



Births and Deaths Registration Act 1953

1953 CHAPTER 20 1 and 2 Eliz 2

PART III

GENERAL

Registers, certified copies, etc.

25 Provision of registers, etc., by Registrar General.

Registers of live–births, still–births and deaths shall be in such form as may be respectively prescribed, and the Registrar General shall provide any such registers, and any of the forms hereafter mentioned for making certified copies of entries in registers, which may be required for the purposes of this Act.

26 Quarterly returns to be made by registrar to superintendent registrar.

(1) Every registrar shall in the months of January, April, July and October on such days as may be appointed by the Registrar General—

(a) make and deliver to the superintendent registrar in the prescribed form a true copy, certified by him in the prescribed manner, of all the entries of live–births, still–births and deaths made in the registers kept by him during the period of three months ending with the last day of the month immediately preceding that in which the copy is required by this subsection to be made;

(b) if no live–birth, still–birth or death has been registered in his sub–district during that period ^{F1}_{F2}...

(i) deliver to the superintendent registrar [^{F3}a certificate in the prescribed form to that effect.]

^{F4}(ii)

(1A) The duty imposed by subsection (1)(a) of this section does not apply, as regards any particular three-month period, to any registrar who provides the relevant information to the superintendent registrar in an approved electronic form within the time allowed.

Status: Point in time view as at 28/06/2022.

Changes to legislation: Births and Deaths Registration Act 1953, Part III is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 14 July 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details)

[^{F5}(1B)] For [^{F6}the purposes of subsection (1A)] —

- (a) the relevant information is the information contained in each entry mentioned in subsection (1)(a) of this section made during the three-month period in question; and
 - (b) the time allowed, in relation to each such entry, is the period of seven days beginning with the day on which the entry is made.
- (2) Where a certified copy is delivered to the superintendent registrar under [^{F7}subsection (1) of this section], the superintendent registrar shall verify the copy and, if the copy is found to be correct, shall certify it [^{F8}in writing] to be a true copy; and where a certificate that there have been no registrations is so delivered, the superintendent registrar shall countersign the certificate.]
- [^{F9}(3) Where the superintendent registrar is provided with any certificate or information in electronic form under subsection (1)(b)(ii) or (1A) of this section he shall if satisfied of its authenticity apply an electronic signature to it.

(4) In this section—

^{F10}
...
^{F10}
...

“three-month period” means any such period of three months as is mentioned in subsection (1) of this section.]

Textual Amendments

- F1** Word in s. 26(1)(b) omitted (1.12.2021) by virtue of [The Births and Deaths Registration \(Electronic Communications and Electronic Storage\) Order 2021 \(S.I. 2021/1231\)](#), arts. 1(2), **3(5)(a)(i)**
- F2** Words in s. 26(1)(b)(1A)(2) substituted for words in s. 26(1)(b) (13.11.2006) by [The Registration of Births and Deaths \(Electronic Communications and Electronic Storage\) Order 2006 \(S.I. 2006/2809\)](#), arts. 1(1), **3(2)**
- F3** Words in s. 26(1)(b) substituted (1.12.2021) by [The Births and Deaths Registration \(Electronic Communications and Electronic Storage\) Order 2021 \(S.I. 2021/1231\)](#), arts. 1(2), **3(5)(a)(ii)**
- F4** S. 26(1)(b)(ii) omitted (1.12.2021) by virtue of [The Births and Deaths Registration \(Electronic Communications and Electronic Storage\) Order 2021 \(S.I. 2021/1231\)](#), arts. 1(2), **3(5)(a)(iii)**
- F5** S. 26(2) renumbered as s. 26(1B) (16.11.2009) by [The Registration of Marriages etc. \(Electronic Communications and Electronic Storage\) Order 2009 \(S.I. 2009/2821\)](#), arts. 1(1), **15**
- F6** Words in s. 26(1B) substituted (16.11.2009) by [The Registration of Marriages etc. \(Electronic Communications and Electronic Storage\) Order 2009 \(S.I. 2009/2821\)](#), arts. 1(1), **15**
- F7** Words in s. 26(2) substituted (13.11.2006) by [The Registration of Births and Deaths \(Electronic Communications and Electronic Storage\) Order 2006 \(S.I. 2006/2809\)](#), arts. 1(1), **3(3)**
- F8** Words in s. 26(2) substituted (1.12.2021) by [The Births and Deaths Registration \(Electronic Communications and Electronic Storage\) Order 2021 \(S.I. 2021/1231\)](#), arts. 1(2), **3(5)(b)**
- F9** S. 26(3)(4) inserted (13.11.2006) by [The Registration of Births and Deaths \(Electronic Communications and Electronic Storage\) Order 2006 \(S.I. 2006/2809\)](#), arts. 1(1), **3(4)**
- F10** Words in s. 26(4) omitted (1.12.2021) by virtue of [The Births and Deaths Registration \(Electronic Communications and Electronic Storage\) Order 2021 \(S.I. 2021/1231\)](#), arts. 1(2), **3(5)(c)**

27 Quarterly returns by superintendent registrar to Registrar General.

[^{F11}(1)] Every superintendent registrar shall four times in every year, on such days as may be appointed by the Registrar General, [^{F12}either—

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- (a) send to the Registrar General all certified copies of entries in registers of live-births, still-births or deaths which he has received during the three months immediately preceding the days so appointed respectively, or
- (b) provide the Registrar General with the information contained in those entries in an electronic form approved by the Registrar General;

and if the necessary copies have not been duly delivered to him, or the necessary information has not been duly provided to him,] the superintendent registrar shall procure, as far as is possible consistently with the provisions of this Act, that the deficiency is remedied.

[^{F13}(2) If the Registrar General receives any copies under subsection (1)(a) of this section, he may store the information contained in those copies in the electronic form approved by him for the purposes of subsection (1)(b) of this section.]

Textual Amendments

- F11** S. 27(1): s. 27 renumbered as s. 27(1) (13.11.2006) by [The Registration of Births and Deaths \(Electronic Communications and Electronic Storage\) Order 2006 \(S.I. 2006/2809\)](#), arts. 1(1), **4(2)**
- F12** Words in s. 27(1) substituted (13.11.2006) by [The Registration of Births and Deaths \(Electronic Communications and Electronic Storage\) Order 2006 \(S.I. 2006/2809\)](#), arts. 1(1), **4(3)**
- F13** S. 27(2) inserted (13.11.2006) by [The Registration of Births and Deaths \(Electronic Communications and Electronic Storage\) Order 2006 \(S.I. 2006/2809\)](#), arts. 1(1), **4(4)**

28 Custody of registers, etc.

- (1) Every registrar shall keep safely all registers of live-births, still-births and deaths which are in his custody and, when not in use, the registers shall be kept in the register box provided for the purpose by the Registrar General.
- (2) When a register of live-births or a register of deaths is filled, the registrar shall deliver it to the superintendent registrar to be kept by him with the records of his office.
- (3) When a register of still-births is filled, the registrar shall deliver it to the superintendent registrar, who shall forward it to the Registrar General.
- (4) The certified copies [^{F14}, or information in electronic form, sent or provided] to the Registrar General under the last foregoing section and the registers forwarded to him under the last foregoing subsection shall be kept in the General Register Office in such order and manner as the Registrar General, subject to any directions of the Minister, may think fit:

Provided that where a filled register of still-births has been forwarded to the Registrar General he may destroy any certified copies of entries therein previously sent to him.

Textual Amendments

- F14** Word in s. 28(4) substituted (13.11.2006) by [The Registration of Births and Deaths \(Electronic Communications and Electronic Storage\) Order 2006 \(S.I. 2006/2809\)](#), arts. 1(1), **5**

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C1** S. 28: functions of the Secretary of State transferred (1.4.1996) by [S.I. 1996/273](#), art. 3(1), **Sch. 1 para. 8(a)**

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C2 S. 28(4): transfer of functions (3.4.2008) by [The Transfer of Functions \(Registration\) Order 2008 \(S.I. 2008/678\)](#), art. 1(2), [Sch. 1 para. 6\(a\)](#) (with art. 4)

29 Correction of errors in registers.

- (1) No alteration shall be made in any register of live–births, still–births or deaths except as authorised by this or any other Act.
- (2) Any clerical error which may from time to time be discovered in any such register may, in the prescribed manner and subject to the prescribed conditions, be corrected by any person authorised in that behalf by the Registrar General.
- (3) An error of fact or substance in any such register may be corrected by entry in the margin (without any alteration of the original entry) by the officer having the custody of the register,^{F15} . . . and upon production to him by that person of a statutory declaration setting forth the nature of the error and the true facts of the case made by two qualified informants of the birth or death with reference to which the error has been made, or in default of two qualified informants then [^{F16}either] by two credible persons having knowledge of the truth of the case [^{F17}or, where it applies, in accordance with section 29A of this Act].

[^{F18}(3A) In the case of a death in relation to which the registrar has been given a confirmed attending practitioner's certificate, or a medical examiner's certificate, in accordance with regulations under section 20 of the 2009 Act—

- (a) no correction under subsection (3) of this section relating to the cause of death may be made without the approval of the medical examiner concerned;
- (b) any error of fact or substance relating to the cause of death in a register of deaths may be corrected by entry in the margin (without any alteration of the original entry) by the officer having the custody of the register on being notified by the medical examiner of the nature of the error and the true facts of the case.

(3B) In the case of a death in relation to which an investigation under Part 1 of the 2009 Act has been discontinued under section 4 of that Act (cause of death [^{F19}becoming clear before inquest])—

- (a) no correction under subsection (3) of this section relating to the cause of death may be made without the approval of the senior coroner concerned;
- (b) any error of fact or substance relating to the cause of death in a register of deaths may be corrected by entry in the margin (without any alteration of the original entry) by the officer having the custody of the register on being notified by the senior coroner of the nature of the error and the true facts of the case.]

[^{F20}(4) Where—

- (a) an error of fact or substance (other than an error relating to the cause of death) occurs in the information given by a coroner's certificate concerning ^{F21}... a death [^{F22}into which he has conducted an investigation under Part 1 of the 2009 Act (other than one that has been discontinued under section 4 of that Act)]; ^{F23}...

^{F23}(b)]

the coroner, if satisfied by evidence on oath or statutory declaration that such an error exists, may certify [^{F24}in writing] to the officer having the custody of the register in

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which the information is entered the nature of the error and the true facts of the case as ascertained by him on that evidence, and the error may thereupon be corrected by that officer in the register by entering in the margin (without any alteration of the original entry) the facts as so certified by the coroner.

Textual Amendments

- F15** Words repealed by S.I. 1968/1242, **Sch. 2**
- F16** Word in s. 29(3) inserted (24.7.2002) by [The Deregulation \(Correction of Birth and Death Entries in Registers or Other Records\) Order 2002 \(S.I. 2002/1419\)](#), **art. 2(1)(a)**
- F17** Words in s. 29(3) inserted (24.7.2002) by [The Deregulation \(Correction of Birth and Death Entries in Registers or Other Records\) Order 2002 \(S.I. 2002/1419\)](#), **art. 2(1)(b)**
- F18** S. 29(3A)(3B) inserted (25.7.2013 for specified purposes, 16.4.2024 for specified purposes) by [Coroners and Justice Act 2009 \(c. 25\)](#), s. 182(4)(e), **Sch. 21 para. 18(2)** (with s. 180); S.I. 2013/1869, **art. 2(o)(vii)**; S.I. 2024/516, **art. 2(f)**
- F19** Words in s. 29(3B) substituted (28.6.2022) by [Judicial Review and Courts Act 2022 \(c. 35\)](#), **ss. 39(4)(d)**, 51(3)
- F20** Words substituted by [Criminal Law Act 1977 \(c. 45\)](#), **Sch. 12**
- F21** Words repealed by [Coroners Act 1980 \(c. 38, SIF 33\)](#), **Sch. 2**
- F22** Words in s. 29(4)(a) substituted (25.7.2013) by [Coroners and Justice Act 2009 \(c. 25\)](#), s. 182(4)(e), **Sch. 21 para. 18(3)** (with s. 180); S.I. 2013/1869, **art. 2(o)(viii)**
- F23** S. 29(4)(b) and word repealed (25.7.2013) by [Coroners and Justice Act 2009 \(c. 25\)](#), s. 182(4)(e), **Sch. 21 para. 18(4)**, **Sch. 23 Pt. 1** (with s. 180); S.I. 2013/1869, **art. 2(o)(viii)**
- F24** Words in s. 29(4) substituted (1.12.2021) by [The Births and Deaths Registration \(Electronic Communications and Electronic Storage\) Order 2021 \(S.I. 2021/1231\)](#), **arts. 1(2), 3(6)**

[^{F25}29A Alternative procedure for certain corrections.

- (1) This section applies where, in an entry in a register of live-births, still-births or deaths, a person is wrongly shown as [^{F26}—
 - (a) the father of the person to whose birth or death the entry relates; or
 - (b) a parent of that person (having been so registered on the basis of being such a parent by virtue of 42, 43 or 46(1) or (2) of the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act 2008).]
- (2) Where this section applies, the statutory declaration required by section 29(3) of this Act may be made—
 - (a) in default of two qualified informants, by one qualified informant of the birth or death to which the entry relates;
 - (b) in default of any qualified informant, by one credible person having knowledge of the truth of the case.
- (3) Such a statutory declaration must be accompanied by documentary evidence of a finding that the person shown as the father was not the father [^{F27}or, as the case may be, that the person shown as a parent was not such a parent by virtue of 42, 43 or 46(1) or (2) of the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act 2008] .
- (4) But subsection (5) applies if it appears to the officer having custody of the register that the only evidence on which the finding was made was that of the person making the statutory declaration.

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- (5) In that case, the officer may correct the error only if satisfied that another person, who is either a qualified informant or a credible person having knowledge of the truth of the case, has (whether before or since the making of the declaration) confirmed the material facts stated in the declaration.
- (6) “Finding” means a finding made expressly in judicial proceedings in the United Kingdom or elsewhere.]

Textual Amendments

- F25** S. 29A inserted (24.7.2002) by [The Deregulation \(Correction of Birth and Death Entries in Registers or Other Records\) Order 2002 \(S.I. 2002/1419\)](#), **art. 2(2)**
- F26** Words in s. 29A(1) substituted (6.4.2009 for specified purposes, 1.9.2009 in so far as not already in force) by [Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act 2008 \(c. 22\)](#), s. 68(2), **Sch. 6 para. 10(2)**; S.I. 2009/479, art. 6(1)(e)(2) (with art. 7, Sch.)
- F27** Words in s. 29A(3) inserted (6.4.2009 for specified purposes, 1.9.2009 in so far as not already in force) by [Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act 2008 \(c. 22\)](#), s. 68(2), **Sch. 6 para. 10(3)**; S.I. 2009/479, art. 6(1)(e)(2) (with art. 7, Sch.)

Searches and Certificates

30 Searches of indexes kept by Registrar General.

- (1) The Registrar General shall cause indexes of all certified copies of entries in registers sent to him under this Act or under any enactment repealed by this Act to be made and kept in the General Register Office.
- [^{F28}(1A) The Registrar General shall cause an index to be made and kept in the General Register Office of the entries in the register kept by him under section 3A of this Act.]
- (2) Any person shall be entitled to search the said indexes at any time when the General Register Office is open for that purpose, and to have a certified copy of any entry in the said certified copies ^{F29}...
- (3) The foregoing provisions of this section shall not apply to certified copies of entries in registers of still–births, but the Registrar General may, if he sees fit in any particular case ^{F30}..., cause a search to be made for, and allow any person to have a certified copy of, any entry in any such certified copies or in any filled register of still–births which has been forwarded to him.
- [^{F31}(4) A reference in this section to a certified copy of an entry sent to the Registrar General includes a reference to information contained in such an entry provided to him in an electronic form approved by him: and a reference to an entry in any such certified copy shall be construed accordingly.]

Textual Amendments

- F28** S. 30(1A) inserted by [Children Act 1975 \(c. 72\)](#), **Sch. 3 para. 13(4)**
- F29** Words in s. 30(2) omitted (12.7.2016) by virtue of [Immigration Act 2016 \(c. 19\)](#), s. 94(1), **Sch. 15 para. 23(a)**; S.I. 2016/603, reg. 3(w)
- F30** Words in s. 30(3) omitted (12.7.2016) by virtue of [Immigration Act 2016 \(c. 19\)](#), s. 94(1), **Sch. 15 para. 23(b)**; S.I. 2016/603, reg. 3(w)

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F31 S. 30(4) inserted (13.11.2006) by [The Registration of Births and Deaths \(Electronic Communications and Electronic Storage\) Order 2006 \(S.I. 2006/2809\)](#), arts. 1(1), **6**

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

C3 S. 30(1)(2) extended with modifications by [S.I. 1982/1526](#), art. 2, Sch. 1 Pts. I, **II**

31 Searches of indexes kept by superintendent registrars.

- (1) Every superintendent registrar shall cause indexes of the registers of live–births and registers of deaths in his register office to be made and to be kept with the other records of that office, and the Registrar General shall supply to every superintendent registrar suitable forms for the making of such indexes.
- (2) Any person shall be entitled at any time when the register office is required to be open for the transaction of public business to search the said indexes, and to have a certified copy of any entry in the said registers [^{F32}issued by] the superintendent registrar ^{F33}...

Textual Amendments

F32 Words in s. 31(2) substituted (1.12.2021) by [The Births and Deaths Registration \(Electronic Communications and Electronic Storage\) Order 2021 \(S.I. 2021/1231\)](#), arts. 1(2), **3(7)**

F33 Words in s. 31(2) omitted (12.7.2016) by virtue of [Immigration Act 2016 \(c. 19\)](#), s. 94(1), **Sch. 15 para. 24**; [S.I. 2016/603](#), reg. 3(w)

32 Searches in registers kept by registrars.

Every registrar shall at any time when his office is required to be open for the transaction of public business allow searches to be made in any register of births or register of deaths in his keeping, and shall give a copy certified [^{F34}by the registrar] of any entry therein ^{F35}...

Provided that this section shall not apply in relation to a register of still–births except as the registrar may, with the consent of the Registrar General, in any particular case allow.

Textual Amendments

F34 Words in s. 32 substituted (1.12.2021) by [The Births and Deaths Registration \(Electronic Communications and Electronic Storage\) Order 2021 \(S.I. 2021/1231\)](#), arts. 1(2), **3(8)**

F35 Words in s. 32 omitted (12.7.2016) by virtue of [Immigration Act 2016 \(c. 19\)](#), s. 94(1), **Sch. 15 para. 25**; [S.I. 2016/603](#), reg. 3(w)

33 Short certificate of birth.

- (1) Any person shall, ^{F36}... on furnishing the prescribed particulars, be entitled to obtain from the Registrar General, a superintendent registrar or a registrar a short certificate of the birth of any person.
- (2) Any such certificate shall be in the prescribed form and shall be compiled in the prescribed manner from the records and registers in the custody of the Registrar General, or from the registers in the custody of the superintendent registrar or registrar, as the case may be, and shall contain such particulars as may be prescribed:

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Provided that any particulars prescribed in addition to name, surname, sex and date of birth shall not include any particulars relating to parentage or adoption contained in any such records or registers.

Textual Amendments

F36 Words in s. 33(1) omitted (12.7.2016) by virtue of [Immigration Act 2016 \(c. 19\), s. 94\(1\), Sch. 15 para. 26](#); [S.I. 2016/603, reg. 3\(w\)](#)

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

C4 S. 33 excluded by [S.I. 1987/2088, reg. 63\(1\)](#)

C5 S. 33(1) extended (with modifications) by [S.I. 1982/1526, art. 2, Sch. 1 Pts. I, II](#)

C6 S. 33(2) extended (with modifications) by [S.I. 1982/1526, art. 2, Sch. 1 Pt. I](#)

34 Entry in register as evidence of birth or death.

- (1) The following provisions of this section shall have effect in relation to entries in registers under this Act or any enactment repealed by this Act.
- (2) An entry or a certified copy of an entry of a birth or death in a register, or in a certified copy of a register, shall not be evidence of the birth or death unless the entry purports to be signed by some person professing to be the informant and to be such a person as might be [^{F37}required or permitted by law] at the date of the entry to give to the registrar information concerning that birth or death:

Provided that this subsection shall not apply—

- (a) in relation to an entry of a birth which, not being an entry signed by a person professing to be a superintendent registrar, purports to have been made with the authority of the Registrar General; or
 - (b) in relation to an entry of a death which purports to have been made upon a certificate from a coroner; or
 - (c) in relation to an entry of a birth or death which purports to have been made in pursuance of the enactments with respect to the registration of births and deaths at sea.
- [^{F38}(d) in relation to the re-registration of a birth under section 9(5) of this Act].
- (3) Where more than three months have intervened between the date of the birth of any child or the date when any living new-born child [^{F39}or still-born child] was found exposed and the date of the registration of the birth of that child, the entry or a certified copy of the entry of the birth of the child in the register, or in a certified copy of the register, shall not be evidence of the birth unless—
 - [^{F40}(a) if it appears that not more than 12 months have so intervened—
 - (i) the original entry was made after the commencement of paragraph 7 of Schedule 6 to the Welfare Reform Act 2009, or
 - (ii) the entry purports either to be signed by the superintendent registrar as well as by the registrar or to have been made with the authority of the Registrar General;]
 - (b) if more than twelve months have so intervened, the entry purports to have been made with the authority of the Registrar General:

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Provided that this subsection shall not apply in any case where the original entry in the register was made before the first day of January, eighteen hundred and seventy-five.

- (4) Where more than twelve months have intervened between the date of the death or of the finding of the dead body of any person and the date of the registration of that person's death, the entry or a certified copy of the entry of the death in the register, or in a certified copy of the register, shall not be evidence of the death unless the entry purports to have been made with the authority of the Registrar General:

Provided that this subsection shall not apply in any case where the original entry in the register was made before the first day of January, eighteen hundred and seventy-five.

- (5) A certified copy of an entry in a register or in a certified copy of a register shall be deemed to be a true copy notwithstanding that it is made on a form different from that on which the original entry was made if any differences in the column headings under which the particulars appear in the original entry and the copy respectively are differences of form only and not of substance.
- (6) The Registrar General shall cause any certified copy of an entry given in the General Register Office to be sealed or stamped with the seal of that Office; and, subject to the foregoing provisions of this section, any certified copy of an entry purporting to be sealed or stamped with the said seal shall be received as evidence of the birth or death to which it relates without any further or other proof of the entry, and no certified copy purporting to have been given in the said Office shall be of any force or effect unless it is sealed or stamped as aforesaid.

Textual Amendments

- F37** Words substituted by [Family Law Reform Act 1987 \(c. 42, SIF 49:7\)](#), s. 33(1), [Sch. 2 para. 17](#)
- F38** S. 34(2)(d) added by [Children Act 1975 \(c. 72\)](#), [Sch. 3 para. 13\(5\)\(a\)](#)
- F39** Words inserted by [Children Act 1975 \(c. 72\)](#), [Sch. 3 para. 13\(5\)\(b\)](#)
- F40** S. 34(3)(a) substituted (28.5.2012) by [Welfare Reform Act 2009 \(c. 24\)](#), s. 61(3), [Sch. 6 para. 14](#); S.I. 2012/1256, art. 2(2)(b)

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C7** S. 34(5)(6) extended with modifications by S.I. 1982/1526, art. 2, [Sch. 1 Pts. I, II, III](#)
- C8** S. 34(5) applied (4.4.2005) by [Gender Recognition Act 2004 \(c. 7\)](#), s. 26, [Sch. 3 para. 10\(1\)](#); S.I. 2005/54, art. 2
- C9** S. 34(5) applied (1.10.2014) by [Presumption of Death Act 2013 \(c. 13\)](#), s. 22(2), [Sch. 1 para. 3\(5\)](#) (with s. 21); S.I. 2014/1810, art. 2

[^{F41}34A Searches and records of information: additional provision

- (1) The Minister may make regulations for the purpose of enabling the Registrar General—
- (a) to carry out, on request, a search to find out whether the Registrar General's certified copies contain a particular entry;
- (b) to provide, on request, a record of information contained in an entry in the Registrar General's certified copies, otherwise than in the form of a certified copy.

^{F42}(2)

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- (3) The regulations may make provision—
- (a) as to how a request for a search or a record may be made;
 - (b) as to the forms in which a record may be provided.
- (4) The provision that may be made in the regulations includes provision for a record to be provided in a form that does not include all of the information contained in an entry.
- (5) This section does not affect the entitlement under this Act of any person to a certified copy of an entry in the Registrar General's certified copies.
- (6) In this section, “the Registrar General's certified copies” means the certified copies of entries in registers sent to the Registrar General under this Act or under any enactment repealed by this Act and kept in the General Register Office.
- (7) Section 30(4) applies for the purposes of this section as it applies for the purposes of section 30.]

Textual Amendments

F41 S. 34A inserted (26.5.2015) by [Deregulation Act 2015 \(c. 20\)](#), **ss. 98(2)**, 115(3)(k)

F42 S. 34A(2) omitted (12.7.2016) by virtue of [Immigration Act 2016 \(c. 19\)](#), s. 94(1), **Sch. 15 para. 28**; S.I. 2016/603, reg. 3(w)

Offences

35 Offences relating to registers.

If any person commits any of the following offences, that is to say—

- (a) if, being a registrar, he refuses or without reasonable cause omits to register any birth or death or particulars concerning which information has been tendered to him by a qualified informant and which he is required by or under this Act to register; or
- (b) if, being a person having the custody of any register of births or register of deaths, he carelessly loses or injures the register or allows the register to be injured,

he shall be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding [^{F43}level 3 on the standard scale].

Textual Amendments

F43 Words substituted by virtue of [Criminal Justice Act 1982 \(c. 48, SIF 39:1\)](#), **ss. 38, 46**

36 Penalties for failure to given information, etc.

If any person commits any of the following offences, that is to say—

- (a) if, being required by or under this Act to give information concerning any birth or death ^{F44}. . . or any dead body, he wilfully refuses to answer any question put to him by the registrar relating to the particulars required to be registered concerning the birth or death, or save as provided in this Act, fails to comply with any requirement of the registrar made thereunder;

Status: Point in time view as at 28/06/2022.

Changes to legislation: Births and Deaths Registration Act 1953, Part III is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 14 July 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details)

- (b) if he refuses or fails without reasonable excuse to give, deliver or send any certificate which he is required by this Act to give, deliver or send;
- (c) if, being a parent and save as provided in this Act, he fails to give information concerning the birth of his child as required by this Act; or
- (d) if, being a parent of a legitimated person ^{F45} . . . , he fails to comply with any requirement of the Registrar General made under or by virtue of section fourteen of this Act; or
- (e) if, being a person upon whom a duty to give information concerning a death is imposed by paragraph (a) of subsection (3) of section sixteen or seventeen of this Act, he fails to give that information and that information is not given, he shall be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding [^{F46}£2] for each offence.

Textual Amendments

- F44** Words repealed by [Children Act 1975 \(c. 72\), Sch. 4 Pt. VI](#)
- F45** Words repealed by [Legitimation \(Re-registration of Birth\) Act 1957 \(c. 39\), s. 1\(2\)](#)
- F46** Words substituted by virtue of [Decimal Currency Act 1969 \(c. 19\), s. 10\(1\)](#)

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C10** S. 36 amended by [Criminal Justice Act 1967 \(c. 80\), s. 92, Sch. 3 Pt. I](#) (as amended by virtue of [Criminal Justice Act 1982 \(c.48, SIF 39:1\), ss. 38, 46](#))

37 Penalty for forging certificate, etc.

If any person ^{F47}... falsifies any certificate, declaration or order [^{F48}(including any copy of the same in an approved electronic form)] under this Act, or knowingly uses, or gives or sends to any person, as genuine any false ^{F47}... certificate, declaration or order [^{F48}(including any copy of the same in an approved electronic form)] for the purposes of this Act, he shall be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding [^{F49}level 1 on the standard scale].

Textual Amendments

- F47** Words repealed by [Forgery and Counterfeiting Act 1981 \(c. 45, SIF 39:7\), s. 30, Sch. Pt. I](#)
- F48** Words in s. 37 inserted (1.12.2021) by [The Births and Deaths Registration \(Electronic Communications and Electronic Storage\) Order 2021 \(S.I. 2021/1231\), arts. 1\(2\), 3\(9\)](#)
- F49** Words substituted by virtue of [Criminal Justice Act 1982 \(c. 48, SIF 39:1\), s. 46](#)

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C11** S. 37 extended with modifications by [S.I. 1982/1526, art. 2, Sch. 1 Pt. III](#)

38 Prosecution of offences and application of fines.

- (1) Subject as may be prescribed, a superintendent registrar may prosecute any person for an offence under this Act committed within his district, and any costs incurred by him in any such prosecution, being costs which are not otherwise provided for, shall be defrayed out of moneys provided by Parliament.
- (2) ^{F50}

Status: Point in time view as at 28/06/2022.

Changes to legislation: Births and Deaths Registration Act 1953, Part III is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 14 July 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details)

Textual Amendments

F50 S. 38(2) repealed by [Criminal Justice Act 1972 \(c. 71\)](#), [Sch. 6 Pt. II](#)

Miscellaneous

[^{F51}38A Fees

- (1) The Minister may by regulations provide for fees to be payable to such persons as may be prescribed in respect of—
 - (a) the issue of a certificate under section 13(2);
 - (b) the carrying out of a search of—
 - (i) any register of births or register of deaths,
 - (ii) any index kept in relation to such a register, or
 - (iii) certified copies of entries in such a register;
 - (c) the provision of a certified copy, or other record of information, relating to an entry in a register of births or a register of deaths;
 - (d) the provision of a short certificate of birth or a short certificate of death (see sections 33 and 33A);
 - (e) such other birth or death registration services as may be prescribed.
- (2) Regulations under this section may—
 - (a) specify the amount of any fee payable under the regulations, or
 - (b) set out how such a fee is to be determined.
- (3) Subsection (4) applies where the regulations provide for a fee to be payable to a superintendent registrar or registrar.
- (4) The regulations may provide for such part of the fee as may be specified by or determined in accordance with the regulations to be payable by the superintendent registrar or registrar to the Registrar General in prescribed circumstances.
- (5) The regulations may provide for the reduction, waiver or refund of part or all of a fee whether by conferring a discretion or otherwise.
- (6) In this section—

“birth or death registration services” means services in connection with the registration of births or deaths which are provided—

 - (a) by or on behalf of the Registrar General, a superintendent registrar or registrar, or
 - (b) by any other person;

“prescribed” means prescribed in regulations made under this section.]

Textual Amendments

F51 S. 38A inserted (12.7.2016) by [Immigration Act 2016 \(c. 19\)](#), s. 94(1), [Sch. 15 para. 2](#); S.I. 2016/603, reg. 3(w)

Status: Point in time view as at 28/06/2022.

Changes to legislation: Births and Deaths Registration Act 1953, Part III is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 14 July 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details)

39 Regulations [^{F52} and approval of electronic forms etc.]

[^{F53}(1)] The Registrar General may, with the approval of the Minister, by statutory instrument make regulations—

- (a) prescribing anything which by this Act is required to be prescribed;
- (b) providing that any provision of this Act specified in the regulations, being a provision relating to the registration or entry of births, shall cease to apply in relation to still–births or, in the case of a provision expressed by this Act not to apply in relation to still–births, shall apply in relation to still–births with such modifications, if any, as may be prescribed:

Provided that paragraph (b) of this section shall not apply in relation to section nine or eleven of this Act.

[^{F54}(2)] The Registrar General may approve forms of electronic communication or electronic storage (including an electronic signature) for the purposes of a provision of this Act.]

Textual Amendments

- F52** Words in s. 39 heading inserted (1.12.2021) by [The Births and Deaths Registration \(Electronic Communications and Electronic Storage\) Order 2021 \(S.I. 2021/1231\)](#), arts. 1(2), **3(10)(a)**
- F53** S. 39 renumbered as s. 39(1) (1.12.2021) by [The Births and Deaths Registration \(Electronic Communications and Electronic Storage\) Order 2021 \(S.I. 2021/1231\)](#), arts. 1(2), **3(10)(b)**
- F54** S. 39(2) inserted (1.12.2021) by [The Births and Deaths Registration \(Electronic Communications and Electronic Storage\) Order 2021 \(S.I. 2021/1231\)](#), arts. 1(2), **3(10)(c)**

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C12** S. 39: functions of the Secretary of State transferred (1.4.1996) by [S.I. 1996/273](#), art. 3(1), **Sch. 1 para. 8(b)**
- C13** S. 39: transfer of functions (3.4.2008) by [The Transfer of Functions \(Registration\) Order 2008 \(S.I. 2008/678\)](#), art. 1(2), **Sch. 1 para. 6(b)** (with art. 4)

[^{F55}39A Regulations made by the Minister: further provisions

- (1) Regulations made by the Minister under the relevant provisions may—
 - (a) make different provision for different cases or areas,
 - (b) provide for exemptions from any of the provisions of the regulations, and
 - (c) contain such [^{F56}consequential,] incidental, supplemental and transitional provision as the Minister considers appropriate.
- (2) Before making regulations under the relevant provisions [^{F57}other than section 38A] the Minister must consult the Registrar General.
- (3) Any power of the Minister to make regulations under the relevant provisions is exercisable by statutory instrument.
- (4) A statutory instrument containing regulations made by the Minister under the relevant provisions is subject to annulment in pursuance of a resolution of either House of Parliament.
- (5) In this section “the relevant provisions” means sections 2B(1), (4) and (6), 2C, 2D, 2E, 10B [^{F58}, 10C [^{F59}, 34A and 38A]].]

Status: Point in time view as at 28/06/2022.

Changes to legislation: Births and Deaths Registration Act 1953, Part III is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 14 July 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details)

Textual Amendments

- F55** S. 39A inserted (19.9.2016) by [Welfare Reform Act 2009 \(c. 24\)](#), s. 61(3), [Sch. 6 para. 17](#); S.I. 2016/913, art. 2(b)
- F56** Word in s. 39A(1)(c) inserted (12.7.2016) by [Immigration Act 2016 \(c. 19\)](#), s. 94(1), [Sch. 15 para. 30\(a\)](#); S.I. 2016/603, [reg. 3\(w\)](#)
- F57** Words in s. 39A(2) inserted (12.7.2016) by [Immigration Act 2016 \(c. 19\)](#), s. 94(1), [Sch. 15 para. 30\(b\)](#); S.I. 2016/603, [reg. 3\(w\)](#)
- F58** Words in s. 39A(5) substituted (26.5.2015) by [Deregulation Act 2015 \(c. 20\)](#), [ss. 98\(4\)](#), 115(3)(k)
- F59** Words in s. 39A(5) substituted (12.7.2016) by [Immigration Act 2016 \(c. 19\)](#), s. 94(1), [Sch. 15 para. 30\(c\)](#); S.I. 2016/603, [reg. 3\(w\)](#)

40 ^[F60] Sending and providing notices, information or other documents]

^[F61]Where any notice], information, declaration, certificate, requisition, return or other document ^[F62]is required to be given, sent, delivered, produced, supplied, transmitted or otherwise provided for any purpose of this Act, the requirement may be met by—

- (a) sending the document by post, or
- (b) providing the document, or a copy of it, in an approved electronic form.]

Textual Amendments

- F60** S. 40 heading substituted (1.12.2021) by [The Births and Deaths Registration \(Electronic Communications and Electronic Storage\) Order 2021 \(S.I. 2021/1231\)](#), arts. 1(2), [3\(11\)\(a\)](#)
- F61** Words in s. 40 substituted (1.12.2021) by [The Births and Deaths Registration \(Electronic Communications and Electronic Storage\) Order 2021 \(S.I. 2021/1231\)](#), arts. 1(2), [3\(11\)\(c\)](#)
- F62** Words in s. 40 substituted (1.12.2021) by [The Births and Deaths Registration \(Electronic Communications and Electronic Storage\) Order 2021 \(S.I. 2021/1231\)](#), arts. 1(2), [3\(11\)\(b\)](#)

^[F63]40A Original documents may be in an approved electronic form

If a declaration made or certificate issued in the prescribed form for the purposes of this Act is made or issued in electronic form, it must be made or issued in an approved electronic form.]

Textual Amendments

- F63** S. 40A inserted (1.12.2021) by [The Births and Deaths Registration \(Electronic Communications and Electronic Storage\) Order 2021 \(S.I. 2021/1231\)](#), arts. 1(2), [3\(12\)](#)

41 Interpretation.

^[F64](1) In this Act, except where the context otherwise requires, the following expressions have the meanings hereby respectively assigned to them, that is to say—

^[F65]“the 2009 Act” means the Coroners and Justice Act 2009;]

^[F66]“approved electronic form” means any form of electronic communication or electronic storage (including an electronic signature) approved by the Registrar General pursuant to the powers conferred under section 39(2) of this Act;]

Status: Point in time view as at 28/06/2022.

Changes to legislation: Births and Deaths Registration Act 1953, Part III is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 14 July 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details)

[^{F65}“attending practitioner's certificate” has the meaning given by section 20(1)(a) of the 2009 Act;]

“birth” includes a live–birth and a still–birth;

[^{F65}“confirmed attending practitioner's certificate” means an attending practitioner's certificate in respect of which the cause of death has been confirmed by a medical examiner in accordance with regulations under section 20(1)(f)(i) of the 2009 Act;]

“disposal”, in relation to a dead body, means disposal by burial, cremation or any other means, and cognate expressions shall be construed accordingly;

[^{F67}“electronic communication” has the meaning given in section 15(1) of the Electronic Communications Act 2000;]

[^{F67}“electronic signature” has the meaning given in section 7(2) of the Electronic Communications Act 2000;]

[^{F68}“father”, in relation to an adopted child, means the child's natural father;]

“general search” means a search conducted during any number of successive hours not exceeding six, without the object of the search being specified;

“house” includes a public institution;

“live–birth” means the birth of a child born alive;

[^{F65}“medical examiner” means a person appointed under section 19 of the 2009 Act;]

[^{F65}“medical examiner's certificate” has the meaning given by section 20(1)(h) of the 2009 Act;]

“the Minister” means [^{F69}the Secretary of State];

[^{F68}“mother”, in relation to an adopted child, means the child's natural mother;]

“occupier” in relation to a public institution, includes the governor, keeper, master, matron, superintendent, or other chief resident officer, and, in relation to a house let in separate apartments or lodgings, includes any person residing in the house who is the person under whom the lodgings or separate apartments are immediately held, or his agent;

“particular search” means a search of the indexes covering a period not exceeding five years for a specified entry;

[^{F65}“partner” (except in the expression “civil partner”) is to be read in accordance with subsection (2) of this section;]

“public institution” means a prison, lock–up or hospital, and such other public or charitable institution as may be prescribed;

“prescribed” means prescribed by regulations made under section thirty–nine of this Act;

“qualified informant”, in relation to any birth or death, means a person who is by this Act or, in the case of a birth or death occurring before the commencement of this Act, by any enactment repealed by this Act required, or stated to be qualified, to give information concerning that birth or death;

“registrar” in relation to any birth or death, means the registrar of births and deaths for the sub–district in which the birth or death takes place, or where any [^{F70}still–born child] is found exposed or any dead body is found and no information as to the place of birth or death is available, for the sub–district in which the child or the dead body is found;

Status: Point in time view as at 28/06/2022.

Changes to legislation: Births and Deaths Registration Act 1953, Part III is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 14 July 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details)

“relative” includes a relative by marriage [^{F71}or civil partnership]^{F72} . . .

“still-born child” means a child which has issued forth from its mother after the [^{F73}twenty -fourth week] of pregnancy and which did not at any time after being completely expelled from its mother breathe or show any other signs of life, and the expression “still-birth” shall be construed accordingly;

“superintendent registrar” in relation to any registrar, means the superintendent registrar of births, deaths and marriages for the district in which that registrar’s sub-district is situate.

- [^{F74}(2) A person is the partner of a deceased person if the two of them (whether of different sexes or the same sex) were living as partners in an enduring relationship at the time of the deceased person's death.
- (3) A reference in this Act to an investigation under Part 1 of the 2009 Act being conducted includes a reference to the case where such an investigation has begun and—
- (a) has not yet finished,
 - (b) is suspended under Schedule 1 to that Act (whether temporarily or otherwise), or
 - (c) is discontinued under section 4 of that Act.]

Textual Amendments

- F64** S. 41 renumbered as s. 41(1) (25.7.2013) by Coroners and Justice Act 2009 (c. 25), s. 182(4)(e), **Sch. 21 para. 21(2)** (with s. 180); S.I. 2013/1869, art. 2(o)(x)
- F65** Words in s. 41 inserted (25.7.2013 for specified purposes, 16.4.2024 for specified purposes) by Coroners and Justice Act 2009 (c. 25), s. 182(4)(e), **Sch. 21 para. 21(1)** (with s. 180); S.I. 2013/1869, **art. 2(o)(ix)**; S.I. 2024/516, **art. 2(h)**
- F66** Words in s. 41(1) inserted (1.12.2021) by The Births and Deaths Registration (Electronic Communications and Electronic Storage) Order 2021 (S.I. 2021/1231), arts. 1(2), **3(13)(a)**
- F67** Words in s. 41(1) inserted (1.12.2021) by The Births and Deaths Registration (Electronic Communications and Electronic Storage) Order 2021 (S.I. 2021/1231), arts. 1(2), **3(13)(b)**
- F68** Definition inserted by Children Act 1975 (c. 72), **Sch. 3 para. 13(6)**
- F69** Words in s. 41 substituted (3.4.2008) by The Transfer of Functions (Registration) Order 2008 (S.I. 2008/678), art. 1(2), **Sch. 2 para. 6** (with art. 4)
- F70** Words substituted by Children Act 1975 (c. 72), **Sch. 3 para 13(1)**
- F71** Words in s. 41 inserted (5.12.2005) by Civil Partnership Act 2004 (c. 33), s. 263(10)(b), **Sch. 27 para. 19**; S.I. 2005/3175, art. 2(2)
- F72** Words repealed by Children Act 1975 (c. 72), **Sch. 4 Pt. I**
- F73** Words in s. 41 substituted (1.10.1992) by Still-Birth (Definition) Act 1992 (c. 29), **ss. 1(1), 4(2)**.
- F74** S. 41(2)(3) inserted (25.7.2013 for specified purposes, 16.4.2024 for specified purposes) by Coroners and Justice Act 2009 (c. 25), s. 182(4)(e), **Sch. 21 para. 21(2)** (with s. 180); S.I. 2013/1869, **art. 2(o)(x)**; S.I. 2024/516, **art. 2(h)**

42 Savings, etc.

- (1) Any registration effected, certificate issued, notice or information given, order, regulations or return made or other thing done under any enactment repealed by this Act shall, if in force at the commencement of this Act, continue in force, and have effect as if effected, issued, given, made or done under the corresponding provision of this Act.

^{F75}(2)

Status: Point in time view as at 28/06/2022.

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- ^{F75}(3)
- (4) Any document referring to an enactment repealed by this Act shall unless the contrary intention appears to be construed as referring to the corresponding provision of this Act.
- (5) Nothing in this Act shall affect any provision of the ^{M1}Population (Statistics) Act 1938, requiring particulars to be furnished for the purposes of that Act.
- (6) Nothing in this Act shall affect the registration of baptisms or burials, or the right of any officiating minister to receive any fees now usually paid for the performance or registration of any baptism or burial.
- (7) Nothing in the foregoing provisions of this section shall be taken as prejudicing the operation of [^{F76}sections 16(1) and 17(2)(a) of the ^{M2}Interpretation Act 1978] (which [^{F76}relate] to the effect of repeals).

Textual Amendments

F75 S. 42(2)(3) repealed (5.11.1993) by 1993 c. 50, s. 1(1), **Sch. 1, Pt. VIII**

F76 Words substituted by virtue of **Interpretation Act 1978 (c. 30), s. 25(2)**

Marginal Citations

M1 1938 c. 12.

M2 1978 c. 30.

43 Repeals and consequential amendments.

- (1) The enactments specified in the First Schedule to this Act shall have effect subject to the amendments respectively specified in that Schedule.
- (2) ^{F77}
- (3) ^{F78}

Textual Amendments

F77 S. 43(2), Sch. 2 repealed by **Statute Law (Repeals) Act 1974 (c. 22), Sch. Pt. XI**

F78 S. 43(3) repealed by **Registration Service Act 1953 (c. 37), Sch. 2**

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

C14 The text of s. 43(1) is in the form in which it was originally enacted: it was not reproduced in Statutes in Force and does not reflect any amendments or repeals which may have been made prior to 1.2.1991.

44 Short title, extent and commencement.

- (1) This Act may be cited as the Births and Deaths Registration Act 1953.
- (2) This Act shall not extend to Scotland or to Northern Ireland.
- (3) This Act shall come into force on the thirtieth day of September, nineteen hundred and fifty-three.

Status:

Point in time view as at 28/06/2022.

Changes to legislation:

Births and Deaths Registration Act 1953, Part III is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 14 July 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations.