



# Chief Coroner

## PREVENTION OF FUTURE DEATHS REPORTS PUBLICATION POLICY

### Introduction

1. If during an investigation, a coroner becomes concerned about circumstances that create a risk of future deaths, Paragraph 7 of Schedule 5, Coroners and Justice Act 2009, provides coroners with the duty to make reports to a person, organisation, local authority or government department or agency where the coroner believes that action should be taken to prevent future deaths. That report is called a Prevention of Future Deaths Report (PFD report).
2. Anyone to whom a PFD report is directed must send the coroner a response. The reports and responses must be sent by the coroner to the Chief Coroner.
3. [Regulations 28 and 29 of the Coroners \(Investigations\) Regulations 2013](#) (the Regulations) set out the procedures that apply to PFD reports and responses.
4. This policy explains the Chief Coroner's approach to the publication and redaction of PFD reports and responses, and the process for raising concerns in a particular case.
5. This policy may be amended from time to time. Any amendments will be published on [www.judiciary.uk](http://www.judiciary.uk).

### Publication

6. The decision to issue a PFD report is a judicial one. To comply with the principle of open justice, the public must be able to access PFD reports and responses, unless there is a compelling reason to restrict access. The scrutiny of PFD reports and responses is also vitally important to society, to enable themes to be recognised, any necessary systemic changes to be put in place, and any promises of change to be enforced. There is therefore a presumption that PFD reports and responses will be published by the Chief Coroner.
7. Published PFD reports and responses can be accessed via the following link: [Reports to Prevent Future Deaths | Courts and Tribunals Judiciary](#), and can be filtered by subject and/or date. 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.

8. The Chief Coroner recognises that the internet has made information easily and widely accessible, and that there must be a balance between openness, and the need to respect individuals' privacy and protect the public from harm. Some PFD reports and responses will therefore be redacted prior to publication. In exceptional cases, the Chief Coroner may decide against publication in any form.
9. The Chief Coroner's power to publish PFD reports and responses does not affect the power of individual coroners to provide copies of PFD reports and responses in accordance with Regulation 27 of the Regulations. 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.

### **Approach to redaction**

10. The following information will usually be redacted from PFD reports and responses prior to publication by the Chief Coroner, to remove information on how death can be caused, and to protect the privacy of individuals:
  - a) Any names, initials and signatures of individuals, except for those of the deceased;
  - b) Email addresses of individuals;
  - c) Personal address details;
  - d) Direct telephone numbers of individuals;
  - e) Case reference numbers; and
  - f) Information that is not commonly known that could help someone to cause a death, including:
    - i) the name of novel products or substances that were used to cause a death,
    - ii) information on how such products or substances were obtained;
    - iii) the amount of any substance that caused a death;
    - iv) the mechanism used to cause a self-inflicted death (for example, information on how a ligature was created);
    - v) websites that were used to plan a death;
    - vi) the locations of suicide spots;
    - vii) details of how any secure areas used for suicide were accessed.
11. Other information may also be redacted if the Chief Coroner considers that redaction to be in the public interest and/or necessary to protect specific individuals.
12. The Chief Coroner may decide not to make a particular redaction if it is considered that it would significantly inhibit the public's understanding of the learning in a report or response.

13. Any links to webpages included in responses will not be checked for sensitive information prior to publication, as the information is already online. In the event that sensitive information can be obtained by clicking an embedded link in a report or response (for example, because being associated with a report affects the anonymity of a linked document), representations about publication of the link should be made when the response is submitted.

### **Decision not to publish**

14. If the Chief Coroner decides that the redactions needed to protect the public and/or particular individuals would prevent a PFD report or response from being understood, or that redaction of the document could not sufficiently mitigate any public or individual risk, the Chief Coroner may decide not to publish a report or response.

15. If the Chief Coroner decides not to publish a document, the following will apply:

- a. If the document is a PFD report, the Chief Coroner will instead publish a brief note about the topic of the report, together with confirmation that a copy of the report can be requested from the relevant coroner area.
- b. If the document is a response, the Chief Coroner will instead publish a statement that the response has not been published but can be requested from the relevant coroner area.

16. Individuals and organisations responding to PFD reports occasionally try to use the publication of a response as a way to challenge publicly the validity of the coroner's decision to issue a PFD report. This is not appropriate. Coroners' decisions can be challenged in the courts, but unless they are successfully challenged, they should be respected. The Chief Coroner will not allow her publication power to be used as an unofficial method of challenging coroners' decisions. If a response adopts this approach, the coroner who issued the PFD report will deal with the response in the usual way, including providing a copy to interested persons (IPs), and considering disclosure requests from the public in accordance with Regulation 27 of the Regulations. However, the Chief Coroner may decide not to publish the response.

### **Representations about publication**

17. The IPs, any organisation or person to whom a PFD report is directed, and anyone who considers their right to private and family life is affected by the content of a report or response, may make representations about:

- a) the decision to publish;
- b) whether redactions are needed;

- c) any specific redactions requested; and
- d) any other matter that may be relevant to the Chief Coroner's publication decision.

18. Before making such representations, the following points should be noted:

- a) The Chief Coroner will not consider representations about whether a PFD report ought to have been issued, or what information it should have included. Coroners are independent judicial office holders, and the Chief Coroner cannot interfere with their decisions. Representations will only be considered by the Chief Coroner if they relate to the publication of PFD reports or responses;
- b) All representations should include clear details of what the Chief Coroner is being asked to do and the reasons why that action is thought to be necessary; and
- c) As there is a presumption that PFD reports and responses will be published, anyone making representations about publication should consider whether a decision not to publish is proportionate, or whether publication in a redacted form would be sufficient to alleviate their concerns.

19. A person or organisation providing a response to a PFD report should send any representations regarding publication to the coroner who made the report. These representations should be made at the same time as the response is provided. The coroner will pass any representations to the Chief Coroner.

20. Any person who is not responding to a PFD report but who wishes to make representations regarding publication of a report or response before that document is published should also send their representations to the coroner who made the report. Those representations should be sent within 56 days (unless the coroner grants an extension) and will be sent by the coroner to the Chief Coroner at the same time as the responses.

21. After a report or response has been published, or the Chief Coroner has confirmed that a report or response will not be published, any representations about the publication decision can be sent to the Chief Coroner directly. The relevant email address is: [chiefcoronersoffice@judiciary.uk](mailto:chiefcoronersoffice@judiciary.uk).

### **Timing of publication**

22. PFD reports and responses will be compiled by the coroner that made the report and sent to the Chief Coroner as a package, together with any representations about publication.

23. If at the end of the 56-day time limit (plus any extension granted by the coroner, whether for a response or for representations to be made about publication), the coroner has not received all of the expected documents, the coroner will send the

PFD report, and any responses and representations that have been forthcoming, to the Chief Coroner. The Chief Coroner will then proceed with publishing those documents that are available (or publishing a statement about non-publication, if appropriate).

24. The names of those who do not respond to PFD reports are regularly published on the Chief Coroner's webpages (link: [Non-responses to Prevention of Future Death \(PFD\) reports - Courts and Tribunals Judiciary](#)).
25. When representations are received by the Chief Coroner after publication has already taken place, the documents will usually remain on the website until the Chief Coroner has considered the representations. If the Chief Coroner decides to remove or amend the documents, the changes will be made as soon as is reasonably practicable.
26. When making publication decisions following representations made in accordance with this policy, the Chief Coroner will consider the following factors:
  - a) The need for open justice;
  - b) The importance of the information to the public interest;
  - c) The right of any relevant individual to respect for their private and family life under Article 8 of the European Convention of Human Rights; and
  - d) The harm that might be caused by publication of the information.

**HHJ ALEXIA DURRAN**  
**CHIEF CORONER**

**April 2026**