

WHAT TO DO IF A TENANT DIES

This guide aims to help you when dealing with the Saxon Weald tenancy of a person who has died.



What to do

Please tell Saxon Weald as soon as possible after the death, so the necessary arrangements can be put in place.

If someone still lives at the address

If there is still someone living at the home, it may be possible for them to take over the tenancy. This is known as succession, and is only possible provided there has been no previous succession of the property since December 2000. We will give the tenancy to a husband or wife, partner or any surviving joint tenants. We may also pass the tenancy on to close members of the deceased's family, as long as they have been living there for at least a year prior to the death. In some cases, we may ask a relative (but not a husband/wife) to move to alternative accommodation. This is usually where the property is larger than they need or where the home has been adapted for special needs. We will always deal with these cases as sensitively as we can. If you believe 'succession' applies to you, please discuss this with us.



If the person who died lived alone

If the tenant lived alone, we serve a 'notice to quit' which brings the tenancy to an end after four weeks. We will ask to see the death certificate when available. If you need more time to sort things out, this can usually be arranged. You can clear the property and return the keys at any time during these four weeks, but rent is charged until the end of the tenancy. You

need to return the keys to our offices, or if the person lived in a retirement scheme, you can give the keys to a Scheme Manager.

Will rent have to be paid

Rent must be paid until the end of the agreed notice period. When you tell us about the death, we will tell you how much rent is due. This should be paid from any funds in the deceased's estate. If there are no funds in the estate, we will not pursue any outstanding rent from the next of kin. The executor of the estate must inform us in writing if there are no funds available.

Clearing the property

All belongings, including carpets and curtains, must be removed from the property. Please remember to check sheds, greenhouses and lofts for belongings. If you leave any belongings in the property when you give back the keys, we will dispose of them and charge the deceased's estate for the work. If you need help clearing the property, contact the local council's environmental health department as they may be able to collect any bulky or large items for a small charge. We may also be able to put you in touch with other local organisations who may be able to help you clear the property or who may take unwanted items for charity.



Getting a death certificate

If the person died at home, the medical certificate stating the cause of death will be signed by their doctor. If they died in hospital, it will be signed by the certifying doctor. You must record the death officially by registering with the Registrar. You will need an appointment to do this. You can purchase death certificates at the same time; you will need these in dealing with the deceased's affairs. You can find your nearest Registrar at www.gro.gov.uk.

How do I deal with benefits?



If the person who died was getting housing benefit, you must tell their local council's benefit department. You should note that council tax benefit, income support and housing benefit are all cancelled from the closest Monday to the date of death.

If the person who died was getting universal credit, you must inform the Department of Work and Pensions.

Other people to tell

You should also inform:

- ▶ Your local council tax department
- ▶ Inland Revenue
- ▶ Passport office
- ▶ Driver and Vehicle Licensing Authority
- ▶ Services: electricity, water, gas, post office
- ▶ Benefits agency – you might be entitled to claim an increase in retirement pension for widowers.

SUPPORT

AtaLoss

Helps bereaved people find support and wellbeing.

Tel: 0800 448 0800

www.ataloss.org

Bereavement counselling

To help you cope with your loss, you may find it helpful to talk to a bereavement counsellor. They can offer you advice, information and support. Cruse Bereavement Care is a charity that offers free advice for anyone who has been affected by a death. You can contact them on:

0844 477 9400 or email

helpline@crusebereavementcare.org.uk.

GOV.UK

Government website offering information about bereavement benefits.

www.gov.uk/bereavement-support-payment/how-to-claim

'Tell us Once'

'Tell us Once' is a service that lets you report a death to most government organisations in one go. When you register the death, the registrar will let you know if the service is available in your area. If so they will give you a phone number and unique reference number to use.

Tel: 0800 085 7308

www.gov.uk/after-a-death/organisations-you-need-to-contact-and-tell-us-once





Should you require a large-font, braille, audio or OpenDyslexic font version of this document, please contact:

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