following the probate period; it is not a debt that is automatically passed to relatives. If you have any concerns about this, please let us know and we will provide advice and help.

At the start of the notice period we would like to make an appointment to carry out a pre end of tenancy inspection. You will be sent a copy of the report which will identify any works that you need to complete before the tenancy ends.

The tenancy ends on the Monday following the expiry of the four week notice period and we'll make an appointment to meet you at the property on that day to collect the keys. We will also check that any works have been completed and the house has been cleared. Please ensure the house is ready on this day to prevent additional rent being incurred.

Housing benefit entitlement stops on the death of the tenant.

An overpayment of housing benefit may occur if any benefit is credited to the tenant's rent account after the date of death.

If the deceased was in receipt of housing and/or council tax benefit, please also inform the revenues and benefits department of the council on 0300 456 0110.

## Clearing the property

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All floor coverings, furnishing and tenant's fittings/alterations should be removed. Every item must be completely removed from the house and garden, unless there is a specific written agreement from the council for these items or alterations to remain.

All the tenant's personal items and any rubbish must be cleared from the property.

No items are to be left for later collection. The council does **not** offer a free rubbish removal service and any additional costs incurred by the council in removing and disposing of any items will be charged for. The council's waste department can be contacted on 01300 456 0102 to pay for bulky items to be collected, or to ask for a price guide.

Please ensure that the garden is cleared and left in a tidy manner and check that lofts and sheds are cleared.

Do not leave any open gas pipes or exposed live wires, always use a qualified and registered tradesman to remove appliances.

## Returning keys

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### 1. Giving notice

You must give us 28 days' notice in writing. This 'Notice to Quit' should be counted from the Monday of the week. If you need any advice about this please contact your neighbourhood officer. Once the 'Notice to Quit' has been received you will be contacted by your neighbourhood officer to arrange pre end of tenancy inspection. The reason behind this pre end of tenancy inspection is because the council has experienced difficulties in recent years with some tenants moving out and leaving their home in a poor condition, often with large amounts of rubbish left behind.

### 2. Keys

At the pre end of tenancy inspection you will agree a date and time to meet with your neighbourhood officer at the property to return the keys. You must return all the keys to your property. This meeting should be done either on the day you move out or by no later than 12 noon on the Monday on which your 'Notice to Quit' ends.

**If you do not do this you will be charged a further week's rent for every week you hold the keys.**

### 3. Gas and electric meter keys/cards

It is essential that you also return to us any gas and electric meter keys/cards, so that the council can have the property safety tested for the next tenant. If you do not do this, or if you leave the meter in debt, you may be charged for the costs that the council incurs.

## Further information and contact checklist

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You may already have the support of friends and relatives at this difficult time, but you may find it helpful to contact CRUSE BEREAVEMENT CARE on 0844 477 9400 or e-mail [helpline@cruse.org.uk](mailto:helpline@cruse.org.uk) who offer bereavement counselling.

GOV.UK also has comprehensive, practical information to guide you through the arrangements and decisions that need to be made at this time. This can be found on their website [www.gov.uk/after-a-death](http://www.gov.uk/after-a-death)

As well as informing people who are close to the person, in many cases you'll need to close down accounts, or cancel or change insurance details, subscriptions, agreements, payments or direct debits

Here's a list to help you keep track; just cross through the ones that don't apply:

- relatives and friends
- employer
- school
- solicitor/accountant

#### *What to do in the first five days*

There are a few steps that need to be taken shortly after the death. In many cases the hospital or GP involved will help you with these early steps:

- notify the family GP
- register the death at a register office
- find the will - the deceased person's solicitor may have a copy if you can't find one
- begin funeral arrangements - you will need to check the will for any special requests
- if relevant, complete form BD8 given to you when you register the death and send to the local Jobcentre Plus or Social Security
- if the person who has died was receiving any benefits or tax credits, advise the offices that were making the payments

#### *Government organisations*

- the relevant tax office
- National insurance contributions office if they were self-employed (to cancel payments)
- Child benefit office (at latest within eight weeks)
- local authority departments if they paid council tax, had a parking permit, were issued with a blue badge for disabled parking, or received social services help, attended day care or similar
- UK Identity and Passport Service, to return and cancel a passport
- DVLA, to return any driving licence, cancel car tax or return car registration documents / change ownership

#### *Financial organisations*

- general insurance companies - contents, car, travel, medical etc
- any other company with which the deceased may have had rental, hire purchase or loan agreements
- if the deceased was the first named on an insurance policy, make contact as early as possible to check that you are still insured
- pension providers / life insurance companies
- banks and building societies
- mortgage provider
- hire purchase or loan companies
- credit card providers/store cards

#### *Utilities and household contacts*

- any private organisation/agency providing home help
- utility companies if accounts were in the deceased's name
- Royal Mail, if mail needs re-directing
- TV/internet companies with which the deceased had subscriptions

### *Other useful contacts*

- [Bereavement Register](#) and [Deceased Preference Service](#) to remove the deceased's name from mailing lists and databases
- clubs, trade unions, associations with seasonal membership for cancellation and refunds
- church / regular place of worship
- social groups to which the deceased belonged
- dentist
- creditors - anyone to whom the deceased owed money
- debtors - anyone who owed the deceased money

**May we reiterate our condolences on your recent loss, and we apologise if we appear direct in giving this advice; our wish is to be helpful in these difficult circumstances.**

## Contact us

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If you would like any further information, please contact Wiltshire Council Housing Management:

**Telephone:** 0300 456 0117 – option 4

**Email:** [hsgmail@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:hsgmail@wiltshire.gov.uk)

**Write to us or visit us:** Housing Management, Wiltshire Council  
Council House, Bourne Hill, Salisbury SP1 3UZ

Information about Wiltshire Council services can be made available on request in other languages including BSL and formats such as **large print** and audio. Please contact the council by telephone **0300 456 0100**, by textphone 01225 712500, or email [customerservices@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:customerservices@wiltshire.gov.uk)

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