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Listed below is a checklist of some of the items that can be addressed by family members after a person dies.

1. Notify immediate family and friends.
2. Decide on how to care for the decedent's dependent children and surviving spouse, if incapacitated.
3. Arrange care for the decedent's pets.
4. Take care of the decedent's final arrangements.
 - a. Determine decedent's wishes regarding final arrangements.
 - b. Check to see whether the bill for these arrangements was previously paid by the decedent.
 - c. If a family member or friend pays the bill, the person who pays should save a copy of the bill and their receipt.
5. Obtain death certificates. At least two should be ordered without the decedent's cause of death (sometimes called the short form).
6. Prepare decedent's obituary for newspaper publication, if desired, not legally required.
7. Evaluate the need for security at the decedent's residence.
8. Throw out any perishable items in the decedent's refrigerator.
9. Secure decedent's vehicle, in a garage if possible.
10. Call an attorney for an appointment regarding how to proceed.
 - a. Let your attorney know if the decedent was ever on Medicaid or another public benefits program.
 - b. Also advise your attorney if the surviving spouse is or is expected to be on Medicaid or another public benefits program.
11. Review the decedent's mail to look for bills or other evidence of creditors.
12. Do not pay any creditors until first consulting an attorney.

13. Be aware that if there was a Durable Power of Attorney for the decedent, it is no longer valid.
14. Locate original Will and Trust if either exist.
15. Determine whether there is a safe deposit box.
 - a. If so, determine whose names are on the box.
 - b. Locate keys.
16. Investigate whether the decedent was receiving or had any of the following:
 - a. Social Security Benefits
 - b. Life insurance
 - c. Union death benefits
 - d. Veteran's burial allowance & Veteran's benefits
 - e. Employee payroll benefits
 - f. Accrued vacation pay
 - g. Employee death benefit
 - h. Final wages
 - i. IRA accounts & Retirement plan death benefits
 - j. Deferred compensation
 - k. Medical reimbursements
 - l. Refunds on insurance or other items
17. Report death to the following:
 - a. Social Security
 - b. Department of Veterans Affairs
 - c. Health insurance companies
 - d. Long term care insurance company
 - e. Retirement/pension company
 - f. Decedent's employer
18. Cut up credit cards.
19. Meet with CPA to prepare decedent's last income tax return.
20. Locate life insurance policies and contact life insurance companies to report death and request claim forms.
21. Locate and review the decedent's tax returns for the last (3) years. There may be assets listed on the return of which you were unaware.