

New forms to be used from 1 July 2005 for certifying death and authorising cremation: What you need to know

From 1 July 2005 medical practitioners will need to use different forms for certifying death and authorising cremation. The table below tells you what you need to know about the new forms.

Which medical practitioner?	Name and purpose of form required	Which form does it replace?	Optional or compulsory?	Who fills it out?	Additional information	Additional documentation
Medical practitioner certifying death	Current Medical Certificate of Cause of Death Certification of death.	White A4 Medical Certificate of Cause of Death and any yellow/buff Medical Certificate of Cause of Death. The medical practitioner certifying death is no longer required to complete an additional medical certificate for cremations (currently contained in the blue four page Departmental cremation form).	Compulsory.	The medical practitioner who was responsible for the deceased's medical care immediately before death or who examines the body of the deceased person within 48 hours of their death.	<p>The current version of the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death is an A3 form in triplicate. It includes additional questions relating to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the name, date of birth or age, and the place of birth of any living or deceased sibling of a deceased child (Q14), to enable the Registry to comply with requirements under the <i>Death Notification Legislation (Amendment) Act 2004</i>; and the presence of a cardiac pacemaker in the body of the deceased person (Q10). <p>Medical practitioners that do not have the most recent version of this form should contact the Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages on 1300 369 367 (dial "0" after the prompt) or download an order form from www.dvc.vic.gov.au/bdm.htm</p> <p>The medical practitioner authorising cremation is required to undertake careful and independent inquiry into the circumstances surrounding the death of the deceased. In general this will require them to have a discussion with the treating and attending doctor(s).</p>	

Which medical practitioner?	Name and purpose of form required	Which form does it replace?	Optional or compulsory?	Who fills it out?	Additional information	Additional documentation
Medical practitioner authorising cremation	<p>Certificate of Registered Medical Practitioner Authorising Cremationⁱⁱ</p> <p>Provides for an independent medical practitioner to authorise the cremation.</p>	Last page of four page blue Departmental form: <i>Certificate of Licensed Medical Practitioner Authorising Cremation.</i>	Compulsory.	<p>A registered medical practitioner who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • did not sign the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death • is not in partnershipⁱⁱⁱ with and will not derive any professional remuneration from any medical practitioner attending the deceased; and • has not and will not acquire any property or pecuniary benefits due to the death of the deceased. <p>If the medical practitioner is unable to make one or more of statements 2, 3, 4 or 5 on the form they must telephone the Office of the State Coroner on (03) 9684 4444.</p>	From 1 July any medical practitioner rather than only Government Medical Officers, can authorise cremations provided they can make certain statements contained on the new forms.	<p>The funeral director or other person arranging the cremation must provide the medical practitioner completing this form with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a completed <i>Application for Cremation Authorisation</i> form; and • a copy of the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death of a person aged 28 days or older; or • a copy of the Medical Certificate of Cause of Perinatal Death.

i Click on "Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages," scroll down to the row called "Online Birth and Death Notification" and click on "Medical Practitioners only."

ii Note separate detailed guidance notes on this form have been developed for medical practitioners authorising cremation. In the first instance these have been distributed to Government Medical Officers in Victoria. The guidance notes can be obtained from www.health.vic.gov.au/cemeteries or by contacting the Cemeteries Act Implementation Team on 9637 4824 or 1800 034 280.

iii 'Partnership' refers to a legal relationship of persons carrying on a business with a view to profit. Partners are jointly and severally liable for the debts incurred in connection with the partnership. It does not include for example two doctors who work in a hospital and share the same employer.