

CMA publishes final report in funerals market investigation

Press release

The CMA has published the final report on its in-depth market investigation into funeral services, confirming its remedies for the sector.



The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) has today confirmed its provisional conclusions, issued in August, which identified [a number of issues](#) in the funeral services sector and suggested a package of 'sunlight remedies' to address these.

The [final report](#) sets out further detail on the remedies, which are intended to support customers when choosing a funeral director or crematorium and to place the sector under greater public scrutiny.

They include:

- an obligation for all funeral directors and crematorium operators to disclose prices in a manner that will help customers make more informed decisions;
- that information must be provided in advance of a customer committing to purchase a service so that people know the price they will be charged and the key terms of business – for example if a deposit is required;
- that customers should be made aware of any relevant business, financial and commercial interests of the funeral director, and that certain practices – such as payments which may incentivise hospitals, care homes or hospices to refer customers to a particular funeral director – will be prohibited;
- a recommendation to government to establish an independent inspection

and registration regime to monitor the quality of funeral director services as a first step in the establishment of a broader regulatory regime for funeral services.

As set out in August, the exceptional circumstances of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic mean that some of the remedies the CMA might otherwise have pursued, including measures to control prices, could not be developed.

However, the CMA continues to have serious concerns about the sector and one of the conclusions of the report is that it should consider whether a further market investigation reference is needed when conditions are more stable.

In the meantime, the CMA will continue to monitor the sector using information provided by funeral directors and crematoria detailing their revenues and the volumes of the different services they provide. This will help the CMA ensure that consumers are being fairly treated and decide whether a future market investigation is necessary.

Martin Coleman, CMA Panel Inquiry Chair, said:

Organising a funeral is often very distressing and people can be especially vulnerable during this time.

That's why our remedies are designed to help people make choices that are right for them and ensure they can be confident that their loved one is in good hands.

The CMA will be keeping a close eye on this sector to make sure our remedies are properly implemented and help it to decide whether further action is necessary when circumstances return to a more steady state.

Notes to editors

1. Under section 131 of the Enterprise Act 2002, the CMA makes a reference to the CMA Panel Chair to appoint a Group of members of the CMA Panel to carry out a market investigation. The investigation and decisions of the Group are required to be taken independently of the Board of the CMA, and the Board's oversight and governance role does not extend into the substance of decisions taken by the Group.
2. Media enquiries should be sent to press@cma.gov.uk, or 020 3738 6460