



AFTER DEATH

CHECKLIST

Losing someone you love can feel overwhelming, especially in the days and weeks immediately following a death. During this time, it can be difficult to know what needs to be done, who to contact, and when to take each step. This checklist is intended to provide gentle structure and practical guidance when things feel unclear.

The *After Death Checklist* outlines some tasks and considerations to help families and caregivers navigate this process in Canada. Every situation is unique, and not everything needs to be done at once. Move through this information at your own pace, lean on available supports, and remember that caring for yourself is just as important as managing practical matters during this time.

1 CONTACT HOSPICE OR HOME CARE PROVIDER (if applicable)

- Notify the provider that your loved one has passed so they can offer support and guidance.

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2 OBTAIN THE MEDICAL CERTIFICATE OF DEATH

- This will be provided by the doctor, facility, or coroner. It is different from the official Death Certificate, which you will use for legal and administrative purposes.

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3 CONTACT THE FUNERAL HOME

- They will handle arrangements for burial, cremation, or other services according to your loved one's wishes. You may also want to gather photos, music, readings, or tributes if desired.

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4 NOTIFY CLOSE FAMILY AND FRIENDS

- Let people know about the death and ensure that dependants and pets have care in place.

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5 LOCATE THE WILL AND OTHER LEGAL DOCUMENTS

- These may include powers of attorney, advance directives, or other important paperwork needed to manage the estate and affairs of your loved one.

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6 REGISTER THE DEATH

- Obtain the Death Certificate (multiple copies) from the provincial or territorial Vital Statistics office or provincially applicable location. If you are working with a funeral home, they will often handle this step for you.

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7 NOTIFY HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS

- Inform the family physician, pharmacist, and any specialists involved in your loved one's care.

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8 NOTIFY GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

- **Canada Revenue Agency (CRA):**
Call 1-800-959-8281 to inform them of the death and ensure all payments are stopped (for example CPP, GST credit).
- **Service Canada:** Apply for the Canadian Pension Plan (CPP) Survivors Benefit, if applicable, and the CPP Death Benefit (a one time payment of \$2,500)
- **Health services:** Cancel the deceased's provincial health card.
- **Department of Motor Vehicles:**
Contact to cancel the driver's license and handle any transfer or cancellation of automobile ownership.
- **Passport/Social Security Number:**
Contact Service Canada to cancel records as needed.

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9 FINANCIAL AND LEGAL MATTERS

- **Notify the executor:** Inform the person named in the will that they are responsible for managing the estate.
- **Contact the estate lawyer:** They can guide you through legal and procedural steps related to the estate.
- **Notify banks and financial institutions:**
Inform them of the death and provide any required documentation.

NOTES



9 FINANCIAL AND LEGAL MATTERS

- **Apply for a clearance certificate:** This official document from the Canada Revenue Agency confirms that all taxes and fees owed by the deceased's estate have been paid.
- **File the final tax return (TI Terminal Return):** The due date depends on the date of death.
- **Settle outstanding debts:** This may include credit cards, loans, utilities, and other obligations.
- **Deal with insurance policies:** Notify relevant providers and follow any required steps for claims or benefit payouts.
- **Contact employers:** Inquire about unpaid wages, benefit transfers, and pensions.
- **Apply for survivor benefits, if applicable.**
- **Manage mail:** Consider using mail forwarding or having a trusted person collect correspondence.

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10 EMOTIONAL CARE FOR CAREGIVERS AND FAMILY

- **Acknowledge that grief looks different for everyone:** Each person processes loss in their own way, and there is no "right" timeline or method.
- **Accept help from others:** Let friends or family assist with meals, errands, childcare, or other tasks.
- **Take breaks and care for your basic needs:** Make sure to eat, stay hydrated, and get rest whenever possible.
- **Seek additional support if needed:** This may include grief counseling, support groups, or spiritual guidance.
- **Avoid making major life decisions immediately:** Give yourself time to process the loss before taking on big changes.

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11 REMEMBERING AND HONOURING

- **Create a remembrance ritual or memory project:** This could include a memorial, scrapbook, photo album, or other meaningful activity.
- **Share stories, photos, or messages with loved ones:** Celebrate your loved one's life by connecting with family and friends.
- **Mark important dates and prepare for emotional milestones:** Anniversaries, birthdays, and holidays may bring strong emotions—planning ahead can help you cope.
- **Give yourself permission to grieve in your own way and time:** There is no “right” way to remember or process loss.

NOTES

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