



What to do when someone dies checklist



Losing someone you care about can naturally be very overwhelming, without worrying about the formalities that follow a death.

You may not know what to do following a death, or maybe you are struggling with where to start or what needs to be done first, beyond letting family and friends know.

So, we have put together the following checklist to help guide you through this difficult time and ensure that you do

everything you need to do when someone dies.

Step 1: Get a legal pronouncement of death

If your loved one died in a hospital or nursing home with a doctor or hospice nurse present, then you do not need to worry about this as it will be handled by the staff.

However, if they passed away at home or unexpectedly then you will need to get an official declaration of death from a medical professional; the usual GP of the person who has died will be able to help with this.

You will need to call 911 and have them transported to an emergency room so that they can be declared dead and moved to a funeral home.

An official declaration of death is required to get a death certificate which will be critical during this process. Without one, you will not be able to plan a funeral or handle the legal affairs of the deceased.

Step 2: Find any important paperwork

Within the first few hours of a loved one dying, you will need to seek out any paperwork pertaining to their wishes, particularly regarding organ or body donation, and specific funeral arrangements.

If you cannot find a written declaration and are unsure what they would want, you may want to gather the deceased's loved ones together to discuss what to do.

Step 3: Tell friends and family

Once you feel up to it, you should let family and friends of the deceased know that they have passed away.

You could do this by sending out a text or email to everyone, or by calling people individually, or you may want to delegate this to someone else if you do not feel up to it.

Check through your loved one's phone and email contacts to ensure you contact everyone that would want to or need to know, including colleagues and fellow members of social groups.

Step 4: Activate the Mail Suppression Service

Although optional, you may want to consider activating the Mail Suppression Service which will reduce junk and marketing mail in the name of the deceased. This can also help to prevent identity fraud.

Step 5: Register the death

Once you have received the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death (MCCD), you will need to schedule an appointment with the registrar to complete the official registration of the death.

You must register a death within five days of it happening, or within eight days in Scotland.

If your loved one did not pass away in the UK, the death will need to be registered in the country in which they died, regardless of where they lived.

Once registered, you will receive a certificate for burial to give to the funeral director or an application for cremation which you will need to complete and give to the crematorium. One of which must be done before a funeral can take place. Your Funeral Director will advise you on the registration procedure in your area.

Step 6: Make funeral arrangements

When making arrangements, you should take into consideration your loved one's wishes, particularly if they have a pre-paid funeral plan.

If they were not specific, you will need to decide whether the deceased will be buried or cremated, where they will rest prior to the funeral and how they will be presented, where the funeral service will take place and maybe where the ashes will finally be laid.

Arranging a funeral is often difficult for family and friends who are grieving, so [Craven Funeral Directors](#) are on-hand to help relieve some of the stress of planning a funeral.

We have a range of [funeral plans](#) available to suit varying budgets. If you are unsure about the service you want, take a look at our range of award-winning, professional, and affordable funeral plans, or get in touch to find out more.

Step 7: Inform organisations and professionals

As well as letting friends, family, and colleagues know of your loved one's passing, you will also need to inform any organisations or professionals they were associated with.

These could include government departments, financial organisations, utility companies, landlords, housing associations, or insurance companies, or their therapist, dentist, solicitors, advisors, or accountants.

To inform all relevant government departments of someone's death at once, you can use the [Tell Us Once](#) service.

Step 8: Secure the estate

You will likely have a clear picture of how the estate was put together if you had Power of Attorney or managed the deceased's finances.

However, if that is not the case, the deceased may have left a file containing the information required to look after the estate.

If you are in neither position, you may need to do a bit of investigating. Look at their financial records and bank cards to find out who they dealt with for banking and other matters.

You may need to apply to get probate to be able to deal with someone's estate after they die. You will have to ask the financial organisations they used whether or not you will need probate to access their assets.

Step 9: Work out if you need probate

Once you have obtained probate, if required, you will then be able to arrange the sale or transfer of any sole assets.

Before anything is handed over, you will need to make sure that any debts are settled and Inheritance Tax has been paid, if required.

Once you are sure that all debts have been paid, you can then follow the instructions in the Will, or distribute the estate to the deceased's relatives in line with the Rules of Intestacy, which are the inheritance laws.

Keep records of money coming in and going out to ensure you have a clear paper trail that shows how the estate has been administered.

Put these records together with the Death Certificate, the Will if there is one, and the Grant of Probate if this was required, to form the estate accounts.

Step 10: Seek support should you need it

For support with carrying out any of these steps, or for bereavement advice following the death of a loved one, contact Bereavement Advice for free on 0800 634 9494.

For expert advice on planning a funeral service that meets your requirements and exceeds your expectations, please get in touch with our team on 0151 228 3900.

Craven Funeral Directors on Craven Funeral Directors is the largest independent funeral provider in Merseyside and North Cheshire, with over 100 years of experience in arranging funerals.