

## **Confirmation of Death Grant process**

### **Social Security (Death Grant) (Jersey) Order 1974**

### **Social Security (Claims and Payments) (Jersey) Order 1974**

#### **Decision**

The Minister for Social Security has decided to confirm the process for paying Death Grants which was changed during Covid in 2021 and now includes paying the Death Grant directly to the funeral directors in the appropriate circumstances.

#### **Reason for Request**

During Covid, CLS streamlined the process for claiming and paying death grants. The updated process has improved customer service for all those involved – mainly the bereaved families, but also the Office of the Superintendent Registrar who are now more involved in the process, and funeral directors. The process is also more efficient and takes less time for government officers to administer death grant claims.

The Law provides the Minister discretion in how the benefit is paid, drawing on the following provisions.

The Social Security (Claims and Payments) Order Article 17 (2) states that a claim for Death Grant can be made by the following people: ‘Personal representatives’, ‘legatees’, ‘heirs or creditors’.

Article 17 (4) confirms that the term ‘creditors’ shall include any person who pays the funeral expenses, which includes funeral directors.

Article 17 (2) also gives the Minister further flexibility in this respect, saying the benefit may be ‘paid’ (in full) or ‘distributed’ (among a number of people).

#### **Relevant circumstances**

The Death Grant is a lump sum payment of £1,132 made towards the cost of a funeral.

The previous process required sight of the Death Certificate and a claim form be completed to enable the grant to be paid. The Department had to ensure the Death Grant was being paid to the person responsible for paying the funeral costs, so the order of precedence for claiming the Death Grant was The Executor, The Administrator of the Estate, or if neither were appointed, the Department would only pay the Death Grant after sighting the receipt for payment of the funeral, to ensure it was being paid to the correct person.

Due to the pandemic, the Department agreed with the Superintendent Registrar’s office that they would notify the Department via e-mail of a death, they would send a form confirming the Deceased’s personal details, the date of death, the next of kin and the funeral director responsible for the funeral. The Department now accepts this notification as a verified date of death, verifies the date of death on our records and pays the Death Grant directly to the funeral director in the appropriate circumstances.

This process has ensured that a date of death is received in a timely manner, records are updated immediately and the Death Grant paid to the funeral directors straight away. There

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have been no complaints received about this change in process, which has proved to be a positive change for bereaved families, funeral directors and the Department.

**Financial implications**

There are no financial implications to this decision.