



**Certificate Fees - Waiver, Refund and  
Reduction Policy**

June 2019

**Cumbria Registration Service**

## **Purpose**

The Registration of Births, Deaths, Marriages and Civil Partnerships (Fees) (Amendment) came into force on the 16th February 2019, which gives Registration Officers the discretion to waive, reduce or refund fees on the grounds of hardship or compassion on a case by case basis. This policy will be adopted by Cumbria Registration Service from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2019.

It is expected that everyone will pay the fee that is due for the service provided. There are however some exceptions where on the grounds of financial hardship or compassion, consideration may be given to waiving, reducing or refunding the fee. This guidance aims to provide registration officers with a framework to assess eligibility.

Under no circumstances should application of this guidance cause delay in the timeliness of a registration, as applications can be made retrospectively and registrations can be completed without the issue of a certificate.

## **Circumstances which are out of scope of this guidance**

- Certificates issued following re-registration
- Certificates issued by another authority following a declaration being given in Cumbria
- Replacement certificate issued following a correction which was subject to a fee. A waiver or reduction in the certificate fee will not be considered. The cost of the correction falls outside this policy.

## **Circumstances which are in the scope of this guidance**

- Certificates issued at the point of first registration of an event
- Certified copy certificates
- Replacement certificate issued following a correction which was not subject to a fee. The cost of the correction falls outside this policy.

This guidance only applies to a single certificate, unless they are replacement certificates following a correction. In this case, the original number purchased would be replaced.

## **Policy**

The Registrar General, Superintendent Registrar or registration officer may reduce, waive, or refund part or the entire fee. Any decision to waive, refund or reduce a fee should be made by exception where circumstances dictate and on an ad hoc basis.

## **Considerations on the basis of financial hardship**

At the customer's request, cases of hardship will be considered where the cost of purchasing certificates would prevent them from meeting household expenses such as food and bills. In all cases where hardship is to be considered, this should be supported by a written statement from an agency

such as social care, housing organisations, homelessness charities, hospices, hospitals or other similar agencies. This should state that a person may not be able to pay the certificate fee due to hardship and may possibly delay access to other services causing further hardship. Where evidence is provided, the agency should include a recommendation as to whether it is appropriate to apply a waiver or reduction. The standard reduction will be 50%. In cases where this cannot be evidenced, a waiver or reduction cannot be granted.

### **Considerations on the basis of compassion**

It is local policy that a fee will not be charged for a certificate at the initial registration of the following events:-

- A still birth
- The death of a child under the age of 18
- A birth and subsequent death of a child registered simultaneously

### **Refunds**

Where a fee has been charged incorrectly or inadvertently then a refund of that fee should be made as soon as possible, as per our refund procedure.

### **Appeals**

Appeals should be made in writing, and will be dealt with in line with the Council's Corporate Complaints Procedure.

### **Review**

This document will be reviewed annually in line with the corporate review of fees & charges, or in accordance with new guidance issued by General Register Office (GRO) or Cumbria County Council.