MILLS & REEVE
Achieve more. Together.

Briefing: Ten top tips to help when instructing Mills & Reeve

1 Ensure you receive good advance notification of inquests by making sure the local Coroner's officers have a central point of contact.

2 Request a copy of the Bundle which will include the post mortem report and statements from the Coroner. If they are relevant, they must be disclosed to you.

3 When you receive notification of an inquest from the Coroner, review the notes and work out who the key witnesses are. Send relevant staff the Mills & Reeve guidance notes on inquests, writing a statement, and the template for drafting a witness statement.

4 Email draft statements to us electronically for checking/amending.

5 When instructing Mills & Reeve, send to us in one go:

(a) Copy relevant records (clinical notes if it is a health and care matter)

(b) Chronology of event (if already drafted)

(c) Relevant policies, procedures or protocols:

(i) in place at the time and

(ii) in place now

(d) Investigation reports, recommendations and action plans. Consider discussing with us before disclosure to the Coroner.

(e) Complaints file

(f) Details of any claims

(g) Details of the involvement of other agencies. For example, the HSE, the police, the local authority, safeguarding.

(h) Information as to contact with family members and friends of the deceased.

6 Liaise with the Coroner's officer – are the family represented, do they have any issues, what other people or organisations are being called? What is the approach or view of the Coroner?

7 If we ask for additional information, please provide it as soon as possible to avoid rushed disclosure immediately before the inquest which can lead to criticism

8 When organising meetings for us to see witnesses, try to organise them at the same time. Instructing us early will allow such a meeting to be planned rather than rushed.

9 Decide if you would like us to:

(a) Review the documentation and advise on risk

(b) Review draft statements and suggest areas for improvement to help the Coroner

(c) Meet with staff to prepare them for the inquest

(d) Represent your organisation at the inquest

(e) Some or all of the above

10 Make sure you know the date of the hearing, where to go, when to arrive and that the practicalities are sorted in good time before the hearing; see our briefing “Attending Coroner’s Court as a witness”.

Mills & Reeve inquest support

Visit our inquest support webpage for guidance and short videos to help you prepare for and navigate the coronial process.

Explore our inquest support resources
Watch our inquest videos

Contacts

Feel free to contact our inquest specialists as any time.



Neil Ward
Partner
T: +441214568202
M: +447918287141
E: neil.ward@mills-reeve.com



Duncan Astill
Partner
T: +441223222477
M: +447974949723
E: duncan.astill@mills-reeve.com



Claire Bridgman
Principal Associate
T: +441214568467
M: +447552489395
E: claire.bridgman@mills-reeve.com



Ed Wrightson
Senior Associate
T: +441612348783
M: +447467997876
E: ed.wrightson@mills-reeve.com

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