

Coroners (Determination of Suicide) Bill [HL]

[AS BROUGHT FROM THE LORDS]

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[AS BROUGHT FROM THE LORDS]

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B I L L

TO

Require the coroner, following an inquest, to record an opinion as to the relevant factors in a case of death by suicide; and for connected purposes.

BE IT ENACTED by the King's most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:—

1 Requirement to record relevant factors in cases of suicide

- (1) In section 10 of the Coroners and Justice Act 2009 (determinations and findings after inquest), after subsection (3) insert—

“(4) Following the conclusion of an inquest, coroners rules may provide for the coroner, in the case of a determination of suicide under subsection (1)(a), to record an opinion as to the relevant factors which were causative to the death.”

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- (2) In section 5 of that Act (matters to be ascertained), in subsection (3), at the end insert—

“(c) the factors mentioned in section 10(4)”.

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- (3) The Secretary of State must issue guidance on—

- (a) the factors which the coroner must consider in reaching an opinion under section 10(4) of the Coroners and Justice Act 2009, and
(b) the form in which such an opinion is to be recorded.

- (4) The Secretary of State must include the option for the coroner to record “no discernible factor”, or equivalent, in the guidance issued under subsection (3)(a).

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- (5) In the Coroners (Inquests) Rules 2013 (S.I. 2013/1616), after rule 34 insert the following new rule—

“35 Determination of suicide: relevant factors

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- (1) Following the conclusion of an inquest, in the case of a determination of suicide under section 10(1)(a) of the Coroners and Justice Act 2009, the coroner must record an opinion as to the factors which were relevant to the death.

- (2) The coroner must record an opinion under paragraph (1) in accordance with the guidance issued by the Secretary of State under section 1(3) of the Coroners (Determination of Suicide) Act 2023.”
- (6) The Office for National Statistics must publish opinions recorded under section 10(4) of the Coroners and Justice Act 2009 and rule 35 of the Coroners (Inquests) Rules 2013 on an annual basis, starting one year from the day on which this Act is passed. 5
- (7) Opinions recorded under section 10(4) of the Coroners and Justice Act 2009 and rule 35 of the Coroners (Inquests) Rules 2013 may not be disclosed in such a way that the identity of the deceased is specified or capable of being identified. 10
- (8) Opinions recorded under section 10(4) of the Coroners and Justice Act 2009 and rule 35 of the Coroners (Inquests) Rules 2013 are inadmissible as evidence in any court proceeding.
- (9) The amendment made by subsection (5) does not affect the power to make further rules or regulations amending the provision made by that amendment. 15

2 Extent, commencement and short title

- (1) This Act extends to England and Wales only.
- (2) This Act comes into force at the end of the period of two months beginning with the day on which it is passed. 20
- (3) This Act may be cited as the Coroners (Determination of Suicide) Act 2023.

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