

What to do after my death

Initial Steps

Contact funeral director. *If you have made prior arrangement, specify the company.* They will guide you through any arrangements, provide multiple copies of the death certificate, publish the obituary in the local paper, and contact Social Security regarding a death benefit.

Organ Donation. *If you have chosen to make organ donation, specify that it gets done.*

Inform family and friends. *List folks with phone or email other than relatives and friends obvious to survivors.*

Estate planning documents. *Specify location, and your attorney. .*

Review my insurance policies. *Specify policies, locations, and phone numbers.*

(If you are a veteran, survivor should local Veterans Administrative office. This office may be able to help with the funeral or a burial plot, supply a flag, or provide other benefits.

Pay all bills due. **Cancel** or change automatic payments.

IRA MRD. *(If you have an IRA, 401(k) etc. specify what to do about Minimum Required Distribution (MRD) is withdrawn before Dec. 31st. Failure will result in 50% penalty.)*

Cost Basis. Update cost basis of all assets.

Pay Taxes. *Specify tax accountant.* File State and Federal Income (by April 15) and Estate Taxes (within 90 days) by due date.

Soon

Meet with attorney. *Specify attorney, if any.* When you set up an appointment, ask who should attend and what document you should bring.

File my will. Have the executor or personal representative (*name the person*) assist you, or ask the attorney to file all the wills with the District Court. (within 40 days in WA)

Start Probate, if necessary.

Contact Social Security. Review the benefits available for a surviving spouse and minor children.

Review the deceased person's employer benefits. *(Specify benefits, if any, and who to contact)*

Cancel services that are no longer needed. *(Specify services)*

Cancel credit cards. *(Specify the cards)*

In the following months

Change title to assets. Be sure to talk to the attorney attorney about what is involved. Some assets, such as real estate, may require an attorney to prepare a new deed and other transfer documents. Retirement accounts including IRAs should be transferred to the beneficiaries. Other assets that may need to be transferred include vehicles, investment accounts, jointly held property, and certain insurance policies. Update cost basis of all assets.

Settle the estate. Deal with distribution to beneficiaries. Consult the attorney about any specifications in the estate plan regarding distributions from insurance policies and retirement accounts. You may wish to have an accountant work with your attorney to prepare and file estate tax returns.

Pay Taxes. File State and Federal Income (by April 15) and Estate Taxes (within 90 days) by due date.

After the estate is settled:

Update your own estate plan

Review beneficiary designations for your retirement accounts and life insurance policies

Review your own financial situation, such as your short and long-term cash needs

Review your situation regarding life insurance, medical insurance, and other types

Reassess your investment portfolio to account for additional assets and other changes.