



## **GUIDE: Dying, Death, Funerals & Bereavement**

*A Resource for Hosts*

As a host, you might find yourself helping guests through tough times, like dealing with critical illness, death, or bereavement. This guide is here to provide you with practical information and tips on how to handle these situations with empathy. From arranging funerals to finding mental health support for both your guests and yourself, we've got you covered.

Remember, you're not expected to take full responsibility for your guests during these times. The best thing you can do is offer guidance and kindness. Our goal is to ensure that everyone receives the support and care they deserve, no matter who they are or where they come from.

We hope you find this guide helpful.

### **Cultural and Death Customs**

In both Ukrainian and Irish traditions, death is a moment to honour and celebrate the life of the deceased. It's common to have social gatherings with family and friends where meals are shared, and people reminisce about the person who died. In Ukraine, this is known as a "mercy meal." It usually includes a two-course meal, with a starter and a main dish, either at lunch or dinner. People take turns sharing special moments they had with the deceased. For those who are religious, similar meals might happen on the 9th and 40th days after the passing.

Just understanding and respecting these customs can be a big comfort to your guests during these tough times.

### **Assistance for Bereaved Guests or in Case of a Guest's Passing**

#### **Making Funeral Arrangements**

- **Funeral:** Contact a [local funeral director](#) (or support your guest to do so) to arrange services. Cremation is cost-effective and allows for ashes to be returned to Ukraine.
- **Community Support:** Get in touch with your [Local Authority Integration Team](#) for additional support and assistance. Church groups and [Local Volunteer Centres](#) have helped people we know make practical funeral arrangements and provided a welcome support network for people finding themselves in this situation.
- **Financial Assistance:** Family members can apply to Intreo for funeral cost assistance. More details available [here](#) or ask an advisor at your [local Intreo office](#).
- **Irish Red Cross Support:** The Irish Red Cross may cover some funeral costs. Contact them at +353 (0)1-642-4600 or [migrationcrisis@redcross.ie](mailto:migrationcrisis@redcross.ie).

- **Local Authority Assistance:** Local Authorities might assist with funeral costs. Contact your local Community Development Worker or [Integration Team](#) for guidance.

## Notifications and Financial Matters

- **Ukrainian Embassy:** In the event of the death of Ukrainian citizens in Ireland, the Embassy of Ukraine in Ireland should be immediately notified by calling +353 86 069 0930. Ukrainian Action can assist with notifying the Ukrainian embassy and locating family members in Ukraine. Contact them via whatsapp at 087 333 8329.
- **Notify Employer and Intreo:** Inform their place of work and [Intreo](#) if the guest was receiving social welfare benefits.
- **Bank Accounts:** A death certificate is required to transfer funds to next of kin. Contact the relevant bank directly for specific procedures and help with doing this.
- **Register a death:** Every death in Ireland must be registered within 3 months. This can be done by a family member, relative, or anyone who has the necessary paperwork. You'll need a Death Certificate signed by a doctor. Take it to your local Civil Registration Office to get an official death certificate. Find your nearest office [here](#) , or give them a call at 1800 700 700 (8am to 8pm weekdays, 9-5pm on weekends).

## Repatriation (returning remains or belongings to Ukraine)

- **Repatriation of Remains:** It is possible to return remains for burial or final resting in Ukraine, there's an excellent guide via Ukrainians in Kerry [here](#) about what's involved, including documentation required. As in many other countries, the Irish government does not provide financial assistance for the costs of repatriating a deceased person.
- **Repatriation of Belongings:** Coordination can be arranged for repatriating belongings to Ukraine if necessary, speak to [Ukrainian Action](#) or the embassy directly about this. As in many other countries, the Irish government does not provide financial assistance for the costs of repatriating a deceased person.

## Support for Hosts

As a host, it's important to remember that it's okay to seek support for yourself while supporting your guests through challenging times. Never hesitate to ask for a dig out or a listening ear.

- **Support Network:** Connect with other hosts who have experienced a similar loss for emotional support. Hosts Karen and Paul in Cork are available to have the chats and share their experiences.
- **The Facebook Group** is also a great place to start, put a message in there and see what comes back from the community.

- The **HIH Support Team** is always on hand and ready to speak to you. Call us on 01 691 7005 - if we're speaking to someone else, just leave a message and one of us will call you back. If it's evening time or over the weekend, it might take us a bit longer, but we'll never let you wait more than 24 hours. If you'd prefer to write, email us at [hostsupport@helpingirishhosts.com](mailto:hostsupport@helpingirishhosts.com)
- Our **resident GP, Dr. Aideen Gough** has extensive experience supporting hosts and guests through these challenging times. Contact her on Whatsapp at 087-7903659

## Critical Illness and Dying in Ireland

Dealing with a critical illness or facing the end of life is tough for anyone, no matter who or where you are. For Ukrainians in Ireland, it can be especially challenging to navigate unfamiliar systems. We've gathered some practical information and resources to help both hosts and guests who are dealing with serious illness or end-of-life situations here in Ireland.

The HSE website has all the healthcare information for Ukrainian nationals, and you can find it [here](#). The GP will work with the patient to put a plan in place, but it's also good to know about other resources available for covering costs and making arrangements.

### Dying in Ireland following a critical illness: Costs and Arrangements

- **Funeral Arrangements:** For those who have been under palliative care, the HSE Palliative Care team Social Worker can organise and cover costs for a simple ceremony and cremation. This applies to guests in state accommodation and host homes.
- **Cremation:** The HSE team in Citywest can arrange and pay for funeral ceremonies and cremations. A €200 contribution may be requested from family members.
- **Irish Red Cross Support:** The Irish Red Cross may cover some funeral costs. Contact them at +353 (0)1-642-4600 or [migrationcrisis@redcross.ie](mailto:migrationcrisis@redcross.ie).
- **Local Authority Assistance:** Local authorities might assist with funeral costs. Contact your local Community Development Worker or [Local Authority Integration Team](#) for guidance.

### Returning to Ukraine

- **Medical Support:** Your local HSE Palliative Care team and/or GP can provide medical documents and medications for returning to Ukraine. Our resident HIH medical team may assist if navigating this process is challenging. Contact the HIH Hosts Support team to request a call from Aideen or one of our medical experts.
- **Travel Arrangements:** Return to Ukraine is at the person's own cost and arrangement. Exceptional Needs Payment could be accessed to cover some of the costs. Speak to the Welfare Officer in your local Intreo about this.

- **Embassy Arrangements:** As of Feb 2024, no special arrangements for return to Ukraine under circumstances of critical illness, bereavement, or repatriation, can be facilitated by the Embassy. A valid, international passport is required. If the guest doesn't have an international passport, a letter from the Embassy is required, which can be requested [here](#). Contact the embassy by phone on: +353 86 069 0930.
- **Travel Accompaniment:** A host or companion can accompany a critically ill patient for up to 90 days without a visa. Contact UCTAT to discuss absence policies before travel to avoid issues upon return to Ireland, such as the loss of ARP payment or social welfare benefits.

## Bereavement & Psychological Support for Guests

- **Natalia (Ukrainian Psychologist):** Offers online support from Dublin. Contact at +353(87)3474410 for volunteer-based or low-cost services.
- **MyMind:** Provides free psychological support and psychotherapy to Ukrainians affected by events in Ukraine. Contact 0818 500 800 or email [office@mymind.org](mailto:office@mymind.org) for more information. More details can be found [here](#).
- **Turn2me:** Offers up to six free one-to-one counselling sessions and online support groups. Visit [turn2me.ie](http://turn2me.ie) to access services.
- **Ukrainian Community:** A list of Ukrainian-speaking psychotherapists is available through the Kyiv Gestalt University. Access the resource [here](#).
- **Barnardo's Bereavement Services:** Provides support for Ukrainian families experiencing bereavement. Contact Iryna at [iryna.matuzova@barnardos.ie](mailto:iryna.matuzova@barnardos.ie) or visit [Barnardos Bereavement Services](#) for more information.
- **Information Sheets:** Additional resources are available in English [here](#).
- **Support group for women whose partners/sons are at the frontline:** Online options available at [veteranhub.com.ua](http://veteranhub.com.ua).
- **Irish Red Cross:** Offers free mental health support services for Ukrainians in Ireland. More information can be found [here](#).

## Additional Resources

- **Psychological Supports:** A comprehensive list of psychological support services in Ukrainian and English is available [here](#).
- **Dept. of Social Protection guide:** "[What to do after a person dies](#)"
- **Ukrainians in Kerry guide:** "[What to do in case of death of Ukrainian Citizens in Ireland](#)"

## Contact Us

We're always just a phone call away if you have any questions or need further assistance. Our team is here to help you navigate these situations with care and compassion.

We sincerely wish you and your guests well and hope you never have to face these difficult circumstances. However, should the need arise, know that you're not alone, and we're here to support you every step of the way.

Take care and reach out anytime.

[www.helpingirishhosts.com](http://www.helpingirishhosts.com)    [hostsupport@helpingirishhosts.com](mailto:hostsupport@helpingirishhosts.com)

**HIH Host & Guest Support Line:** 01 691 7005 (every day)

### **Disclaimer Note:**

This guidance note is intended for informational purposes only and does not constitute legal, financial, or professional advice. While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy and completeness of the information contained herein, we make no guarantees, warranties, or representations as to its accuracy or suitability for any specific purpose. The examples and scenarios presented are for illustrative purposes and may not reflect all potential risks or legal considerations. By using this guidance note, you acknowledge that the authors and publishers are not liable for any actions taken or not taken based on the content herein. Use at your own discretion and risk.