

After the Loss of a Loved One

Plans to Consider

Grief can be exhausting, emotional, and complicated. You may be able to rely on friends and family for support and help making final arrangements and handling other business matters.

Getting Support

- Family and Friends
- Faith Community/Clergy

Things to Consider

- Locate any letter of direction, will, trust, prepaid funeral contract and/or insurance policy.
- If nothing has been pre-arranged or specified, you will need to choose a funeral home.
- Once a funeral home has been selected, the director will walk you through funeral arrangements including service, disposition, newspaper/obituary information, and obtaining a death certificate.

Final Arrangements

- Think about the details for the service, viewing, or other arrangements.
- If you choose cremation, think about the details of what you want to do with the ashes.
- If you choose burial, consider whether the casket will be open or closed for the service.
- Think about the officiant, pallbearers, speakers for the service. Music, flowers, scriptures, poetry, and photographs are other details to consider.
- You may also want to plan a gathering after the service.
- Ask someone to help you keep a list of people to thank for flowers, support, and memorial gifts.

Death Certificate Information

Here is some of the information and paperwork you may need. Make sure to get multiple copies.

- Name, home address, phone number, social security number, date of birth, place of birth
- U.S. citizenship papers (if applicable)
- Father's and mother's name and place of birth

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Others to Notify

- Employer(s) of loved one, past and present, regarding possible survivor benefits
- Professional groups or organizations
- Attorney
- Accountant
- Insurance Agents (life, health, burial, supplemental plans, etc.)
- Creditors where they owe debt
- Bank
- Doctor(s)
- Businesses where your loved one had services that need to be cancelled or changed

Other Necessary/Helpful Documents

- Will (if applicable)
- Birth certificate
- Marriage license
- Divorce decree (if applicable)
- Social security number
- Trust documents
- Property deeds
- Insurance policies
- Recent income tax returns
- Vehicle titles and registrations
- Doctor and hospital bills
- Disability and retirement papers
- Safe deposit box location and key

Possible Benefits

- Social Security – Death Benefit (www.ssa.gov)
- Veteran's Administration (if applicable) (www.opm.gov and www.cem.va.gov)
- Life insurance (if applicable)

