



DOCUMENT CHECKLIST

We hope this checklist helps you gather the documents you'll need after losing a loved one. These are helpful documents to collect, their purpose, and their likely location.



ACTION ITEMS

Certified death certificates

Location: request certified copies from funeral director or county clerk's office

- May be needed to process claims.
- Required to apply for social security benefits (including Railroad Retirement Act benefits, burial allowance, lump-sum benefit).
- Required to apply for VA benefits, including burial allowance (photocopy OK).
- Bring to your attorney (photocopy OK).
- Required to change ownership on joint property, such as house, property, stocks, bonds, automobile, bank accounts.
- Required to enter safe deposit box.
- Required to file tax return.

Last will and testament

Location: likely found in safe deposit box, home or office desk, computer files, safe, file cabinet, the attorney who drew up the will, or on file at the surrogate court

- Bring to an attorney or to the surrogate court.

Original life insurance policies or annuity contracts on the deceased (or policy numbers/contract numbers)

Location: likely found in safe deposit box, home or office desk, safe, or file cabinet

- This may be needed to file claims and inquire about methods of payments.

Certificates of appointments (if you are filing as executor, administrator, or in any other fiduciary responsibility)

Location: Obtain certified copy of the appointment from the court

- May be required for processing of claims and disposing of assets.

Marriage certificate(s)

Location: Likely found in safe deposit box, home or office desk, computer files, safe, or file cabinet

- Required to apply for social security benefits.
- Required to apply for VA benefits (photocopy OK).
- Bring to your attorney (photocopy OK).

Domestic partner or civil union certificates (if applicable)

Location: Likely found in safe deposit box, home or office desk, computer files, safe, file cabinet, or on file with the municipality that issued the certificate

- Required to claim any state or employer sponsored benefits.

Names and addresses of heirs, next of kin, beneficiaries

Location: Likely found in safe deposit box, home or office desk, computer files, safe, or best of your knowledge

- Bring to your attorney.
- Bring to the surrogate court if you are not using an attorney.

Summary of deceased's assets

Location: Likely found in safe deposit box, home or office desk, computer files; these papers might include the W-2 form, recent tax returns, property and casualty insurance form records

- Bring to your attorney.

Business records, such as partnership agreements, buy-sell agreements, tax records, balance sheet

Location: Likely found with accountant, safe deposit box, home or office desk, computer files, safe, file cabinet

- Bring to your attorney.

Employee benefits statement for deceased

Location: Likely found in safe deposit box, home or office desk, computer files, safe, file cabinet, or contact employer

- Help determine the benefits you are entitled to as the survivor.

Your retirement plans and employee benefits

Location: Likely found in safe deposit box, home or office desk, computer files, safe, file cabinet

- Change beneficiary designation.

Social security numbers or cards

Location: Likely found in wallet, W-2 form, paycheck stub, file cabinet, computer file

- Required to apply for social security benefits.

Deceased's approximate earnings during the year of death

Location: Likely found with paycheck stub, or contact the employer

- Required to apply for social security benefits.



DOCUMENT CHECKLIST

(continued)



ACTION ITEMS

Government life insurance policy number, if applicable (or the "C" claim number, military service serial number, the branch and date of military service, or a copy of the discharge papers)

Location: Likely found in safe deposit box, home or office desk, computer files, safe, file cabinet; the VA can help you secure some of these documents

- Required to apply for VA benefits.

Membership cards or dues notices to organizations and associations to which the deceased belonged

Location: Likely found in home or office desk, briefcase, or wallet

- Ask what benefits you are entitled to as the survivor.

Bank statements and passbooks, keys to safe deposit box

Location: Likely found in safe deposit box, home or office desk, computer files, safe, file cabinet, online accounts

- Ask the bank if the deceased had mortgage insurance, safe deposit box, trust agreements, bank accounts.

Fire, homeowners, automobile and other casualty insurance coverage

Location: Likely found in safe deposit box, home or office desk, computer files, safe, file cabinet

- Change name on policies.

Medical and disability insurance policies and certificates

Location: Likely found in safe deposit box, home or office desk, computer files, safe, file cabinet

- Needed to review amount and type of coverage you need now.

Current bills

Location: Monitor mail for 2 months

- Discuss with an attorney or surrogate court.
- Prepare household budget.

Installment payment books, credit cards, checking account book, credit agreements, loan papers

Location: Likely found in file cabinet, online accounts, home or office desk, computer files; also monitor mail for 2 months

- Find out if there is credit life insurance or disability insurance on installment loans, credit cards and checking account lines of credit.
- Change name on existing accounts.

Joint billing statements (utilities, etc.)

Location: Likely found in home or office desk, computer files, file cabinet

- Change name on these accounts.

Real estate deeds

Location: Likely found in safe deposit box, home or office desk, safe, file cabinet

- Required to change name on these deeds.

Brokerage and mutual fund statements, stocks, bonds and securities certificates

Location: Likely found in safe deposit box, home or office desk, safe, file cabinet

- Change name on deceased's account and joint account.

Automobile registration

Location: Likely found in home or office desk, file cabinet, or vehicle

- Required to change name.

Life insurance policies or annuity contract on you and other family members

Location: Likely found in safe deposit box, home or office desk, safe, or file cabinet

- Change beneficiary if the deceased is named.
- For life insurance, ask if children's coverage is automatically paid up.



480-444-3780 (Scottsdale)
520-747-3373 (Tucson)



www.signaturewealthconcepts.com



contactus@signaturewealthconcepts.com