



FAQs: Prevention of Future Deaths (PFD) Reports

1. What is a Prevention of Future Deaths (PFD) report?

A PFD report is a statutory report issued by a Coroner when, during an inquest or death investigation, they identify circumstances that create a risk of future deaths and believe action should be taken to reduce or prevent that risk.

2. What law governs PFD reports?

PFD reports are governed by:

- Paragraph 7, Schedule 5 of the Coroners and Justice Act 2009
 - Regulations 28 and 29 of the Coroners (Investigations) Regulations 2013
These provisions place a duty on coroners to issue a report and a duty on recipients to respond.
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3. When must a coroner issue a PFD report?

A Coroner must issue a PFD report only when:

They are investigating a death and something revealed during the investigation causes concern that future deaths may occur or continue; and the Coroner believes action should be taken to reduce or eliminate the risk.

4. Does the issue have to have caused the death?

No.

A PFD report does not need to relate to the direct cause of death. It can address any risk identified during the investigation, even if it did not contribute to the death itself.

5. Who can receive a PFD report?

A PFD report can be sent to any person or organisation the Coroner believes has the power to take action.

6. Can a coroner make recommendations in a PFD report?

No.

Coroners cannot recommend specific actions. Their role is to identify concerns, not to dictate solutions. The recipient decides what action (if any) is appropriate.

7. Is there a deadline to respond to a PFD report?

Yes.

Recipients **must respond in writing within 56 days** of receiving the report. Extensions can be requested but are not guaranteed.

8. What must a PFD response include?

The response must:

- Describe actions already taken, and/or
 - Set out actions proposed, including a timetable, or
 - Clearly explain why no action is proposed.
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9. What happens if an organisation does not respond?

Non-responses are reported to the Chief Coroner and are published on the judiciary.uk website twice a year.

10. Are PFD reports made public?

Yes.

PFD reports and responses are usually published on the Courts and Tribunals Judiciary website and are accessible to the public, media, and regulators, subject to redactions.

11. Oversight and publication

All PFD reports:

- Must be sent to the Chief Coroner
- Are usually published online, subject to redaction policy

The coroner has no further enforcement role once the report is issued.

12. Limits of the coroner's role after issuing a PFD

After issuing the report, the coroner's role ends. They:

- Do not assess the adequacy of the response
- Cannot enforce action
- Cannot impose sanctions for poor or absent responses

The statutory obligation to respond lies with the recipient, not the coroner.

13. Are families involved in PFD reports?

Families:

- Usually receive a copy of the PFD report
 - May make submissions or representations regarding the redaction either to the Coroner (before publication) or the Chief Coroner (once published).
 - Please note, Coroners are not required to consult families before deciding whether to issue a report.
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14. Are PFD reports meant to assign blame?

No.

PFD reports are not intended as a punishment or sanction and do not determine civil or criminal liability. Their purpose is public safety and learning, not fault-finding.

15. Can a recipient be removed from the list of non-responders once published?

Yes.

Non-responses can be removed off the published list once the response has been sent to the coroner's office, they share with the Chief Coroner's office and once published the non-responses list is updated.

16. Can you search for specific PFD reports?

Yes.

Since 1 January 2023, all PFD reports have been published directly onto a webpage, which means that the full text of those reports is searchable. You can also filter dates of the report, categories or search by using any of the titles (Date of report, Reference number, Deceased name, Coroner name, Coroner Area, Category and This report is being sent to).

17. Can you request PFD report and responses?

Yes.

Anyone who wishes to obtain a copy of a PFD report or response in its original form can apply to the coroner area that issued the PFD, and the coroner will consider that request.

18. What information is redacted?

The approach to redaction is removing information on how death can be caused, and to protect the privacy of individuals. More detail can be found in the publication policy.

19. What if you want a PFD report or response removed/ further redacted?

An Interested Person, organisation, or any individual who believes that the content of a PFD report or response affects them may make representations to the coroner. These representations should include all relevant information outlined in the publication policy and should be directed to the coroner for the area.

Only the Chief Coroner has the authority to decide whether non-publication is proportionate, or whether publishing a further-redacted version would be sufficient. Any representations made to the coroner will then be forwarded to the Chief Coroner.

If the report and responses have been published, then representations should be made to the Chief Coroner directly; to the chiefcoronersoffice@judiciary.uk.

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