

ESTATE CHECKLIST FOR SURVIVORS

Personal Documents

- Will and Trust documents
- Social Security card and/or number
- Birth certificate
- Marriage and divorce certificates
- Honorable Discharge papers for veteran and/or V.A. Claim Number
- Insurance and annuity policies
- Deeds and titles to property
- Recent Income Tax forms, with W2 and 1099 forms
- Pension documents and ID numbers
- Copies of bank (CU and S&L, etc.), investment, IRA and retirement plan statements
- Copy of recent corporate benefits statement
- Vehicle title and registration papers
- Loan and installment payment books
- Credit cards and recent credit card statements
- Bank books and check registers
- Stock certificates
- Computer passwords

Estate Tax and Legal Advice

- Notify existing tax and legal advisors about the deceased's death. Consult with these advisors on issues impacting the estate (estate size, estate assets and debt balances, estate and income taxes, executor appointment, re-titling of assets, transfer of asset ownership, funding trusts, potential disclaimers of assets, etc.).
- If tax and legal advisers are not currently in place, contact other knowledgeable individuals (existing bank and investment professionals) for referrals.

Estate Paperwork

- Obtain 5-10 certified copies of the death certificate. The funeral home can provide these. The number needed will depend on the number of bank, investment and IRA relationships, insurance and annuity policies, real estate, pensions, lease and service agreements, credit cards and loans, etc.
- If you qualify as Executor, request several Court Qualifications from the Clerk of the Court of your city or county. The Court Qualification will be needed by brokerage firms and are good for only 60 days.
- Make copies of the published obituary.
- Establish an estate checking account to address payment of estate expenses.

Property Held in Joint Names

- Re-title real estate with the Clerk of the Court, you should make an appointment.
- Re-title personal property with the DMV. You should take the title and death certificate to re-title.
- If there a safe deposit box at the bank, contact the bank to determine access requirements. The safe deposit box may be a source of documents listed above.

Property Held in a Business

- Consult with the company's attorney and/or partners.

Investments (Deceased)

- Establish an estate account with at least one of the existing investment institutions.
- Change joint bank, mutual fund and brokerage accounts to include your name.
- If the deceased had an IRA, notify the beneficiaries so a Beneficiary IRA can be established in a timely fashion.
- If the deceased held securities at a transfer agent, obtain the following paperwork to transfer to Davenport:
 - The most recent statement issued by the transfer agent
 - Stock Power signed by the Executor or Survivor if the securities are held in joint name
 - Notarized Affidavit of Domicile
 - Court Appointment dated within 60 days
 - Certified Death Certificate

Insurance (Deceased)

- Confirm that all health, life, and other insurance premiums are paid and current through the date of death.
- If the deceased had life insurance or an annuity, call each company to begin claims process. At a minimum, policy numbers and a certified copy of the death certificate will be needed.
 - If the cause of death was accidental, find out if there are accidental death benefits payable in addition to other benefits.
- If the deceased was covered under a group life insurance or supplemental life insurance policy with an employer, contact the HR department to get the phone numbers of the insurance providers. Submit claims.
- If the deceased was covered under a health insurance policy with his/her employer, cancel coverage as of date of death. Be prepared to pay any back premiums.
 - If children were covered under the plan, and if they are still eligible for coverage under COBRA, ask the HR department to determine eligibility and needed documents.
 - If the deceased was NOT covered under an employer group, cancel any private coverage.
- Cancel disability income insurance as of the date of death. Request return of any unused premiums or other balances available.
- Contact the long-term care insurance provider to cancel coverage.
 - Ask the company to confirm whether any remaining unused benefit can be allocated to a surviving spouse.
 - Confirm the new premium for the surviving spouse.

Note: Personal property (home owners and/or auto) insurance should NOT be canceled until the property is sold or transferred.

Employee Benefits

- Check with the human resources department to see what benefits or money may be due to surviving family members. Apply for appropriate benefits.

Social Security

- Notify the Social Security Administration about the death and stop the deceased's benefits.
- Check with the Social Security Administration about spousal survivor benefits.
- Apply for the death benefit.
- Confirm the new benefit amount if you are currently collecting social security.

Retirement (Deceased)

- If the deceased was receiving pension benefits, contact the pension plan to report the death, cease current benefits and determine and apply for available survivor benefits.
- Review your spouse's retirement accounts and transfer to the beneficiaries.

Financials/Debt

- Make a list of the credit cards and debit cards in the deceased's name. Each institution needs to be notified of their death and many will require a copy of the death certificate in order to close the account.
- Ask each institution if there is any insurance that pays off the account balance upon the card holder's death.
- Check auto loans and mortgages. Discuss debt balances with a legal advisor.

Contact the Veterans Administration (if appropriate)

- Stop any monthly benefits the VA may be providing.
- Check to see if the VA is able to assist with funeral expenses.

Investments (Spouse and Other Beneficiaries)

- Review all investments and make sure they meet your specific needs.
- Ask your Financial Advisor for a Wealthcare Questionnaire. Upon completion, you will be provided with a Wealthcare analysis.

Insurance (Spouse and Other Beneficiaries)

- If you are not covered by your own health insurance, apply for health insurance. You may be able to keep your spouse's employer plan under COBRA (paying the entire premium). Contact the employer within 30 days. If not, look at an individual policy (possibly converting from employer's group plan).
- Review your life insurance and change the beneficiaries as appropriate.
- If you do not currently have long-term care, consider whether it would be beneficial for you.
- Review home owner's insurance.
- Review automobile insurance.

Retirement (Spouse and Other Beneficiaries)

- Review your retirement accounts and the beneficiary designations.

Your Legal Documents (Spouse and Other Beneficiaries)

- Establish a new power of attorney for yourself.
- Update your medical directive.
- Update your will and/or trust documents.

- Contact your tax advisor to file a final return for the deceased if appropriate.

- Create an emergency fund.

Document your team of consultants and emergency contacts with names and phone numbers:

Executor/Successor Trustee _____

Attorney _____

Accountant _____

Banker _____

Financial Advisor _____

Insurance Agent _____

Emergency Contact _____

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July 2020

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