

## What do I need to do after a loved one dies? Checklist

There are many decisions to make, people to notify and events to coordinate after the death of a loved one. The following is a list of responsibilities and tasks that may need to be done following a death:

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?

Notify close friends and family, the deceased's employer and your employer of the situation.

Prepare an obituary or death notice for the newspaper.

Cancel other services, including deliveries, appointments, subscriptions or hospice care visits.

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.

Determine if the deceased left instructions for or pre-arranged his or her 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 he or she used

The deceased's date and place of birth

His or her Social Security Number

His or her father's name and mother's maiden name

His or her occupation

Proof of military service if he or she was a veteran

The names of any clubs or organizations of which the deceased was a member

The name of an organization, charity or cause to which people can make donation in the name of the deceased as a memorial

Arrange for immediate care of any dependents or pets of the deceased.

Look for a house-sitter to look after the deceased's home and pick up mail.

Make sure any valuables including jewelry, cash and antiques are safe in the deceased's home. Move the valuables and store them elsewhere if they are not safe. Locate the deceased's safe deposit box, if applicable, and inventory its contents.

Make sure the deceased's bills, including those for his or her mortgage, rent or utilities are paid.

Locate copies of the deceased's financial and legal documents, including his or her 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.

Look into transferring titles and deeds to shared assets and property if the deceased was a spouse, partner or dependent. 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.

Make changes to the necessary documents if the deceased was a beneficiary for your insurance policies or in your will.