

Contact with Family/Next of Kin (NoK)

The term "Next of Kin" is widely used, but has no legal definition in the UK. For more information to assist in understanding the meaning of next of kin please see National Police Chief Counsel next of kin – [Glossary of Terms](#).

The definition of family shall include partners, parents, siblings, children, guardians and others who may not be related, but who have a direct and close relationship with the deceased. There are diverse communities in London and a person's relationship to the deceased should not be assumed. The deceased may have kept their relationship with a person private for a multitude of reasons. Advice as to whether a family member and/or next of kin is eligible to the family liaison service the MPS provide can be found [here](#), and will be assessed by the FLO once assigned.

Family liaison officers (FLO) are available in cases of homicide, other major crimes, road death and any other incident classed as a critical incident.

The deceased's family and/or next of kin may not be in attendance. If so, try to identify who is the most appropriate person to contact and arrange for them to be informed of the death as soon as possible and in a sensitive manner. See **Delivering a Death message** for guidance.

All contact with the deceased's family and/or next of kin must be recorded including details of who has been spoken to and how they were known to the deceased and the date, time and location of that contact and the content of the conversation had. This detail must be recorded from the time of informing them of the death and subsequent contact thereafter.

If it is identified that the deceased's family and/or next of kin require language assistance, then you should seek the assistance of a translator through [Language Line](#).

If the family and/or NoK of the deceased is present at the scene on arrival, then statements should be taken from each of them if appropriate.

Do not leave the family member and/or NoK alone with the deceased, especially if there are suspicious circumstances or the cause of death is not known.

It is recognised that persons who practice a particular religion or belief may require release of a deceased person. The decision to allow this is that of the Coroner and NOT the MPS. You must ascertain any cultural or religious requirements surrounding the deceased, their family and/or NoK and inform the Coroner as soon as possible. You should also provide details of the Coroners' Courts Support Service 0300 111 2141.

If premises are insecure and the family, NoK, or a representative agreed by them are not present, wait for the funeral directors to arrive and remove the deceased to the local mortuary.

Provide the family and/or NoK (or other person representing the family) the [MPS Bereavement Information Leaflet](#). This is to be used in non-suspicious cases only.

FLO or other specialist support will be appropriate in suspicious incidents and a Family Liaison Log with the family and/or next of kin will be maintained by FLO officers. See FLO Policy.