

Following the Loss of a Loved One

Plans to Consider

Grief is exhausting, emotional, and at times complicated. It is important to rely on friends and family for support and to assist in making final arrangements and handling other business matters.

Initial Notifications

- Family and Friends
- Faith Community/Clergy

Considerations

- 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

- Service? Viewing? Date, time, and location?
- Disposition – burial or cremation?
- If cremation, where/when will the ashes be scattered or to whom will they be given?
- If burial – will the casket be open or closed for the service?
- Who will officiate, be pallbearers, speak at the service? Favorite music, scripture, poetry? Photographs?
- Flowers or charitable donations?
- Gathering after service?
- Pick someone to assist you with keeping a list of individuals to thank for flowers, support, and memorial gifts.

Death Certificate Information

(Make sure to get multiple copies)

- Name, home address, phone number, Social Security Number, date of birth, place of birth
- How long a resident in state
- U.S. Citizenship papers (if applicable)
- Father's and mother's name and place of birth

Loss of a Loved One

Other Notifications

- 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 – especially those exclusive to your loved one
- Bank
- Doctor(s)
- Other companies or institutions that your loved one did regular business with to cancel or adjust services

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 (if applicable)

Possible Benefits

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

