



A Checklist for the Estate

- _____ 1. Obtain the necessary number of copies of the death certificate needed as proof of death for benefits due. The funeral home can advise you on how many and can order them for you.
- _____ 2. Notify BANKS. Change all accounts into your name. If deceased's estate is in a trust, check with trust department of the bank.
- _____ 3. Notify the person's EMPLOYER and employer's personnel of insurance department. Check on group insurance benefits, survivor's benefits, profit sharing, and/or pension monies which may be due to you.
- _____ 4. Check on monies in CREDIT UNIONS. Some supply life insurance.
- _____ 5. Inquire about HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE for you and your children if carried by your deceased spouse.
- _____ 6. Check on ACCIDENT INSURANCE. If the death was accidental, benefits may be due. If not, you may be due unused premium.
- _____ 7. Check on AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE. Same as #6 above.
- _____ 8. Check with LABOR UNION if the person was a member. Benefits may be due to you.
- _____ 9. Check with FRATERNAL ORGANIZATIONS. Benefits may be due to you.
- _____ 10. File at SOCIAL SECURITY OFFICE for benefits for you and minor children. Call first AND WITHIN THE MONTH OF DEATH.
- _____ 11. Check with VETERAN'S ADMINISTRATION if the person was a veteran, especially if he/she served during a wartime era. Widow's and children's pensions, and grave markers can be supplied, if eligible. ALSO, you may be eligible for COUNTY SOLDIERS AND SAILORS RELIEF COMMISSION BENEFITS.
- _____ 12. Collect any DEBTS owed to deceased by other persons.
- _____ 13. Make a REVIEW OF YOUR PRESENT FINANCIAL SITUATION.
- _____ 14. If you have no income or monies due you presently, SEEK EMERGENCY AID from Dept. of Social Services.
- _____ 15. KEEP AN UP-TO-DATE ACCOUNTING OF ALL CASH INCOME AND EXPENSES.
- _____ 16. Get HOSPITAL AND MEDICAL STATEMENTS as soon as possible.



- _____ 17. Pay all **BILLS AND TAXES OWED** as soon as possible (funeral, income tax, real estate, home mortgage, hospital and other bills incurred). **ALSO**, check on **CREDIT LIFE INSURANCE** that may have been carried on all debts (house, car, appliances, etc.). Close accounts covered by this insurance.
- _____ 18. File the **WILL** in Probate Court within 30 days following death. No probate on joint property. It is advisable to have an attorney if estate is valued at \$7,500.00 or more. Discuss attorney's fee and have a **WRITTEN RETAINER AGREEMENT**.
- _____ 19. Draw up or update **YOUR OWN WILL**.
- _____ 20. Change beneficiary on **YOUR INSURANCE POLICY**, if necessary.
- _____ 21. Transfer real estate of **JOINTLY-HELD PROPERTY** in the Register of Deeds Office in the county where real estate is located.
- _____ 22. Change **STOCKS AND BONDS** into your own name. Banks or stock brokers have these forms.
- _____ 23. Transfer **AUTOMOBILE TITLE** into your name at Secretary of State's office, or if estate is probated, through Probate Court.
- _____ 24. File **INHERITANCE AND ESTATE TAX IRS FORM 706**. Must be filed within 9 months if estate is more than \$225,000 (beginning 1982). Pay state tax first for credit on federal tax. Decide if you are going to be Personal Representative of the estate, and if so, file **WILL AND PETITION for APPOINTMENT**.

It is usually best not to make any major decisions, such as sale of property, until time has passed and you have been able to think things through, even 1 or 2 years.

Documents You Will Need to Handle Business Matters

- Death certificates
- Social security numbers, yours and that of deceased
- Marriage certificate
- Birth certificate of each child
- Armed services discharge papers
- Insurance policies
- Deeds and titles to property
- Stock certificates
- Bank books
- Wills
- Recent income tax forms and w2 forms
- Veteran's administration claim number
- Automobile registration
- Loan and installment payment books and contracts