

# What to Do After a Parent Dies: A Checklist After Losing a Parent

## TO DO THE FIRST WEEK AFTER A PARENT DIES

- Notify close friends and family members of the passing. Ask other family members to help and split up the list if this is too difficult.
- Get a legal pronouncement of death either from the hospital or hospice nurse.
- Make sure to check up on your parent's property and vehicles. If they rented, notify the landlord ASAP.
- Arrange care for any dependents such as other relatives or pets who may have been in your loved one's care.
- Write a draft of the obituary, get feedback from family and friends, and submit a copy to a local newspaper either via mail or online.
- Notify any employers or volunteer groups of the passing

## FUNERAL AND BURIAL ARRANGEMENTS

- Decide if your loved one will be buried, cremated, or another option.
- Research funeral and burial costs in your area.
- If the person was in the military, contact the Veterans Administration to see if they offer burial benefits or special funeral services.
- Arrange a funeral date, and work with friends and relatives to take on funeral roles such as speakers, pallbearers, and hosts for a wake or post-funeral gathering.

## TO DO 2-3 WEEKS FOLLOWING A DEATH

- Order a headstone and provide a headstone engraving.
- Make an inventory of all assets including bank accounts, house, car, brokerage account, personal property, furniture, jewelry, etc.). These will need to be filed in court.
- Review all existing safes, lock-deposit boxes, or secondary properties/homes to account for all additional assets.

## LEGAL OBLIGATIONS AND PROBATE PROCESS

- Get 5- 10 copies of a death certificate.
- Locate your loved one's will and identify the will executor.
- Get a probate lawyer or contact the city probate court office to begin the probate process to handle existing debts and liabilities.

## ENTITIES TO NOTIFY WHEN A PARENT DIES

- Notify banks and financial institutions to close, remove or transfer funds to a beneficiary.
- Notify the Social Security Administration (SSA) to cease payments, and determine eligibility for death benefits if your parent was receiving Social Security payments.
- Notify life insurance companies and provide a death certificate to make claims on any life insurance policies.
- Notify a financial advisor or CPA to act on filing a final tax return.
- Send a copy of the death certificate to one of three major credit bureaus, Equifax, Experian, or TransUnion to prevent identity theft or fraud.
- Contact the Post Office to stop or forward the deceased's mail.
- Contact your state's voter registration office to remove the deceased from the voting rolls.

## OTHER TASKS THAT NEED TO BE TAKEN CARE OF AFTER A DEATH

- Cancel their driver's license.
- Close credit card accounts.
- Terminate existing home, health, and auto insurance processes.
- Close any active email accounts.
- Cancel subscription services and utilities such as internet, cable, streaming services, phone plans, gas and electricity, and other services in the deceased's name.