



## IMMEDIATE NEED CHECKLIST

When a death occurs in your family, you will need to make some very important decisions in a short period of time. We realize this is a very difficult time and our staff is here to help. To make things a little easier, we've put together this comprehensive checklist to help guide you through the steps you'll need to take after a death has occurred.

### Notification

- Call 911 to report the death (if outside of a hospital or nursing home).
- Determine whether the deceased is an organ donor and notify the proper authorities.
- Notify close relatives and friends.
- Locate the deceased's will and notify the lawyer and executor.

### Gather Information

Gather the following information. You will need this for the death certificate, funeral home, and obituary.

- Social Security Number.
- Date of birth.
- Deceased's parents' names, including mother's maiden name.
- Place of work (name, address, and occupation), even if retired.
- Information about the deceased's education.
- Marital status of the deceased.
- Order five to seven copies of the death certificate.

### Contact your Funeral Home

- Notify your funeral home and setup a time to meet with the funeral director.
- Determine who will be responsible for the funeral expenses. If they are to be shared, make sure your funeral director is aware of that.
- Be prepared to provide the funeral director with the following:
  - Name of the deceased
  - Location of the deceased
  - Your name, contact information, and relationship to the deceased
  - Name and contact information for next of kin



### **Funeral Home Decisions**

- Provide a recent photograph of the deceased. This will be used for cosmetics purposes.
- Decide whether to embalm the body. State law requires bodies that are not embalmed to be buried sooner. Your funeral director can help you with this decision.
- Decide on clothing and jewelry; the funeral home can provide clothing if needed.
- Select the type of container you will need for the deceased's remains (casket, container, urn).

### **Funeral Home Decisions (continued)**

- Decide whether you want an open- or closed-casket service.
- Determine when the viewing and funeral service will be held.
- Determine grave site transportation for immediate family members.
- Provide family photos for use in the funeral services slideshow.
- Provide any pre-arrangement paperwork.
- Provide the cemetery lot information (if applicable).

### **Cemetery Decisions**

If a cemetery lot HAS been purchased, bring the deed with you to the funeral home. If a cemetery lot HAS NOT been purchased, call us at 757-656-2006 and one of our Family Service Counselors will walk you through the process. Also, be sure to visit our website for types of burials, cemetery maps, property information, memorial options, and more. You'll need to decide:

- Type of burial (in-ground, cremation, mausoleum).
- Lot location.
- Type of vault.
- Type of memorial and its inscription.
- Any personal touches for the grave side service. (balloons, bagpipers, butterflies, doves, etc.)

### **Funeral Service Decisions**

- Contact your clergy.
- Decide on the time and place for the funeral or memorial service.
- Decide on the type of service, music, etc. Some fraternal orders and military branches may provide special ceremonies for the funeral service.
- Determine seating arrangements for family members and any special needs.
- Decide on who will deliver the eulogy.
- Arrange for the pallbearers; usually four to six men are needed.



## Funeral Service Notification

- Notify friends and family members of the date, time, and location of the following:
  - Viewing
  - Funeral services
  - Reception
- Notify guests of where flowers should be sent or where charitable donations should be made.

## Obituary

- Gather the following obituary information: a photo, age, place of birth, cause of death, occupation, college degrees, memberships, military service and decorations, surviving family members. Please keep in mind that it's up to you to decide what information you'd like to publish.
- Compose the obituary.
- Be sure to include the time and place of the viewing and funeral services.
- Decide where to publish the obituary (current city, hometown, etc.).
- Publish the obituary.

## Flower Arrangements

Decide on the type of flower arrangement(s) you would like. If you are unsure, contact your local florist. For years, we've worked with Schmidt's Flowers and we recommend them highly.

Schmidt's Flowers  
6596 Richmond Road  
Williamsburg, VA 23188  
[www.schmidtsflowers.net](http://www.schmidtsflowers.net)  
757-229-1665

## Following the Service

- Send thank-you notes to everyone who sent flowers, made donations, or contributed time.
- Notify insurance companies of the death.
- Carefully check all life insurance and death benefits, including Social Security, credit unions, trade unions, fraternal memberships, and military.
- Check on possible income for survivors.
- Make sure any installment payments are kept current.
- Notify banks, insurance carriers, mortgage lenders, creditors, utility companies, and the Post Office of the death. Your funeral director will notify Social Security.