

Checklist of Things to do after a Loved One Dies

After the death of a loved one, there are many decisions to make, people to notify and events to coordinate. The following is a checklist of responsibilities and tasks that may need to be done following a death. You may need to request the assistance of family and friends to complete all the tasks on the list for your particular situation.

Medical

Talk with doctors and other medical personnel about post-mortem decisions:

- What was the cause of death?
- Will there be an autopsy?
- Will you donate the organs/tissue of the deceased?

Obtain a copy of the death certificate and make at least 10 copies of it.

Notifications

- Notify close friends and family of the loved one's death.
- Notify their employer if the deceased had a job.
- Notify your employer of the situation.
- Prepare an obituary or death notice for the newspaper.
- Cancel services including routine deliveries or caretaker visits.
- If the deceased kept a calendar, make sure all upcoming appointments are canceled.
- Contact an attorney or the executor named in the deceased's will.
- Notify the Social Security Administration of the death, and apply for survivor benefits if applicable.
- Notify the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs of the death if the deceased was a veteran.

If there are many people to contact, consider delegating the responsibility of contacting other friends and acquaintances to someone else. Keep track of all notifications, and make note of those who call with their condolences. Keep a list of all flower, food and monetary donations so you can send an acknowledgment at a later date.

Social Media Accounts

You may want to deactivate, delete or alter various social media accounts that the deceased set up. There are no national or state laws governing how social media sites should deal with an account if the user passes away. However, many websites list options in their terms of use or help sections:

- Facebook: Someone who holds a Facebook account can choose to preselect what will happen to their account in the event of death. This can also be done by anyone from the deceased's estate. An account can either be memorialized (the profile will remain active and feature the word "remembering" next to the user's name) or deleted. If the username and password are known, these adjustments can be made in the "settings" section. If the username and password are not known, someone from the estate can contact Facebook directly.
- Twitter: An authorized member of the deceased's estate can contact Twitter to request the deactivation of the account and/or the removal of certain images. Twitter may ask for verifying information, such as a copy of a death certificate and a copy of your ID.
- Instagram: A member of the deceased's estate can contact Instagram to request the memorialization or removal of an Instagram account. Instagram will likely request the deceased's birth and death certificate and proof that you manage his or her estate.
- LinkedIn: Users or a member of the deceased's estate can fill out a form (<https://help.linkedin.com/app/ask/path/ts-rdmlp>) to request the removal of a deceased person's profile. Someone from LinkedIn may follow up and request additional information.
- Google+: Someone from the deceased's estate can fill out a form (<https://support.google.com/accounts/contact/deceased?hl=en>) to request that a profile be deactivated. Current Google+ users can adjust their profile preferences to reflect how they would like their profile managed if they die.
- Pinterest: Someone from the deceased's estate can email care@pinterest.com with their full name, the deceased's full name, the deceased email address, a link to the deceased's Pinterest account, documentation of the deceased's death, your relationship to the deceased and proof of such.

The Funeral

Determine if the deceased left instructions for or pre-arranged their funeral, cremation or burial. Contact the funeral home or other service about the disposition of the body.

Compile a list of information about the deceased for the funeral home. Be sure to include:

- The full name of your loved one and any nicknames they used
- Their date of birth
- Their place of birth
- Their Social Security Number
- Their father's name and mother's maiden name
- Their occupation
- Proof of military service if they were a veteran
- The names of any clubs or organizations in which the deceased was a member
- The name of an organization, charity or cause to which people can donate in the name of the deceased as a memorial

You will also want to make a list of people who are willing to serve in various capacities at the funeral /memorial service (pallbearers, speakers, etc.).

Property

- Arrange for the immediate care of any dependents of the deceased.
- If the deceased had any pets arrange for their immediate feeding and care, and look to making long-term arrangements for their care.
- Arrange for a house-sitter to look after the deceased's home.
- Arrange to have mail picked up and cancel any newspaper deliveries.
- Make sure the deceased's bills, including those for their mortgage, rent or utilities are paid.
- Make sure any valuables including jewelry, cash, and antiques are safe in the deceased's home. If they are not, remove the valuables and store them in a safe location.
- Locate copies of the deceased's financial and legal documents including their will or living trust, mortgages, titles, deeds, licenses and identification papers. Other important documents include insurance policies, financial statements, military certificates, and tax returns.
- Check insurance policies for death-related benefits.
- Contact any fraternal organizations, unions or other groups about possible insurance benefits.
- If you are a surviving spouse, partner or dependent look into transferring titles and deeds to shared assets and property.
- If the deceased kept a safe deposit box locate it and inventory its contents.
- Transfer shared policies and accounts to your name if you are a spouse or surviving partner. This can include opening your own credit card or bank account and transferring utility accounts to only your name.
- If the deceased was a beneficiary for your insurance policies or in your will you will want to change the documents as necessary.

Resources

- U.S. Social Security Administration: www.ssa.gov
- U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs: www.va.gov
- U.S. Government Organ and Tissue Donation/Transplantation Information: <http://organdonor.gov>
- National Funeral Directors Association (NFDA): www.nfda.org

Here when you need us.

Call: 866-615-3047

Online: guidanceresources.com

App: GuidanceNowSM

Web ID: UCRFSAP