



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}either—
 - (i) deliver to the superintendent registrar in the prescribed form a certificate to that effect under his hand, or
 - (ii) provide the superintendent registrar with a certificate to that effect in an approved electronic form.

(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Status: Point in time view as at 01/09/2014.

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 29 June 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)

[^{F2}(1B)] For [^{F3}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 [^{F4}subsection (1) of this section] , the superintendent registrar shall verify the copy and, if the copy is found to be correct, shall certify it under his hand 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.

[^{F5}(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—

“approved” means approved by the Registrar General;

“electronic signature” has the meaning given by section 7(2) of the Electronic Communications Act 2000; and

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

Textual Amendments

- F1** 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)**
- F2** 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**
- F3** 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**
- F4** 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)**
- F5** 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)**

27 Quarterly returns by superintendent registrar to Registrar General.

[^{F6}(1)] Every superintendent registrar shall four times in every year, on such days as may be appointed by the Registrar General, [^{F7}either—

- (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.

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[^{F8}(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

- F6** 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)**
- F7** 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)**
- F8** 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 [^{F9}, 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

- F9** 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)**
- 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.

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- (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, ^{F10} . . . 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 [^{F11}either] by two credible persons having knowledge of the truth of the case [^{F12}or, where it applies, in accordance with section 29A of this Act].
- [^{F13}(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 revealed by post-mortem examination)—
 - (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.]
- [^{F14}(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 ^{F15} . . . a death [^{F16}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)]; ^{F17} ...
 - ^{F17}(b)]

the coroner, if satisfied by evidence on oath or statutory declaration that such an error exists, may certify under his hand to the officer having the custody of the register in 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.

<p>Textual Amendments</p> <p>F10 Words repealed by S.I. 1968/1242, Sch. 2</p>

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- F11** 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)**
- F12** 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)**
- F13** 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)**
- F14** Words substituted by [Criminal Law Act 1977 \(c. 45\)](#), **Sch. 12**
- F15** Words repealed by [Coroners Act 1980 \(c. 38, SIF 33\)](#), **Sch. 2**
- F16** 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)
- F17** 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)

[^{F18}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 [^{F19}—
 - (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 [^{F20}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.
- (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

- F18** 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)**

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- F19** 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.)
- F20** 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.
- [^{F21}(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, on payment to the Registrar General or to such other person as may be appointed to act on his behalf of the following fees respectively, that is to say—
- ^{F22}(a)
- ^{F22}(b)
- (c) for every certified copy, the sum of [^{F23}£9.25][^{F23}£23.40].
- (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 and on payment as aforesaid of the appropriate fee aforesaid, 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.
- [^{F24}(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

- F21** S. 30(1A) inserted by [Children Act 1975 \(c. 72\)](#), [Sch. 3 para. 13\(4\)](#)
- F22** S. 30(2)(a)(b) repealed by [S.I. 1968/1242](#), [Sch. 2](#)
- F23** S. 30(2)(c): fees of £9.25 and £23.40 made payable respectively for (i) standard service and (ii) priority service for certified copy of entry obtained from the Registrar General following a search of indexes kept at General Register Office (6.4.2010) by virtue of The Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages (Fees) Order 2010 (S.I. 2010/441), arts. 1(1), 2, Sch. (as substituted (1.9.2014) by [The Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages \(Fees\) \(Amendment\) Order 2014 \(S.I. 2014/1790\)](#), arts. 1, 2)
- F24** 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](#)

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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 under the hand of the superintendent registrar, on payment by that person to the superintendent registrar of the following fees respectively, that is to say—
 - (a) for every general search, the sum of [^{F25}£18.00];
 - ^{F26}(b)
 - (c) for every certified copy, the sum of [^{F27}£10.00].

Textual Amendments

- F25** Fee in s. 31(2)(a) made payable (6.4.2010) by virtue of The Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages (Fees) Order 2010 (S.I. 2010/441), arts. 1(1), 2, Sch. (as substituted (1.9.2014) by [The Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages \(Fees\) \(Amendment\) Order 2014 \(S.I. 2014/1790\)](#), arts. 1, 2)
- F26** S. 31(2)(b) repealed by [S.I. 1968/1242](#), [Sch. 2](#)
- F27** Fee in s. 31(2)(c) made payable (6.4.2010) by virtue of The Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages (Fees) Order 2010 (S.I. 2010/441), arts. 1(1), 2, Sch. (as substituted (1.9.2014) by [The Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages \(Fees\) \(Amendment\) Order 2014 \(S.I. 2014/1790\)](#), arts. 1, 2)

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 under his hand of any entry therein, on payment of the following fees respectively, that is to say—

- ^{F28}(a)
- ^{F28}(b)
- (c) for every certified copy the sum of [^{F29}£4.00][^{F29}£7.00]:

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

- F28** S. 32(a)(b) repealed by [S.I. 1968/1242](#), [Sch. 2](#)
- F29** S. 32(c): fees of £4.00 and £7.00 made payable respectively for certified copy of entry in registers kept by registrars issued (a) at the time of registration and (b) after the time of registration (6.4.2010) by virtue of The Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages (Fees) Order 2010 (S.I. 2010/441), arts. 1(1), 2, Sch. (as substituted (1.9.2014) by [The Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages \(Fees\) \(Amendment\) Order 2014 \(S.I. 2014/1790\)](#), arts. 1, 2)

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33 Short certificate of birth.

- (1) Any person shall, on payment of a fee of ninepence and 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:

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.

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C4 S. 33 excluded by [S.I. 1987/2088](#), [reg. 63\(1\)](#)
- C5 S. 33(1): new fees made payable (6.4.2010) by virtue of [The Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages \(Fees\) Order 2010 \(S.I. 2010/441\)](#), arts. 1(1), 2, Sch. as specified therein (as substituted (1.4.2012) by [The Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages \(Fees\) \(Amendment\) Order 2012 \(S.I. 2012/760\)](#), arts. 1, 3, 4)
- 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 [^{F30}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.

[^{F31}(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 [^{F32}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—

[^{F33}(a) if it appears that not more than 12 months have so intervened—

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- (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:

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

- F30** Words substituted by [Family Law Reform Act 1987 \(c. 42, SIF 49:7\)](#), s. 33(1), [Sch. 2 para. 17](#)
- F31** S. 34(2)(d) added by [Children Act 1975 \(c. 72\)](#), [Sch. 3 para. 13\(5\)\(a\)](#)
- F32** Words inserted by [Children Act 1975 \(c. 72\)](#), [Sch. 3 para. 13\(5\)\(b\)](#)
- F33** 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

Offences

35 Offences relating to registers.

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

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- (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 [^{F34}level 3 on the standard scale].

Textual Amendments

F34 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 . . . ^{F35} 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;
- (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 . . . ^{F36}, 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 [^{F37}£2] for each offence.

Textual Amendments

F35 Words repealed by [Children Act 1975 \(c. 72\)](#), **Sch. 4 Pt. VI**

F36 Words repealed by [Legitimation \(Re-registration of Birth\) Act 1957 \(c. 39\)](#), **s. 1(2)**

F37 Words substituted by virtue of [Decimal Currency Act 1969 \(c. 19\)](#), **s. 10(1)**

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

C9 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 . . . ^{F38} falsifies any certificate, declaration or order under this Act, or knowingly uses, or gives or sends to any person, as genuine any false . . . ^{F38}

Status: Point in time view as at 01/09/2014.

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certificate, declaration or order for the purposes of this Act, he shall be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding [^{F39}level 1 on the standard scale].

Textual Amendments

F38 Words repealed by [Forgery and Counterfeiting Act 1981 \(c. 45, SIF 39:7\)](#), s. 30, **Sch. Pt. I**

F39 Words substituted by virtue of [Criminal Justice Act 1982 \(c. 48, SIF 39:1\)](#), s. 46

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

C10 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) ^{F40}

Textual Amendments

F40 S. 38(2) repealed by [Criminal Justice Act 1972 \(c. 71\), Sch. 6 Pt. II](#)

Miscellaneous

39 Regulations.

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.

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

C11 S. 39: functions of the Secretary of State transferred (1.4.1996) by [S.I. 1996/273, art. 3\(1\), Sch. 1 para. 8\(b\)](#)

C12 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)

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40 Sending documents by post.

Any notice, information, declaration, certificate, requisition, return or other document required by or under this Act may be sent by post.

41 Interpretation.

[^{F41}(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—

[^{F42}“the 2009 Act” means the Coroners and Justice Act 2009;]

[^{F42}“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;

[^{F42}“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;

[^{F43}“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;

[^{F42}“medical examiner” means a person appointed under section 19 of the 2009 Act;]

[^{F42}“medical examiner's certificate” has the meaning given by section 20(1)(h) of the 2009 Act;]

“the Minister” means [^{F44}the Secretary of State];

[^{F43}“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;

[^{F42}“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;

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“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 [^{F45}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;

“relative” includes a relative by marriage [^{F46}or civil partnership]^{F47} . . .

“still–born child” means a child which has issued forth from its mother after the [^{F48}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.

- [^{F49}(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

- F41** 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)
- F42** 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\(h\)](#)
- F43** Definition inserted by [Children Act 1975 \(c. 72\)](#), [Sch. 3 para. 13\(6\)](#)
- F44** 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)
- F45** Words substituted by [Children Act 1975 \(c. 72\)](#), [Sch. 3 para 13\(1\)](#)
- F46** 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)
- F47** Words repealed by [Children Act 1975 \(c. 72\)](#), [Sch. 4 Pt. I](#)
- F48** Words in s. 41 substituted (1.10.1992) by [Still-Birth \(Definition\) Act 1992 \(c. 29\)](#), [ss. 1\(1\)](#), 4(2).
- F49** 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.

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^{F50}(2)

^{F50}(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 [^{F51}sections 16(1) and 17(2)(a) of the ^{M2}Interpretation Act 1978] (which [^{F51}relate] to the effect of repeals).

Textual Amendments

F50 S. 42(2)(3) repealed (5.11.1993) by 1993 c. 50, s. 1(1), **Sch. 1, Pt. VIII**

F51 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) ^{F52}
- (3) ^{F53}

Textual Amendments

F52 S. 43(2), Sch. 2 repealed by [Statute Law \(Repeals\) Act 1974 \(c. 22\), Sch. Pt. XI](#)

F53 S. 43(3) repealed by [Registration Service Act 1953 \(c. 37\), Sch. 2](#)

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

C13 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.

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- (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 01/09/2014.

Changes to legislation:

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