

# Legal Representation

Your Guide

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## Will you need a lawyer to help you during the coroner's investigation / inquest?

Whether you are an interested person or not, it is not essential for you to have a lawyer in order for you to attend or participate in the inquest process. The coroner will ensure:

- That the process is fair and thorough, and
- That you have a chance to ask relevant questions if you are an interested person

## What are the sorts of situation where you may want to consider seeking legal advice?

Although legal assistance is not essential, you may wish to consider seeking independent legal advice if you fall into one or more of the following categories:

- You are an interested person and there is another interested person which is a public body (such as a hospital, a prison, or the armed forces), and that organisation does have legal representation
- The coroner has asked you to provide evidence, and you think that something you did (or did not do) may have caused or contributed to the death that is being investigated
- You are an interested person, but you are not the family / next of kin of the person who has died
- The inquest is being heard before a Jury
- The inquest is considering the wider circumstances of how the deceased died, sometimes called an Article 2 inquest.

These are not the only circumstances in which you might want to seek legal advice - that is a decision for you - they are simply examples of the sorts of case in which you might want advice from a lawyer.

## THE COST OF SEEKING LEGAL ADVICE OR PRESENTATION

When you contact a lawyer, they will be able to advise you about the cost; or if you are eligible for public funding or any free advice.

## WHERE CAN YOU FIND LEGAL REPRESENTATION?

If you want to have a solicitor represent you, you may find it helpful to choose a solicitor with experience and expertise in inquests. The [Law Society website](#) may help you find a solicitor. Alternatively, some barristers may be able represent you without using a solicitor, but only if they undertake 'direct access' work.

## MORE INFORMATION

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If you would like more information about any part of the inquest process, then a good place to start is the '[Guide to coroner services for bereaved people](#)' produced by the Ministry of Justice. Our website is also available at [avon-coroner.com](http://avon-coroner.com)