

Reference Guide: What to Do After Someone Passes

What to do first

Who to notify

What information is needed

How to manage the estate

When are tax deadlines

Where to get help - directory

Within the first few days

Completed Date	Completed By	Task
		Care for pets and/or dependents.
		Locate documents for prearranged funeral services and burial plots.
		Assign someone to watch the home of the decedent: keep doors and vehicles locked, have mail brought in, notify neighbors or police.

Notifications to send over the next few weeks

Completed Date	Completed By	Task
		If employed, notify employer and ask about benefits or life insurance.
		Contact the military if decedent was a veteran to determine if there are any benefits or survivor's benefits available. Go to www.va.gov .
		Contact Social Security to put the decedent's social security number on a Master Death Index to avoid fraud. Go to www.ssa.gov .
		Cancel decedent's driver's license to protect against identity theft.
		Notify local election board to protect against voter fraud.
		Contact credit card companies, cancel and destroy cards, obtain last credit card statement.
		Contact insurance companies and determine beneficiaries.
		If decedent had federal student loans they will be discharged, visit www.studentaid.ed.gov .
		Contact utility companies to change names or cancel accounts: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Phone 2. Internet 3. Gas & electric 4. Water 5. Cable/dish and streaming services.
		Complete a change-of-address form with the post office so future mail will go to the decedent's administrator.
		Complete a change-of-address form with the IRS to receive the decedent's IRS correspondence, Form 8822 www.irs.gov .

Tasks to complete over the next few months

Completed Date	Completed By	Task
		Request and gather important documents: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.) original will and/or trust 2.) death certificate (you will need several copies of this) 3.) Marriage, divorce and birth certificates 4.) Property and vehicle titles 5.) Passport 6.) Driver's license
		Gather all financial records: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.) Bank and savings account statements 2.) Checkbook, check register, and statements 3.) Investment and stock holdings 4.) IRA, 401(K) and annuity account statements. 5.) Pension account statements. <p>Determine titling on all accounts. Determine designated beneficiaries on retirement holdings. Close or freeze these accounts if not needed to pay expenses.</p>
		Shred, don't just throw away, personal documents to guard against fraud.
		Gather all user names and passwords for digital assets: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.) Email accounts 2.) Online bank and investment accounts 3.) Social media accounts (Facebook, Twitter, etc) 4.) Reward programs 5.) Digital photo or music accounts
		Determine if decedent held assets in cryptocurrency, and if you have access to the "private key" in order to transfer the asset.
		Determine if there is a safe deposit box, gain access, and take inventory of the contents.
		Obtain copies of any mortgage statements and notify the mortgage company. If a renter, notify landlord and inquire about lease obligations.
		Try to obtain as many years as possible of prior tax returns (at least two).

Managing the estate

Completed Date	Completed By	Task
		Apply for a tax EIN# for the estate if required. Can be done online at www.irs.gov (this can also be done by an accountant or lawyer).
		Once the EIN is obtained, open an estate bank account to handle the estate's income and expenses.
		Make sure all utilities and mortgage payments are being paid in a timely manner.
		Contact a lawyer to get a letter of administration or begin the probate process.
		Prepare a list of assets and the approximate value on the date of death. Remember there is a step up basis for capital assets. For large estates, contact a tax professional to assist with this process.
		Cancel reoccurring charges such as memberships, insurance, health insurance, and other accounts.
		Be careful to not give out too much information on social media accounts or in the obituary. Monitor or close social media accounts. Check the decedent's credit report for accounts opened in decedent's name.
		Go to www.missingmoney.com and conduct a free search for any unclaimed property that belongs to the decedent.
		Keep detailed records of income and expenses to assist the accountant and lawyer with the preparation of estate documents and tax returns.
		Determine what assets will be sold or distributed to the beneficiaries. Contact the necessary professionals to assist with these sales. Do not sell any securities or other assets on the date of death. Take time to think through these arrangements.

Tax Deadlines: Forms that may be required

Name	Due Date	Extension
Final 1040	4/15 following year of death	6 months (due date 10/15)
Form 706	9 months following death (payment also due)	6 months
Form M706 (for MN residents)	9 months following death (payment also due)	6 months
Form 1041	3.5 months (15 th day of the 4 th month) after determining the return month end date. Administrator determines the year end date. (Year end date can be calendar year end or fiscal year end. Fiscal year end begins on the date of death and ends on the last day of the month prior to the one year death anniversary.)	5.5 months

Directory

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