

THINGS THAT MUST BE DONE ON THE MOST DIFFICULT DAY OF YOUR LIFE

The following is a list of the things that must be done following the death. Some things can be planned, arranged, and/or paid for prior to death.

A. SECURE VITAL STATISTICS

1. Full legal names, complete address, telephone number, and email
2. Religious name, if any
3. Date of birth
4. Place of birth
5. Marital status
6. Spouse's name
7. Spouse's maiden name
8. Education statement
9. Citizenship (US/Canadian,)
10. Father's Name
11. Father's Birthplace
12. Mother's Name & Maiden Name
13. Mother's Birthplace
14. Full names of all children whether alive or deceased and dates of birth/death
15. Full names of all grandchildren whether alive or deceased, dates of birth/death
16. Social Security Number
17. Veteran's number
18. Date and place of service, branch, date of discharge
19. How long at current residence
20. Occupation, job title, nature of work and employment history
21. Family origin

B. PAY SOME OR ALL OF THE FOLLOWING AND KEEP RECEIPTS

1. Estate/inheritance taxes
2. Funeral expenses
3. Purchase of family burial plot, mausoleum., crypt, opening and closing costs
4. Permanent memorialization
5. Monument/marker/engraving
6. Funeral director
7. Clergy
8. Organist
9. Florist
10. Obituary
11. Clothing
12. Long distance phone services
13. Food
14. Transportation
15. Doctors, nurses, medical personnel
16. Ambulance
17. Hospital, nursing homes
18. Medications and pharmacy

19. Current and urgent bills (mortgage, phone, utilities, taxes, installment payments)

C. COLLECT DOCUMENTS AND PAPERWORK

1. Will, check for special wishes
2. Prepare legal papers, certificates and permits
3. Birth certificate/legal proof of age
4. Citizenship papers
5. Social security number and card
6. Marriage licenses and divorce papers
7. Veteran's discharge papers (DD214)
8. Submit insurance policies (life, health, accident, property, auto, credit card, mortgage)
9. Disability claims
10. Bank books, and account numbers
11. Other financial documents
12. Cemetery deed or proof of ownership
13. Auto titles and/or bill of sale
14. Income tax returns, receipts/cancelled checks

D. DECIDE AND ARRANGE WITHIN A FEW HOURS

1. Make cemetery arrangements
2. Call funeral home
3. Secure interment space and get exact location of burial/disposition
4. Arrange for opening and closing of the grave/mausoleum/niche
5. Secure endowment care
6. Arrange graveside committal service
7. Secure use of cemetery chapel for committal prayers
8. Choose restorative art
9. Decide on embalming or other preparations
10. Service type (religious, green, fraternal, military, etc)
11. Arrange for services
12. Provide information for eulogy
13. Select casket (open or closed)
14. Select outer burial container or vault
15. Provide vital statistics to newspaper for obituary
16. Time and place of service or memorial
17. Clothing for deceased
18. Jewelry and glasses for deceased

19. Select cosmetics and hairdresser for deceased
20. Select music and scripture readings
21. Clergy or officiate
22. Marking grave (temporary /permanent)
23. Select memorial marker
24. Select charitable contributions for memorials in memory of deceased
25. Register book, memorial/prayer cards
26. Select and call pallbearers
27. Floral arrangements and transportation before and after services
28. Organist/ pianist/vocalist /music
29. Funeral coach/hearse
30. Arrange limousine for family and pallbearers
31. Arrange cars for family and guests
32. Clothing for you and children
33. Decide on child care and care for pets
34. House cleaning
35. Extra chairs
36. Transportation for family and guests
37. Answering phone calls, emails, letters
- 38. Necessary meetings with funeral director, lawyer, clergy, cemetery**
39. Arrange transportation & lodging for out-of-town guests/family
40. Acknowledge those who help in a special way (contributions for flowers, food, donations, help)
41. Decide on how many certified copies of the death certificate you need, with and without a cause of death (talk to your attorney)
42. Food for family, relatives, out of town guests
43. Items for memento display/memorial board
44. Arrange thank you notes and mail
45. Decide on memorial video production, pictures, music

E. PLAN TO NOTIFY AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

1. Family members
2. Relatives
3. Friends
4. Minister and church/synagogue
5. Funeral director
6. Pallbearers
7. Cemetery
8. Doctor
9. Employer of deceased
10. Employers of relatives not going to work (tell your relatives to do this)
11. Organist, musicians, vocalists