



Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984

1984 CHAPTER 22

PART III

DISPOSAL OF DEAD BODIES

46 Burial and cremation

- (1) It shall be the duty of a local authority to cause to be buried or cremated the body of any person who has died or been found dead in their area, in any case where it appears to the authority that no suitable arrangements for the disposal of the body have been or are being made otherwise than by the authority.
- (2) Any council which is the local authority for the purposes of the Local Authority Social Services Act 1970 may cause to be buried or cremated the body of any deceased person who immediately before his death was being provided with accommodation under Part III of the National Assistance Act 1948 by, or by arrangement with, the council or was living in a hostel provided by the council under section 29 of that Act.
- (3) An authority shall not cause a body to be cremated under subsection (1) or (2) above where they have reason to believe that cremation would be contrary to the wishes of the deceased.
- (4) Subsections (1) and (2) above do not affect any enactment regulating or authorising the burial, cremation or anatomical examination of the body of a deceased person.
- (5) An authority may recover from the estate of the deceased person or from any person who for the purposes of the National Assistance Act 1948 was liable to maintain the deceased person immediately before his death expenses incurred under subsection (1) or subsection (2) above, less any amount recovered by the authority by way of death grant in respect of that death under section 32 of the Social Security Act 1975.

Status: This is the original version (as it was originally enacted).

- (6) Without prejudice to any other method of recovery, a sum due to an authority under subsection (5) above is recoverable summarily as a civil debt by proceedings brought within three years after the sum becomes due.
- (7) The Secretary of State may cause such inquiries to be held as he may deem necessary or desirable for the purposes of this section.
- (8) The Secretary of State may by order made by statutory instrument direct that this section, in its application to the Isles of Scilly, shall have effect subject to exceptions, adaptations and modifications.

47 Regulations about dead bodies

- (1) The Secretary of State may make regulations imposing any conditions and restrictions—
 - (a) with respect to means of disposal of dead bodies other wise than by burial or cremation,
 - (b) as to the period of time a body may be retained after death on any premises, or
 - (c) with respect to embalming or preservation,which may appear to be desirable in the interests of public health or public safety.
- (2) The power to make regulations under this section shall be exercisable by statutory instrument.

48 Removal of body to mortuary or for immediate burial

- (1) If a justice of the peace (acting, if he deems it necessary, *ex parte*) is satisfied, on a certificate of the proper officer of the local authority for the district in which a dead body lies, that the retention of the body in any building would endanger the health of the inmates of that building or of any adjoining or neighbouring building, he may order—
 - (a) that the body be removed by, and at the cost of, the local authority to a mortuary, and
 - (b) that the necessary step be taken to secure that it is buried within a time limited by the order or, if he considers immediate burial necessary, immediately.
- (2) Where an order is made under subsection (1) above, relatives or friends of the deceased person shall be deemed to comply with the order if they cause the body to be cremated within the time limited by the order or, as the case may be, immediately.
- (3) An order under this section shall be an authority to any officer named in it to do all acts necessary for giving effect to the order.