
STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

1984 No. 552**CORONERS****The Coroners Rules 1984**

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The Lord Chancellor, in exercise of the powers conferred on him by sections 26 and 27 of the Coroners (Amendment) Act 1926(a) and with the concurrence of the Secretary of State, hereby makes the following Rules:—

PART I

GENERAL

Citation and commencement

1. These Rules may be cited as the Coroners Rules 1984 and shall come into operation on 1st July 1984.

Interpretation

- 2.—(1) In these Rules, unless the context otherwise requires—
 - “the Act of 1887” means the Coroners Act 1887(b);
 - “the Act of 1926” means the Coroners (Amendment) Act 1926;
 - “appropriate officer” has the same meaning as it has in section 3A of the Act of 1887(c);
 - “chief officer of police” means the chief officer of police for the area in which the coroner's jurisdiction is comprised;
 - “coroner” includes a deputy and assistant deputy coroner;

(a) 1926 c. 59; section 26 was amended by section 2 of the Coroners' Juries Act 1983 (c. 31).

(b) 1887 c. 71.

(c) Section 3A was inserted by the Coroners' Juries Act 1983, section 1.

“deceased” means the person upon whose body a post-mortem examination is made or touching whose death an inquest is held or the person whose death is reported to the coroner, as the case may be;

“enforcing authority” has the same meaning as it has in section 18(7) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974(a);

“hospital” means any institution for the reception and treatment of persons suffering from illness or mental disorder, any maternity home, and any institution for the reception and treatment of persons during convalescence;

“industrial disease” means a disease prescribed under section 76 of the Social Security Act 1975(b);

“inquest” means an inquest for the purpose of inquiring into the death of a person;

“legal proceedings” includes proceedings for the purpose of obtaining any benefit or other payments under the provisions of the Social Security Act 1975 relating to industrial injuries or under section 5 of the Industrial Injuries and Diseases (Old Cases) Act 1975(c);

“pneumoconiosis medical board” and “pneumoconiosis medical panel” have the same meanings as they have in the Social Security (Industrial Injuries) (Prescribed Diseases) Regulations 1980(d);

“post-mortem examination” means a post-mortem examination which a legally qualified medical practitioner is directed or requested by a coroner to make under section 21 of the Act of 1887(e) or under section 21(1) or 22(1) of the Act of 1926(f);

“registrar” means a registrar of births and deaths;

“the Registration Acts” has the same meaning as it has in the Act of 1887;

“special examination” has the same meaning as it has in section 22(1) of the Act of 1926.

(2) In these Rules any reference to a Rule or Schedule shall be construed as a reference to a Rule contained in these Rules, or, as the case may be, to a Schedule thereto; and any reference in a Rule to a paragraph shall be construed as a reference to a paragraph of that Rule.

Revocations and application

3.—(1) Subject to paragraph (2), the Rules specified in Schedule 1 are hereby revoked.

(2) These Rules shall not have effect in relation to any inquest begun before 1st July 1984 or to any post-mortem examination which, before that day, a coroner has directed or requested a medical practitioner to make; and, accordingly, the Rules revoked by paragraph (1) shall continue to have effect in relation to any such inquest or post-mortem examination.

(a) 1974 c. 37.

(b) 1975 c. 14; the relevant instrument is S.I. 1980/377, as amended by S.I. 1980/1493, 1982/249 and 566.

(c) 1975 c. 16.

(d) S.I. 1980/377.

(e) Section 21 was amended by the Coroners (Amendment) Act 1926, sections 30 and 31 and Schedules 2 and 3.

(f) Section 21(1) was amended by the Coroners Act 1980 (c. 38), section 1 and Schedule 1.

PART II

AVAILABILITY OF CORONER

Coroner to be available at all times

4. A coroner shall at all times hold himself ready to undertake, either by himself or by his deputy or assistant deputy, any duties in connection with inquests and post-mortem examinations.

PART III

POST-MORTEM EXAMINATIONS

Delay in making post-mortem to be avoided

5. Where a coroner directs or requests that a post-mortem examination shall be made, it shall be made as soon after the death of the deceased as is reasonably practicable.

Medical practitioner making post-mortem

6.—(1) In considering what legally qualified medical practitioner shall be directed or requested by the coroner to make a post-mortem examination the coroner shall have regard to the following considerations:—

- (a) the post-mortem examination should be made, whenever practicable, by a pathologist with suitable qualifications and experience and having access to laboratory facilities;
- (b) if the coroner is informed by the chief officer of police that a person may be charged with the murder, manslaughter or infanticide of the deceased, the coroner should consult the chief officer of police regarding the legally qualified medical practitioner who is to make the post-mortem examination;
- (c) if the deceased died in a hospital, the coroner should not direct or request a pathologist on the staff of, or associated with, that hospital to make a post-mortem examination if—
 - (i) that pathologist does not desire to make the examination, or
 - (ii) the conduct of any member of the hospital staff is likely to be called in question, or
 - (iii) any relative of the deceased asks the coroner that the examination be not made by such a pathologist,unless the obtaining of another pathologist with suitable qualifications and experience would cause the examination to be unduly delayed;
- (d) if the death of the deceased may have been caused by any of the diseases or injuries within paragraph (2), the coroner should not direct or request a legally qualified medical practitioner who is a member of a pneumoconiosis medical panel to make the post-mortem examination.

(2) The diseases and injuries within this paragraph are those in connection with which duties are from time to time imposed upon pneumoconiosis medical

boards by Part III of the Social Security Act 1975 and any regulations made under that Act (a).

Coroner to notify persons of post-mortem to be made

7.—(1) Where a coroner directs or requests a legally qualified medical practitioner to make a post-mortem examination, the coroner shall notify the persons and bodies set out in paragraph (2) of the date, hour and place at which the examination will be made, unless it is impracticable to notify any such persons or bodies or to do so would cause the examination to be unduly delayed.

(2) The persons and bodies to be notified by the coroner are as follows:—

- (a) any relative of the deceased who has notified the coroner of his desire to attend, or be represented at, the post-mortem examination;
- (b) the deceased's regular medical attendant;
- (c) if the deceased died in a hospital, the hospital;
- (d) if the death of the deceased may have been caused by any of the diseases or injuries within Rule 6(2) (other than occupational asthma), the pneumoconiosis medical panel for the area;
- (e) if the death of the deceased may have been caused by any accident or disease notice of which is required by or under any enactment to be given—
 - (i) to an enforcing authority, the appropriate inspector appointed by, or representative of, that authority; or
 - (ii) to an inspector appointed by an enforcing authority, that inspector;
- (f) any government department which has notified the coroner of its desire to be represented at the examination;
- (g) if the chief officer of police has notified the coroner of his desire to be represented at the examination, the chief officer of police.

(3) Any person or body mentioned in paragraph (2) shall be entitled to be represented at a post-mortem examination by a legally qualified medical practitioner, or if any such person is a legally qualified medical practitioner he shall be entitled to attend the examination in person; but the chief officer of police may be represented by a member of the police force of which he is chief officer.

(4) Nothing in the foregoing provisions of this Rule shall be deemed to limit the discretion of the coroner to notify any person of the date, hour and place at which a post-mortem examination will be made and to permit him to attend the examination.

Persons attending post-mortem not to interfere

8. A person attending a post-mortem examination by virtue of paragraph (3) or (4) of Rule 7 shall not interfere with the performance of the examination.

(a) The relevant instrument and the instruments amending it are set out in the footnote to the definition of "industrial disease" in Rule 2(1).

Preservation of material

9. A person making a post-mortem examination shall make provision, so far as possible, for the preservation of material which in his opinion bears upon the cause of death for such period as the coroner thinks fit.

Report on post-mortem

10.—(1) The person making a post-mortem examination shall report to the coroner in the form set out in Schedule 2 or in a form to the like effect.

(2) Unless authorised by the coroner, the person making a post-mortem examination shall not supply a copy of his report to any person other than the coroner.

Premises for post-mortems

11.—(1) No post-mortem examination shall be made in a dwelling house or in licensed premises.

(2) Every post-mortem examination shall be made in premises which are adequately equipped for the purpose of the examination.

(3) Where a person dies in a hospital possessing premises so equipped, any post-mortem examination of the body of that person shall, with the consent of the hospital authority, be made in those premises unless the coroner otherwise decides.

(4) For the purpose of this Rule no premises shall be deemed to be adequately equipped for the purpose of post-mortem examinations unless they are supplied with running water, proper heating and lighting facilities, and containers for the storing and preservation of material.

PART IV

SPECIAL EXAMINATIONS

Preservation of material

12. A person making a special examination shall make provision, so far as possible, for the preservation of the material submitted to him for examination for such period as the coroner thinks fit.

Report on special examination

13. Unless authorised by the coroner, the person making a special examination shall not supply a copy of his report to any person other than the coroner.

PART V

BURIAL ORDERS

Issue of burial order

14. An order of a coroner authorising the burial of a body shall not be issued unless the coroner has held, or has decided to hold, an inquest touching the death.

Burial order where certificate for disposal of body issued

15. Where a coroner is satisfied that a certificate for the disposal of a body has been issued by a registrar, the coroner shall not issue an order authorising the burial of that body unless the certificate has been surrendered to him; and in such a case he shall on issuing the order transmit the certificate to the registrar and inform him of the issue of the order.

PART VI

INQUESTS

Formality

16. Every inquest shall be opened, adjourned and closed in a formal manner.

Inquest in public

17. Every inquest shall be held in public:

Provided that the coroner may direct that the public be excluded from an inquest or any part of an inquest if he considers that it would be in the interest of national security so to do.

Days on which inquest not to be held

18. An inquest shall not be held on Christmas Day, Good Friday, or a bank holiday unless the coroner thinks it requisite on grounds of urgency that an inquest should be held on such a day, and no inquest shall be held on a Sunday.

Coroner to notify persons of inquest arrangements

19. The coroner shall notify the date, hour and place of an inquest to—

- (a) the spouse or a near relative or personal representative of the deceased whose name and address are known to the coroner; and
- (b) any other person who—
 - (i) in the opinion of the coroner is within Rule 20(2); and
 - (ii) has asked the coroner to notify him of the aforesaid particulars of the inquest; and
 - (iii) has supplied the coroner with a telephone number or address for the purpose of so notifying him.

Entitlement to examine witnesses

20.—(1) Without prejudice to any enactment with regard to the examination of witnesses at an inquest, any person who satisfies the coroner that he is within paragraph (2) shall be entitled to examine any witness at an inquest either in person or by counsel or solicitor:

Provided that—

- (a) the chief officer of police, unless interested otherwise than in that capacity, shall only be entitled to examine a witness by counsel or solicitor;
- (b) the coroner shall disallow any question which in his opinion is not relevant or is otherwise not a proper question.

(2) Each of the following persons shall have the rights conferred by paragraph (1):—

- (a) a parent, child, spouse and any personal representative of the deceased;
- (b) any beneficiary under a policy of insurance issued on the life of the deceased;
- (c) the insurer who issued such a policy of insurance;
- (d) any person whose act or omission or that of his agent or servant may in the opinion of the coroner have caused, or contributed to, the death of the deceased;
- (e) any person appointed by a trade union to which the deceased at the time of his death belonged, if the death of the deceased may have been caused by an injury received in the course of his employment or by an industrial disease;
- (f) an inspector appointed by, or a representative of, an enforcing authority, or any person appointed by a government department to attend the inquest;
- (g) the chief officer of police;
- (h) any other person who, in the opinion of the coroner, is a properly interested person.

Examination of witnesses

21. Unless the coroner otherwise determines, a witness at an inquest shall be examined first by the coroner and, if the witness is represented at the inquest, lastly by his representative.

Self-incrimination

22.—(1) No witness at an inquest shall be obliged to answer any question tending to incriminate himself.

(2) Where it appears to the coroner that a witness has been asked such a question, the coroner shall inform the witness that he may refuse to answer.

Adjournment where inspector or representative of enforcing authority etc. is not present

23.—(1) Where a coroner holds an inquest touching the death of a person which may have been caused by an accident or disease notice of which is required to be given to an enforcing authority, the coroner shall adjourn the inquest unless an inspector appointed by, or a representative of, the enforcing authority is present to watch the proceedings and shall, at least four days before holding the adjourned inquest, give to such inspector or representative notice of the date, hour and place of holding the adjourned inquest.

(2) Where a coroner holds an inquest touching the death of a person which may have been caused by an accident or disease notice of which is required to be given to an inspector appointed by an enforcing authority, the coroner shall adjourn the inquest unless the inspector or a representative of the inspector is present to watch the proceedings and shall, at least four days before holding the adjourned inquest, give to the inspector or representative notice of the date, hour and place of holding the adjourned inquest.

Notice to person whose conduct is likely to be called in question

24. Any person whose conduct is likely in the opinion of the coroner to be called in question at an inquest shall, if not duly summoned to give evidence at the inquest, be given reasonable notice of the date, hour and place at which the inquest will be held.

Adjournment where person whose conduct is called in question is not present

25. If the conduct of any person is called in question at an inquest on grounds which the coroner thinks substantial and which relate to any matter referred to in Rule 36 and if that person is not present at the inquest and has not been duly summoned to attend or otherwise given notice of the holding of the inquest, the inquest shall be adjourned to enable him to be present, if he so desires.

Request by chief officer of police for adjournment

26.—(1) If the chief officer of police requests a coroner to adjourn an inquest on the ground that a person may be charged with an offence within paragraph (3), the coroner shall adjourn the inquest for twenty-eight days or for such longer period as he may think fit.

(2) At any time before the date fixed for the holding of the adjourned inquest, the chief officer of police may ask the coroner for a further adjournment and the coroner may comply with his request.

(3) The offences within this paragraph are murder, manslaughter or infanticide of the deceased, an offence under section 1 of the Road Traffic Act 1972(a) committed by causing the death of the deceased and an offence under section 2(1) of the Suicide Act 1961(b) consisting of aiding, abetting, counselling or procuring the suicide of the deceased.

(a) 1972 c. 20; section 1 was substituted by the Criminal Law Act 1977 (c. 45), section 50.

(b) 1961 c. 60.

Request by Director of Public Prosecutions for adjournment

27.—(1) If the Director of Public Prosecutions requests a coroner to adjourn an inquest on the ground that a person may be charged with an offence (whether or not involving the death of a person other than the deceased) committed in circumstances connected with the death of the deceased, not being an offence within Rule 26(3), the coroner shall adjourn the inquest for twenty-eight days or for such longer period as he may think fit.

(2) At any time before the date fixed for the holding of the adjourned inquest, the Director of Public Prosecutions may ask the coroner for a further adjournment and the coroner may comply with his request.

Coroner to adjourn in certain other cases

28.—(1) If during the course of an inquest evidence is given from which it appears to the coroner that the death of the deceased is likely to be due to an offence within Rule 26(3) and that a person might be charged with such an offence, then the coroner, unless he has previously been notified by the Director of Public Prosecutions that adjournment is unnecessary, shall adjourn the inquest for fourteen days or for such longer period as he may think fit and send to the Director particulars of that evidence.

(2) At any time before the date fixed for the holding of the adjourned inquest, the Director of Public Prosecutions may ask the coroner for a further adjournment and the coroner may comply with his request.

Coroner to furnish certificate after adjournment

29. A certificate under the hand of a coroner stating the particulars which under the Registration Acts are required to be registered concerning a death which he furnishes to a registrar of deaths under section 20(4)(a) of the Act of 1926 shall be furnished within five days from the date on which the inquest is adjourned.

Coroner's interim certificate of the fact of death

30. When an inquest has been adjourned for any reason and section 20(4) of the Act of 1926 does not apply, the coroner shall on application supply to any person who, in the opinion of the coroner, is a properly interested person an interim certificate of the fact of death.

Coroner to furnish certificate stating result of criminal proceedings

31. A certificate under the hand of a coroner stating the result of the relevant criminal proceedings which he furnishes to a registrar of deaths under section 20(5) or section 20(7) of the Act of 1926 shall be furnished within twenty-eight days from the date on which he is notified of the result of the proceedings under section 20(9) or section 20(10) of that Act or, if the person charged with an offence before a magistrates' court as mentioned in section 20(8) of that Act is

(a) Section 20 was substituted by the Criminal Law Act 1977, section 56 and Schedule 10, and was amended by the Coroners Act 1980, section 1 and Schedules 1 and 2.

not committed for trial to the Crown Court, within twenty-eight days from the date on which he is notified under the said section 20(8) of the result of the proceedings in the magistrates' court.

Effect of institution of criminal proceedings

32. Subject to section 20 of the Act of 1926, an inquest shall not be adjourned solely by reason of the institution of criminal proceedings arising out of the death of the deceased.

Coroner to notify persons as to resumption of, and alteration of arrangements for, adjourned inquest

33.—(1) If an inquest which has been adjourned in pursuance of section 20 of the Act of 1926 is not to be resumed, the coroner shall notify the persons within paragraph (4).

(2) If an inquest which has been adjourned as aforesaid is to be resumed, the coroner shall give reasonable notice of the date, hour and place at which the inquest will be resumed to the persons within paragraph (4).

(3) Where a coroner has fixed a date, hour and place for the holding of an inquest adjourned for any reason, he may, at any time before the date so fixed, alter the date, hour or place fixed and shall then give reasonable notice to the persons within paragraph (4).

(4) The persons within this paragraph are the members of the jury (if any), the witnesses, the chief officer of police, any person notified under Rule 19 or 24 and any other person appearing in person or represented at the inquest.

Recognizance of witness or juror becoming void

34. Where any witness or juror who has been bound over to attend at an adjourned inquest, whether without further notice or conditionally on receiving further notice, is notified by the coroner that his attendance at the adjourned inquest is not required or that the inquest will not be resumed, the recognizance entered into by him shall be void.

Coroner to notify Crown Court officer of adjournment in certain cases

35. Where a person charged with an offence within Rule 26(3) is committed for trial to the Crown Court, the coroner who has adjourned an inquest in pursuance of section 20 of the Act of 1926 shall inform the appropriate officer of the Crown Court at the place where the person charged is to be tried of such adjournment.

Matters to be ascertained at inquest

36.—(1) The proceedings and evidence at an inquest shall be directed solely to ascertaining the following matters, namely—

- (a) who the deceased was;
- (b) how, when and where the deceased came by his death;

- (c) the particulars for the time being required by the Registration Acts to be registered concerning the death.

(2) Neither the coroner nor the jury shall express any opinion on any other matters.

Documentary evidence

37.—(1) Subject to the provisions of paragraphs (2) to (4), the coroner may admit at an inquest documentary evidence relevant to the purposes of the inquest from any living person which in his opinion is unlikely to be disputed, unless a person who in the opinion of the coroner is within Rule 20(2) objects to the documentary evidence being admitted.

(2) Documentary evidence so objected to may be admitted if in the opinion of the coroner the maker of the document is unable to give oral evidence within a reasonable period.

(3) Subject to paragraph (4), before admitting such documentary evidence the coroner shall at the beginning of the inquest announce publicly—

- (a) that the documentary evidence may be admitted, and
- (b) (i) the full name of the maker of the document to be admitted in evidence, and
- (ii) a brief account of such document, and
- (c) that any person who in the opinion of the coroner is within Rule 20(2) may object to the admission of any such documentary evidence, and
- (d) that any person who in the opinion of the coroner is within Rule 20(2) is entitled to see a copy of any such documentary evidence if he so wishes.

(4) If during the course of an inquest it appears that there is available at the inquest documentary evidence which in the opinion of the coroner is relevant to the purposes of the inquest but the maker of the document is not present and in the opinion of the coroner the content of the documentary evidence is unlikely to be disputed, the coroner shall at the earliest opportunity during the course of the inquest comply with the provisions of paragraph (3).

(5) A coroner may admit as evidence at an inquest any document made by a deceased person if he is of the opinion that the contents of the document are relevant to the purposes of the inquest.

(6) Any documentary evidence admitted under this Rule shall, unless the coroner otherwise directs, be read aloud at the inquest.

Exhibits

38. All exhibits produced in evidence at an inquest shall be marked with consecutive numbers and each number shall be preceded by the letter “C”.

Notes of evidence

39. The coroner shall take notes of the evidence at every inquest.

No addresses as to facts

40. No person shall be allowed to address the coroner or the jury as to the facts.

Summing-up and direction to jury

41. Where the coroner sits with a jury, he shall sum up the evidence to the jury and direct them as to the law before they consider their verdict and shall draw their attention to Rules 36(2) and 42.

Verdict

42. No verdict shall be framed in such a way as to appear to determine any question of—

- (a) criminal liability on the part of a named person, or
- (b) civil liability.

Prevention of similar fatalities

43. A coroner who believes that action should be taken to prevent the recurrence of fatalities similar to that in respect of which the inquest is being held may announce at the inquest that he is reporting the matter in writing to the person or authority who may have power to take such action and he may report the matter accordingly.

PART VII

SUMMONING OF JURORS AND EXCUSAL FROM JURY SERVICE

Summoning of jurors

44. Subject to the provisions of these Rules, the person to whom the coroner's warrant is issued under section 3 of the Act of 1887 for the summoning of persons to attend as jurors at inquests shall have regard to the convenience of the persons summoned and to their respective places of residence, and in particular to the desirability of selecting jurors within reasonable daily travelling distance of the place where they are to attend.

Method of summoning

45. Subject to the provisions of these Rules, jurors shall be summoned by notice in writing sent by post or delivered by hand and a notice shall be sent or delivered to a juror at his address as shown in the electoral register.

Notice to accompany summons

46. A written summons sent or delivered to any person under Rule 45 shall be accompanied by a notice informing him—

- (a) of the effect of section 3A of the Act of 1887 and Rules 51(1) and 52; and
- (b) that he may make representations to the appropriate officer with a view

to obtaining the withdrawal of the summons, if for any reason he is not qualified for jury service, or wishes or is entitled to be excused.

Withdrawal or alteration of summons

47. If it appears to the appropriate officer, at any time before the day on which any person summoned under section 3 of the Act of 1887 is to attend, that his attendance is unnecessary, or can be dispensed with, the appropriate officer may withdraw or alter the summons by notice served in the same way as a notice of summons.

Summoning in exceptional circumstances

48. If it appears to the coroner that a jury will be, or probably will be, incomplete, the coroner may, if he thinks fit, require any persons who are in, or in the vicinity of, the place of the inquest to be summoned (without any written notice) for jury service up to the number needed (after allowing for any who may not be qualified under section 3A of the Act of 1887 and for excusals) to make up such number.

Excusal for previous jury service

49.—(1) If a person summoned under section 3 of the Act of 1887 shows to the satisfaction of the appropriate officer or of the coroner—

- (a) that he has served on a jury, or duly attended to serve on a jury, at inquests held in that coroner's jurisdiction on three or more days in the period of one year ending with the service of the summons on him; or
- (b) that he has served on a jury, or duly attended to serve on a jury, in the Crown Court, the High Court or any county court in the period of two years ending with the service of the summons on him; or
- (c) that any such court or a coroner has excused him from jury service for a period which has not terminated,

the appropriate officer or the coroner shall excuse him from attending, or further attending, in pursuance of the summons.

(2) In reckoning the days for the purpose of paragraph (1)(a) no account shall be taken of any day or days to which an inquest is adjourned.

Certificate of attendance

50. A person duly attending to serve on a jury in compliance with a summons under section 3 of the Act of 1887 shall be entitled on application to the appropriate officer to a certificate recording that he has so attended.

Excusal for certain persons and discretionary excusal

51.—(1) A person summoned under section 3 of the Act of 1887 shall be entitled, if he so wishes, to be excused from jury service if he is among the persons for the time being listed in Part III of Schedule 1 to the Juries Act

1974(a) but, except as provided by that Part of that Schedule in the case of members of the forces, a person shall not by this Rule be exempt from his obligation to attend if summoned unless he is excused from attending under paragraph (2).

(2) If any person so summoned shows to the satisfaction of the appropriate officer or of the coroner that there is good reason why he should be excused from attending in pursuance of the summons, the appropriate officer or the coroner may excuse him from so attending and shall do so if the reason shown is that the person is entitled under paragraph (1) to excusal.

Discharge of summons in case of doubt as to capacity to act effectively as a juror

52. Where it appears to the appropriate officer, in the case of a person attending in pursuance of a summons under section 3 of the Act of 1887, that on account of physical disability or insufficient understanding of English there is doubt as to his capacity to act effectively as a juror, the person may be brought before the coroner, who shall determine whether or not he should act as a juror and, if not, shall discharge the summons.

Saving for inquests held by the coroner of the Queen's household

53. Nothing in this Part of these Rules shall have effect in relation to any inquest held by the coroner of the Queen's household.

PART VIII

RECORDS, DOCUMENTS, EXHIBITS AND FORMS

Register of deaths

54. A coroner shall keep an indexed register of all deaths reported to him, or to his deputy or assistant deputy, which shall contain the particulars specified in Schedule 3.

Retention and delivery or disposal of exhibits

55. Every exhibit at an inquest shall, unless a court otherwise directs, be retained by the coroner until he is satisfied that the exhibit is not likely to be, or will no longer be, required for the purposes of any other legal proceedings, and shall then, if a request for its delivery has been made by a person appearing to the coroner to be entitled to the possession thereof, be delivered to that person, or, if no such request has been made, be destroyed or otherwise disposed of as the coroner thinks fit.

Retention and delivery of documents

56. Any document (other than an exhibit at an inquest) in the possession of a coroner in connection with an inquest or post-mortem examination shall,

unless a court otherwise directs, be retained by the coroner for at least fifteen years:

Provided that the coroner may deliver any such document to any person who in the opinion of the coroner is a proper person to have possession of it.

Inspection of, or supply of copies of, documents etc.

57.—(1) A coroner shall, on application and on payment of the prescribed fee (if any), supply to any person who, in the opinion of the coroner, is a properly interested person a copy of any report of a post-mortem examination (including one made under section 21 of the Act of 1926) or special examination, or of any notes of evidence, or of any document put in evidence at an inquest.

(2) A coroner may, on application and without charge, permit any person who, in the opinion of the coroner, is a properly interested person to inspect such report, notes of evidence, or document.

Deputy or assistant deputy to sign documents in own name

58. Where a deputy or assistant deputy coroner acting for, or as, the coroner signs a document, he shall sign it in his own name as deputy or assistant deputy coroner, as the case may be.

Transfer of documents etc. to next-appointed coroner

59. Where a coroner vacates his office by death or otherwise, all documents, exhibits, registers and other things in the custody of the coroner in connection with inquests or post-mortem examinations shall be transferred to the coroner next appointed to that office.

Forms

60. The forms set out in Schedule 4, with such modifications as circumstances may require, may be used for the purposes for which they are expressed to be applicable.

5th April 1984.

Hailsham of St. Marylebone, C.

I concur,

Leon Brittan,
One of Her Majesty's Principal
Secretaries of State.

Home Office.
9th April 1984.

SCHEDULES

Rule 3

SCHEDULE 1

REVOCATIONS

Rules revoked	References
The Coroners Rules 1953	S.I. 1953/205
The Coroners Rules 1956	S.I. 1956/1691
The Coroners (Amendment) Rules 1974	S.I. 1974/2128
The Coroners (Amendment) Rules 1977	S.I. 1977/1881
The Coroners (Amendment) Rules 1980	S.I. 1980/557
The Coroners (Amendment) (Savings) Rules 1980	S.I. 1980/668
The Coroners (Amendment) Rules 1983	S.I. 1983/1539

SCHEDULE 2

Rule 10

POST-MORTEM EXAMINATION REPORT

THIS REPORT IS CONFIDENTIAL. IT SHOULD NOT BE DISCLOSED TO A
THIRD PARTY WITHOUT THE CORONER'S CONSENT

POST-MORTEM EXAMINATION REPORT Serial No.:

Name of deceased:

Coroner:

Address (if known):

Identified by: Place of examination: Date and time of examination:

Observers present at examination:

EXTERNAL EXAMINATION*

Stated/Estimated date and time of death: Stated/Apparent age:

Nourishment:

Marks of identification (tattoos, old scars, etc.):

Body surface and musculo-skeletal system, including injuries:

INTERNAL EXAMINATION*

Central nervous system

Cranial cavity	{	Skull:
		Brain:
		Meninges:
		Cerebral vessels:

Respiratory system†

{	Larynx:
	Trachea:
	Bronchi:
	Plurae:
	Lung parenchyma:

Thoracic
cavity

{	<i>Cardio-vascular system</i>
	Heart:
	Weight:
	Valves:
	Myocardium:
	Pericardium:
	Coronary arteries: Great vessels:

Alimentary system

Mouth:

Tongue:

Oesophagus:

{	Stomach and contents:
	Duodenum:
	Intestines:
	Liver and gall bladder:
	Pancreas:
	Peritoneum:

Abdominal
cavity

{	<i>Genito-urinary system</i>
	Kidneys and ureters:
	Bladder and urine:
	Generative organs:

NOTES:

*Descriptions of injuries or of complex pathology may be attached on a separate sheet, provided it is properly identified and signed.

†In cases of suspected pneumoconiosis (or one of the other occupational diseases affecting the lungs) see "Notes on completing the post-mortem examination report form" obtainable from the coroner.

Reticulo-endothelial system

Spleen:

Lymph nodes:

Thymus:

Endocrine system

Thyroid:

Pituitary:

Adrenals:

In my opinion the cause of death was:

I

I

Disease or condition
directly leading to
death*(a)
due to (or as a consequence of)

Antecedent causes.

Morbid conditions,
if any, giving rise
to the above cause
(stating the underlying
condition last){ (b)
due to (or as a consequence of)
(c)

II

II

Other significant conditions
contributing to the death
but NOT related to the
disease or condition
causing it†

.....

Morbid conditions present but in the
pathologist's opinion *NOT contributing to the death*:Is any further laboratory examination to be made which may affect the cause
of death? YES/NO

Comments:

.

To the best of my knowledge no cardiac pacemaker remains in the body.

Signature and qualifications

Name (in block letters)

NOTES:

*This does not mean the mode of dying, such as (e.g.) heart failure, asphyxia,
asthenia, etc. It means the disease, injury or complication which caused death.†Conditions which did not in the pathologist's opinion contribute materially to the
death should NOT be included under this heading, but under "Morbid conditions
present but in the pathologist's opinion NOT contributing to the death".

SCHEDULE 3

Rule 54

REGISTER OF DEATHS REPORTED TO THE CORONER

Date on which death is reported to coroner	Particulars of deceased			Cause of death	State whether case disposed of by using Pink Form A or B or whether inquest was held	Verdict at inquest (if any)
	Full name and address	Age	Sex			

SCHEDULE 4

Rule 60

FORMS

1

Form of declaration of office of coroner

I, A.B., solemnly, sincerely, and truly declare and affirm that I will well and truly serve our Sovereign Lady the Queen and Her liege people in the office of coroner for this county of _____, and that I will diligently and truly do everything appertaining to my office to the best of my power for the doing of right, and for the good of the inhabitants within the said county.

2

Warrant to exhume

To
(insert the names of the Minister and churchwardens or other persons having power of control over the churchyard, cemetery, or other place in which the body is buried).

Whereas I, A.B., one of Her Majesty's coroners for the _____ of _____ am credibly informed that the body of one, C.D., has been recently buried in _____ (insert the name of the churchyard, cemetery or other place in which the body is buried), and it appears to me that it is necessary for the body to be examined for the purpose of [my holding an inquest touching the death of the deceased] [my discharging one of my functions in relation to the body or death of the deceased, namely (insert function):

I hereby order you to cause the body of the said C.D. to be disinterred for that purpose.]

Dated this _____ day of _____ 19 ____.

Signature
Coroner for

3

Warrant to summon jury

To the Coroner's officer and to each and all of the constables of
 . You are hereby commanded to summon jurors to appear before
 me on 19 , at (state day of week) the (state date) day of
 a.m./p.m. at (state place).

Dated this day of 19 .

Signature
 Coroner for

4

Summons to juror

To
 By virtue of a warrant of A.B., one of Her Majesty's coroners for the of
 you are hereby summoned to appear before him as a juror on
 (state day of week) the (state date) day of 19 , at a.m./p.m.
 at (state place) until you are no longer needed.

You must attend at the time and place shown above unless you are told by the officer
 authorised by the Coroner that you need not do so.

Dated this day of 19 .

Signature
 Coroner's Officer/Constable

**YOU MUST COMPLETE THE ATTACHED FORM AND RETURN IT TO (insert
 name of officer authorised by the Coroner) IN THE ENVELOPE PROVIDED WITHIN
 THREE DAYS OF THE RECEIPT OF THIS SUMMONS.**

WARNING: YOU WILL BE LIABLE TO A FINE IF YOU—

1. refuse to give the information necessary to decide if you are qualified to serve on a jury;
2. deliberately give false information or cause or permit false information to be given;
3. fail to attend for jury service or refuse without reasonable excuse to serve as a juror; or
4. serve on a jury knowing you are not qualified to do so.

Notice to accompany summons and reply thereto

This form should be returned in the envelope provided within three days of receiving it.

Surname

Forename(s) Date of Birth

Address

..... Telephone number

(If possible please give a telephone number where you can be contacted between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m.)

**INFORMATION GIVEN WILL BE TREATED IN THE STRICTEST
CONFIDENCE**

YOU ARE QUALIFIED for jury service if you—

- (a) are over eighteen and under sixty-five;

[If you will be under eighteen on or have reached your sixty-fifth birthday by the date on which your appearance is required you will NOT be eligible to serve as a juror.]

- (b) are registered as a parliamentary or local government elector;

- (c) have lived in the United Kingdom, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man for a period of at least five years since attaining the age of thirteen; and

- (d) are not one of the persons described in Parts I and II of Schedule 1 to the Juries Act 1974.*

1. Are you **QUALIFIED** to serve as a juror? Please tick appropriate box.

YES ☐

NO ☐

If you have answered NO to question 1, please answer question 2 and sign the form at the end.

If you have answered YES and wish to apply to be excused from jury service on this occasion, please go on to 3 below and then sign the form at the end.

2. I **AM NOT QUALIFIED** to serve on a jury because—

3. **YOU ARE ENTITLED TO BE EXCUSED** if you fall within any of the categories of persons specified in Part III of Schedule 1 to the Juries Act 1974† (although you may serve if you want to).

YOU MAY BE EXCUSED at the discretion of the Coroner or of the officer authorised by the Coroner on grounds such as poor health, illness, physical disability, insufficient understanding of English, holiday arrangements or for any other good reason.

I WISH TO BE EXCUSED from jury service on this occasion because—

[If you are in any doubt as to whether you may be excused from jury service please write to the officer authorised by the Coroner at the address on the front of the summons.]

When you attend as a juror you may be discharged if there is doubt as to your capacity to serve on a jury because of physical disability or insufficient understanding of English.

I HAVE READ THE WARNING IN THE SUMMONS AND THE INFORMATION I HAVE GIVEN IS TRUE.

Signed Dated

* See List 1 attached.

† See List 2 attached.

6

Certificate of attendance

Name of Juror

I hereby certify that the above-named Juror [attended to serve] [served] on a jury at an inquest held before A.B., one of Her Majesty's coroners for the of

*Delete as *on/*from
required *to

[and I further certify that in the opinion of the Coroner it would be reasonable and proper that he/she should be exempt from service on a jury in a coroner's court for a period of years from]

Dated this day of 19 ..

Signature

Officer authorised by the Coroner.

7

Form of oath of juror

I swear by Almighty God that I will diligently inquire and a true presentment make of all such matters and things as are here given me in charge on behalf of our Sovereign Lady the Queen, touching the death of C.D., now lying dead, and will, without fear or favour, affection or ill-will, a true verdict give according to the evidence.

NOTE: If a person wishes to affirm, or swear in Scottish form or in any other form authorised by law, this oath shall be modified accordingly.

8

Summons to witness

To
You are hereby summoned to appear before me on (state day of
week) the (state date) day of 19 , at
a.m./p.m., at (state place) to give evidence touching the
death of C.D.

Dated this day of 19 .

Signature
Coroner for

9

Oath of witness

I swear by Almighty God that the evidence which I shall give shall be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

NOTE: If a person wishes to affirm, or swear in Scottish form or in any other form authorised by law, this oath shall be modified accordingly.

10

Direction to medical practitioner to make a post-mortem examination

To
I hereby direct you, in pursuance of section 21 of the [Coroners Act 1887] [Coroners (Amendment) Act 1926], to make a post-mortem examination of the body of C.D. and to report the result thereof to me in writing.

Dated this day of 19 .

Signature
Coroner for

11

Certificate of fine

I hereby certify that I have imposed a fine of _____ upon E.F. for that he
 being duly summoned to appear as a juror [witness] at an inquest held before [by] me on
 the _____ day of _____ 19____,
 *Delete as *did not, after being openly called three times, appear to such summons.
 required *refused, without reasonable excuse, to serve as a juror.
 *refused, without lawful excuse, to answer a question put to him.

Dated this _____ day of _____ 19____.

Signature
 Coroner for

12

Form of recognizance—witnesses or jurors

G.H. of _____ acknowledges that he/she owes to our Sovereign Lady
 the Queen the sum of _____, payment thereof to be enforced against
 him/her by due process of law if he/she fails to comply with the following condition.

Taken before me the _____ day of _____ 19____.

Signature
 Coroner for

Condition

If the said G.H. [on receiving notice] appears at an inquest touching the death of C.D.
 to be held on the _____ day of _____ next at _____,
 or on such other date or at such other place as may be notified to him/her,
 and there gives evidence [makes further inquiry as a juror] touching the said death,
 then this recognizance shall be void but otherwise shall remain in full force.

13

Notice of inquest arrangements

To _____
 I hereby give you notice that the inquest touching the death of C.D. will take place on
 (state day of week) the _____ (state date) day of
 19____, at _____ a.m./p.m. at _____ (state
 place).

Dated this _____ day of _____ 19____.

Signature
 Coroner for

14

Coroner's interim certificate of the fact of death

To whom it may concern.

(Name)

of (address)

died on

The precise medical cause of death *was as follows/*has yet to be established.

Dated this day of 19 .

Signature

Coroner for

*Delete whichever is inapplicable.

15

Notice that an inquest which is adjourned in pursuance of section 20 of the Coroners (Amendment) Act 1926 will not be resumed

To

I hereby give you notice that the inquest touching the death of C.D. will not be resumed.

Dated this day of 19 .

Signature

Coroner for

16

Notice that an inquest which is adjourned in pursuance of section 20 of the Coroners (Amendment) Act 1926 will be resumed

To

I hereby give you notice that the inquest touching the death of C.D. will be resumed
on (state day of week) the (state date) day of
19 at a.m./p.m. at
(state place) [and that your attendance thereat is required].

Dated this day of 19

Signature

Coroner for

17

Notice that the attendance of a witness will not be required at the holding of an adjourned inquest

To
I hereby give you notice that your attendance at the adjourned inquest touching the death of C.D. to be held on the _____ day of _____ 19____, will not be required.

Dated this _____ day of _____ 19____.

Signature
Coroner for

18

Notice that the date, hour or place fixed for the holding of an adjourned inquest has been altered

To
I hereby give you notice that the date/hour/place fixed for the holding of the adjourned inquest touching the death of C.D. has been altered, and that the adjourned inquest will be held on _____ (state date and day of week) at _____ a.m./p.m. at _____ (state place) [and that your attendance thereat is/is not required].

Dated this _____ day of _____ 19____.

Signature
Coroner for

19

Certificate of forfeiture of recognizance

I hereby certify that G.H. of _____ was bound by recognizance taken by me on the _____ day of _____ 19____, in the sum of _____ for his appearance at an inquest held at _____ on the _____ day of _____ 19____, to give evidence [make further inquiry as a juror] touching the death of C.D., and the said G.H. failed to appear in accordance with the condition of the said recognizance and that the said recognizance is accordingly forfeited.

Dated this _____ day of _____ 19____.

Signature
Coroner for

20

Order to remove body for inquest or post-mortem examination

To _____ (undertaker or other person as the case may be)
 I hereby authorise you to remove the body of C.D., aged _____ from
 to _____ before the _____ day of
 19 .

Dated this _____ day of _____ 19 .

Signature
 Coroner for

21

Coroner's order for burial

I hereby authorise the burial of the body of C.D. aged _____ late of
 who died at _____ on _____

Dated this _____ day of _____ 19 .

Signature
 Coroner for

22

Inquisition

An inquisition taken for our Sovereign Lady the Queen at _____, in the
 county (or as the case may be) of _____ on the _____ day of
 19 , [and by adjournment on the _____ day of
 19 ,] [before and by ⁽¹⁾] me A.B., one of Her Majesty's coroners for
 the said county (or as the case may be), [and the undermentioned jurors,] touching the
 death of C.D. [a person unknown] [concerning a stillbirth].

The following matters are found:—

1. Name of deceased (if known):
2. Injury or disease causing death:⁽²⁾
3. Time, place and circumstances at or in which injury was sustained:⁽³⁾
4. Conclusion of the jury/coroner as to the death:⁽⁴⁾
5. Particulars for the time being required by the Registration Acts to be registered concerning the death:

(1) Date and place of death	(2) Name and surname of deceased	(3) Sex	(4) Maiden surname of woman who has married	(5) Date and place of birth	(6) Occupation and usual address

Signature of coroner [and jurors].....

NOTES

(¹) Modify this as necessary according to whether the inquest is held with or without a jury or partly with and partly without a jury.

(²) In the case of a death from natural causes or from industrial disease, want of attention at birth, or dependence on, or non-dependent abuse of, drugs insert the immediate cause of death and the morbid conditions (if any) giving rise to the immediate cause of death.

(³) Omit this if the cause of death is one to which Note 2 applies.

(⁴) (*a*) Where the cause of death is one to which Note 2 applies, it is suggested that one of the following forms be adopted:—

C.D. died from natural causes.

C.D. died from the industrial disease of

C.D. died from dependence on drugs/non-dependent abuse of drugs.

C.D. died from want of attention at birth.

(In any of the above cases, but in no other, it is suggested that the following words may, where appropriate, be added:

“and the cause of death was aggravated by lack of care/self-neglect”.)

(*b*) In any other case except murder, manslaughter, infanticide or stillbirth, it is suggested that one of the following forms be adopted:—

C.D. killed himself [whilst the balance of his mind was disturbed].

C.D. died as a result of an attempted/self-induced abortion.

C.D. died as a result of an accident/misadventure.

Execution of sentence of death.

C.D. was killed lawfully.

Open verdict, namely, the evidence did not fully or further disclose the means whereby the cause of death arose.

(*c*) In the case of murder, manslaughter or infanticide it is suggested that the following form be adopted:—

C.D. was killed unlawfully.

(*d*) In the case of a stillbirth insert “stillbirth” and do not complete the remainder of the form.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This Note is not part of the Rules.)

These Rules consolidate with minor amendments the Coroners Rules 1953 as from time to time amended. They govern the powers and duties of coroners in England and Wales, and associated procedural matters, in relation to the holding of inquests and post-mortem examinations. The principal amendment of substance is the introduction of Rule 30, with its associated form in Schedule 4, Form 14. The Rule obliges a coroner, when he has adjourned an inquest and is unable to furnish the registrar of deaths with a certificate stating the particulars which are required to be registered concerning the death, to issue to any properly interested person who applies to him a certificate (Form 14) recording the date of the deceased's death and the precise medical cause (if established).

Another amendment of substance is the removal of “chronic alcoholism” from the list of suggested verdicts in the notes to the Form of Inquisition (Schedule 4, Form 22); and, also in the notes to that form, the suggested verdict “C.D. died from addiction to drugs” has been altered to “C.D. died from dependence on drugs/non-dependent abuse of drugs”.

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