

What To Do First: A Checklist

When a death occurs there are so many things to consider and decisions to make. These lists can help you navigate through them.

Where Did the Death Occur?

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| ☐ At Home:
If the deceased was under hospice care, notify the hospice nurse. The nurse will contact the funeral home on your behalf. If the deceased was not under hospice or another at-home medical care provider, call 911. | ☐ At a Hospital:
Notify the hospital which funeral home you have selected. The hospital will contact the funeral home on your behalf once they have completed their necessary documents. |
| ☐ At a Hospice Facility:
Notify the hospice facility which funeral home you have selected. The hospice staff will notify the funeral home on your behalf. | ☐ At a Nursing/Long Term Care Facility:
Notify the staff as to which funeral home you have selected; they will notify the funeral home on your behalf. |
| ☐ Out of State/Out of the Country:
Even if a death occurs away from home you should still notify your local funeral home. If you plan to have the deceased casketed and brought home, or if you plan to have services in your hometown, your local funeral home can help facilitate transportation and coordination with a funeral home where the death occurred. | |

Contact These People as Soon as Possible

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| ☐ The Funeral Home
Set an appointment to make further arrangements. | ☐ Relatives and Friends |
| ☐ Personal Representative | ☐ Cemetery Where You Want or Own Property |
| ☐ Employers
Both the deceased's employer and those of relatives who will need time off. | ☐ Insurance Agencies
Life, Health, and Accident. |
| ☐ Associations, Clubs, and Organizations
Religious, fraternal, civic, unions, etc. that the deceased was affiliated with. | ☐ Lawyer |
| | ☐ Accountant |

Secure Vital Statistics of the Deceased

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| ☐ Full Legal Name
Other names must be identified by "Also Known As" (AKA). | ☐ Mother's Full legal Name and Place of Birth
This includes the mother's maiden name. |
| ☐ Date and Place of Birth | ☐ Father's Full Legal Name and Place of Birth |
| ☐ Social Security Number | ☐ Longest Held Occupation and Industry |

☐ **Home Address**

☐ **Level of Education Reached**

Documents to Collect

These may be required to establish rights for insurance, pensions, survivor benefits, ownership, etc.

☐ **Will.**

☐ **Insurance Policies.**

☐ **Military Discharge Papers**
DD214 or Discharge Certificate.

☐ **Bank Books.**

☐ **Legal Proof of Age or Birth Certificate.**

☐ **Deeds.**

☐ **Marriage License.**

☐ **Vehicle/Car Ownership Papers.**

☐ **Citizenship Papers**
If not a U.S. Citizen.

☐ **Income Tax Returns, Receipts or Canceled Checks.**

Things You Will Discuss with the Funeral Home

☐ **Whether Your Loved One Will Be Buried or Cremated.**

☐ **If You Want Pallbearers, Music, Pictures, Flowers, Scriptures, or Readings.**

☐ **Service Details**
Would you like a visitation period, a formal service or a reception?

☐ **If you Would Like a Charity to Receive Donations In Memory of Your Loved One.**

☐ **The Clothing the Deceased Will Be Buried or Cremated In.**

☐ **The Funeral Director Will Ask if You Have Made Any Arrangements With a Cemetery.**
If you have not done this, you will need to visit the cemetery to do so.

☐ **If a Member of the Clergy Will Be Engaged for the Service.**

If This Is To Be A Casket Burial

☐ **Would You Like Other Members of the Family to be With your Loved One in the Future?**
This determines the size and the type of cemetery property needed.

☐ **What Type of Memorial Marker Would You Prefer?**
A marker set flush with the ground, or an upright monument.

☐ **If an In-Ground Liner or Vault is Required.**
The cemetery will be able to answer this for you when you make arrangements for the lot.

☐ **What Type of Presentation Would You Prefer for the Burial Service?**
A tent canopy, chairs, mats leading to the graveside.

If This Is To Be A Cremation

☐ **Would you like to schedule a viewing or visitations prior to the cremation?**

☐ **Would you like to use our chapel for a short service prior to the cremation?**

☐ **Would you like your family to be present at the time of cremation?**
This is called a Witness Cremation.

☐ **What type of engraving would you like on the urn?**

☐ **What type of final resting place would you prefer for your loved one?**
Ground burial, above ground niches, scattering, etc.

☐ **What type of urn would you prefer?**
Metal, wood, marble, ceramic, biodegradable, dissolving, scattering tube, etc.

☐ **Would you like members of your family to be with your loved one in the future?**
This determines the size and type of the final resting place.

Burial of an Urn

☐ **Burial urn or urn vault?**
One of these will be required for an in ground burial in our local cemeteries.

☐ **What type of memorial do you prefer?**
For example, would you want a bronze or granite marker set flush with the ground, an cremation bench or an upright monument?

Above Ground Niches

☐ **Would you like the niche to be inside a building or outside?**

Tip: Determine the measurements of the niche to ensure the urn will fit properly.

Scattering

☐ **Would you like to be present for the scattering?**

☐ **Would you like a permanent memorial to be placed in or around the area where scattering took place?**

You Will Need to Pay For

☐ **Funeral arrangements:**
This includes clergy, florist, newspapers, transportation, casket and/or urn, and any other services or merchandise.

☐ **Cemetery charges:**
This includes the burial lot, opening/closing of the lot, vault or liner, selected headstone or other memorial.

☐ **Current and urgent bills:**
This may include mortgage, rent, taxes, telephone, utilities, etc.

Your Notes

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