

Checklist: What to Do When Someone Dies

This checklist is designed to help guide families through what to do when someone dies. It is broken down into the following sections:

1. Things to Do Immediately
2. Organ Donation
3. Prepaid Funerals, Funeral Bonds and Insurance
4. Funeral Director
5. Funeral Service
6. Organisations to Notify
7. Mailing Lists
8. Social Media Accounts
9. Grief Support

How to use this Checklist: Each item you need to complete is denoted by a checkbox ().

1. Things to Do Immediately

Death at the Hospital

- If the death occurs at a hospital or a nursing home, staff will arrange for a doctor to issue a Doctor's Certificate of Cause of Death

Death at Home

- If the death occurs at home and was expected, call your doctor who will issue a Doctor's Certificate of Cause of Death
 - If the death occurs at home and was unexpected, call the police. Depending on the circumstances, the Coroner may be required to conduct a post-mortem to determine the cause of death.
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2. Organ Donation

- If you know the deceased is an organ donor, the next of kin will be required to provide their consent for organ donation to proceed
- If you do not know whether the deceased is an organ donor, the next of kin will be required to decide whether or not to donate the deceased's organs

To check whether the deceased is an organ donor, you can contact the hospital to look up the Australian Organ Donor Register.

If consent to organ donation is provided, the deceased will be required to be taken to hospital immediately so that the donation process can be carried out.

3. Prepaid Funerals, Funeral Bonds and Insurance

Before taking any further steps, it's important to understand if the deceased had made any existing funeral and/or financial arrangements for their funeral.

Prepaid Funeral

- If the deceased has a prepaid funeral, contact the relevant funeral director (and ignore sections 4 and 5 below)
- If you are unsure whether the deceased has a prepaid funeral, you will usually be able to find a copy of the funeral plan with their solicitor or the Executor of the will

Funeral Bond

- If the deceased has a funeral bond, it can be used to assist with funeral costs. A funeral bond may nominate a preferred funeral director, so be sure to check.

Insurance

- Check whether the deceased had any insurance (such as funeral, life, accident, private health or sickness insurance). If so, call the relevant company to see if they are entitled to a payout.

4. Funeral Director

Preferred Funeral Director

- If the deceased has a preferred/nominated funeral director, contact them to collect the body

No Preferred Funeral Director

- If the deceased does not have a preferred/nominated funeral director, you will need to find a funeral director

Finding and choosing a funeral director can be a difficult task with hundreds of different options, all at different price points and service levels. Our website makes it easy to compare local funeral directors and make the right decision. To start your search:

1. Go to www.gatheredhere.com.au
2. Select burial or cremation
3. Select the type of funeral you would like to arrange
4. Type in your postcode and click "Compare"

5. The Funeral Service

- Plan the funeral service

There's a lot that goes into planning a funeral service, and you will need to make a number of important decisions. Before you meet with your chosen funeral director, it's sensible to have an idea of the type of funeral you would like to plan. To simplify the process, you can use our Funeral Planning Checklist (www.gatheredhere.com.au/funeral-planning-checklist), which sets out everything you need to arrange and decide on in order to plan a funeral.

6. Paying for the Funeral

- Identify sources of funds that will help you pay for the funeral [□](#)
- Set a budget for the funeral [□](#)

Funerals are expensive. In Australia, the average cost of a cremation is \$7,420 while the average cost of a burial is approximately \$19,000. If you are working to a tight budget, there are a number of options for more affordable funerals (see our guide to Cheap Funerals in Australia).

Depending on your circumstances, the following funds may be available to you:

- Insurance or funeral bond payouts
- Money in the deceased's bank account
- Superannuation funds
- Government allowances or bereavement payments
- Bereavement payments for veterans or Indigenous Australians
- Assistance from clubs, trade unions, or associations the deceased was a member of

For further information on the types of financial assistance available, see our Guide to Assistance with Funeral Costs.

6. Organisations to Notify

- Notify the relevant organisations using this checklist from the Department of Human Services [□](#)

7. Mailing Lists

- If you want to stop marketing and advertising being sent, register the deceased's details on the Association for Data-driven Marketing and Advertising website [□](#)
- Alternatively, make a written request to the address below [□](#)

ADMA
GPO Box 3895
Sydney NSW 2001

8. Social Media Accounts

- Delete or “memorialise” social media accounts by following the recommended procedure in the relevant site’s “help” section [🔗](#)

Facebook is the most popular social media website in Australia. Under their website terms you can request for the website to be “memorialised” so that family and friends can continue to gather and share messages on their profile. Alternatively, you can request that the account be deleted if you are a verified and immediate family member of the deceased.

Keep in mind, if you do choose to delete an account, you might lose all of the photos and memories that have been collected online over the years, so consider making copies first.

9. Grief Support

- Seek out grief and bereavement support [🔗](#)

During an incredibly emotional and busy time, it’s easy to put yourself last. Don’t forget about your own mental and physical health and wellbeing. Some of the departments and organisations you can contact for help include:

- Australian Centre for Grief and Bereavement
- Australian Government Social Work Services
- Beyondblue
- Good Grief
- GriefLine

We hope you have found this checklist for what to do when someone dies helpful. If you have any questions, please don’t hesitate to email us at support@gatheredhere.com.au