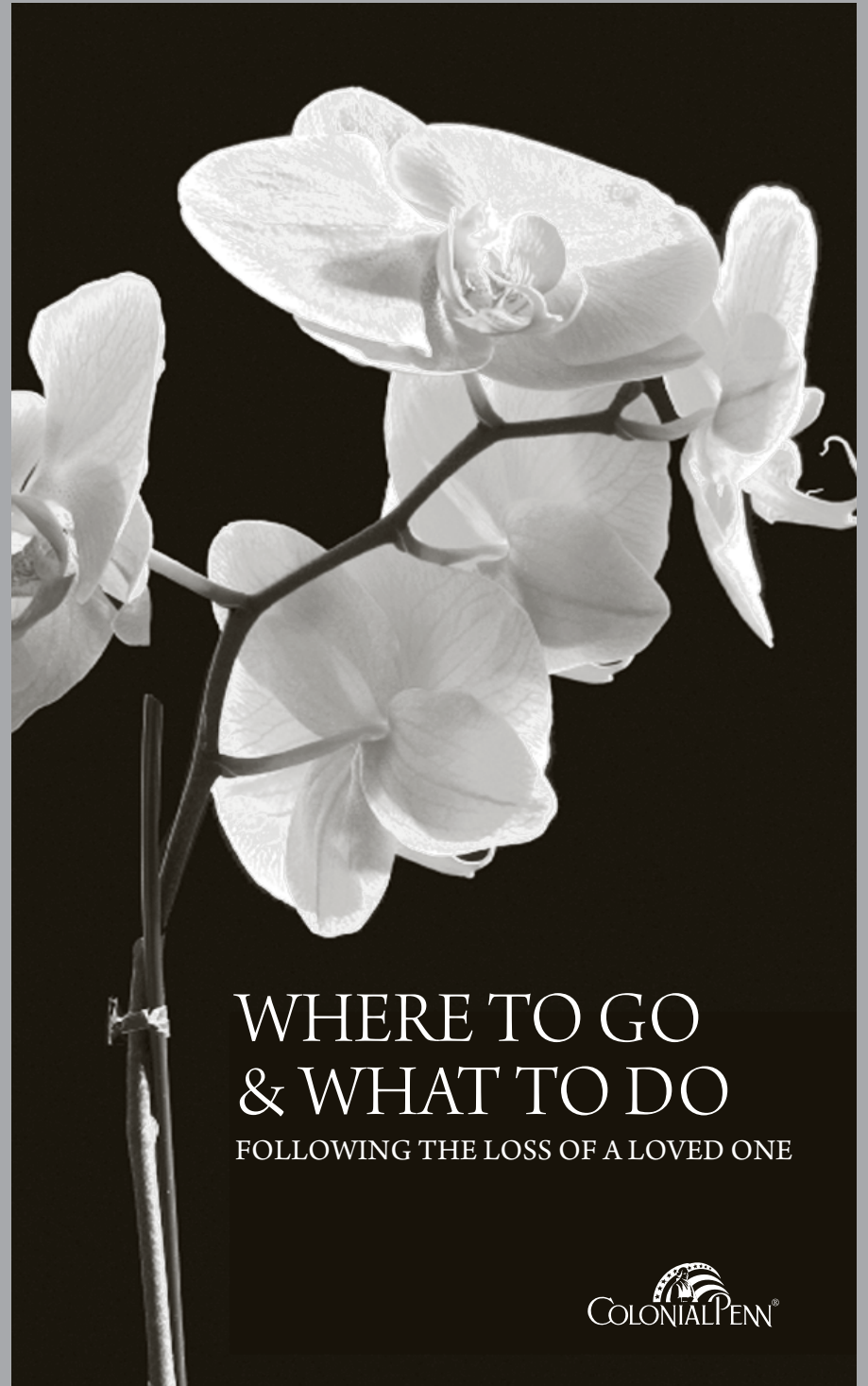




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WHERE TO GO
& WHAT TO DO
FOLLOWING THE LOSS OF A LOVED ONE





Losing someone you love presents one of the most difficult experiences in life. You will have to deal with many emotional issues. At the same time, if you are responsible for settling a loved one's final affairs, you may be faced with getting a handle on legal and financial issues and concerns. The purpose of this brochure is to help reference where to go and what to do in minimizing the financial strains, so you can focus on what's truly important – healing and moving forward.

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Gathering Important Documents

Consider checking the following:

1. **Mail:** Check the mail for 60-90 days for anything you may have overlooked. Not all financial institutions send regular statements, so you may want to continue checking these items for 6-12 months.
2. **Tax Returns:** Check the previous two years of tax returns in helping you identify any assets or tax credits from previous tax periods.

Gathering important documents will help in searching and collecting benefits.

3. **Address Book:** Contact attorneys, advisors, companies and employers listed in an address book.
4. **Safe Deposit Box:** Check any safe deposit boxes or personal files for important documents.
5. **Computer:** Check for any pins or login information on financial sites and review Financial Accounting and Financial Management Software for any personal recordkeeping.

Use the following checklists in searching for all of the information, documents and benefits.

Document Name	Have It	Need to Send for It	Received
Will			
Death Certificate (up to 10 or 20 copies)			
Marriage Certificate			
Divorce Papers;			
Custody Orders			
Birth or Adoption Certificate(s)			
Decedent			
Dependent children			
Social Security Numbers			
Decedent			
Spouse			
Dependent children			
Insurance Policies:			
Life			
Health			
Auto			
Homeowners			
Military Discharge Papers			

Document Name	Have It	Need to Send for It	Received
Military Service numbers:			
Serial No.			
VA Claim No.			
GI Insurance No.			
Annuities			
Other Investments:			
Stocks, Bonds, etc.			
Bank Accounts			
US Savings Bonds			
Gift Certificates			
Credit Card Statements			
Safe Deposit Box			
Uncashed Checks			
Utility Deposits			
Drivers License Number			
Citizenship Papers			
Membership Numbers for Professional, Fraternal or Military Organizations			

Vital Documents

You can order copies of birth certificates, marriage, divorce, or death records directly from the appropriate state or county agency. There are also several online commercial sources, such as VitalCheck.com, where you can place an order for these vital documents for many states. Some sites also provide addresses and phone numbers for certain government agencies.

The Death Certificate

Certified copies of the death certificate may be available from the funeral director, from a local government agency such as a county or municipal health department, or online. Charges for certified copies of the death certificate vary by state.

Marriage Certificate

A copy of the marriage certificate may be required in collecting benefits for a spouse. If a copy cannot be found, the office of the Municipal or County Clerk where the marriage license was issued should make copies available, or check online.

City/County/State Where Marriage Took Place: _____

Clerk's Address: _____

Clerk's Phone Number: _____

Birth Certificates

Copies of birth certificates for any dependent children will also be required for researching and applying for benefits. Copies are available at either the state or county public health department where the child was born, or they may be available online.

Name of Dependent	Relationship	Social Security Number	Date of Birth	State of Birth

The Will

Hopefully your loved one had a will. If there is no will, this is referred to as dying "intestate," and you will need to contact the County Clerk or Clerk of Courts in the county of residence. If there is a will, most states require that it be filed with the probate court within 30 days of notification of the death.



What is Probate?

Very simply, probate is the process of paying debts and distributing the estate to the beneficiaries. This process begins with the court appointing someone to administer the estate. A will usually names the executor who will handle this process. If there is no will, or no executor is named, the court will appoint a "personal representative," usually a spouse or relative. The Executor or Personal Representative will need to pay a probate fee, inform interested parties, especially creditors, that the estate is being probated, make an inventory of assets, and dispose of the estate according to the will or state laws. Probate ends when all debts and taxes are paid and all assets are distributed. If there is disagreement over the will, a probate judge will resolve the differences.

Property in which a spouse and someone else are listed as owners is not part of the probate estate. Proceeds from a life insurance policy or IRA are paid directly to a beneficiary and are not part of the estate unless there is no living beneficiary.

According to the National Endowment for Financial Education, don't pay any large debts incurred by the deceased until you check with an attorney. In most cases, debts owed by the deceased are the responsibility of the estate and should be forwarded to the executor or "personal representative" for payment. Many creditors will need to wait until the estate is settled. Paying bills out-of-pocket or with savings will deplete the cash that you may need on hand for living expenses and/or a financial emergency.



List All Assets

Compile a list of all of the deceased's property, such as personal property, real estate, stocks, bonds, mutual funds, CDs and bank accounts.

Bank Accounts

The deceased may have more than one bank account. In searching for old bank accounts that may still be active, check www.unclaimed.org or the state's General Treasurer's Unclaimed Property Division if the account information is not available.

Another valuable resource for bank accounts is the FDIC. If the bank account number and bank name are known, the FDIC may help you with your research by calling their Public Information Center at 1-877-275-3342.

Savings Account/Checking Account/CDs

Bank Name	Address	Account Number	Phone Number

US Savings Bonds

If you think the deceased may have purchased US Savings Bonds at any time, visit www.treasurydirect.gov. This site offers product information and research across the entire line of Treasury Securities, from Series EE Savings Bonds to Treasury Notes. For tax implications after death, visit the site and enter “death of a savings bond holder” in the search field.

For questions, you can start by calling Legacy Treasury Direct at 1-800-722-2678; Legacy Treasury Direct is a program in which investors buy Treasury bills, Treasury notes, and Treasury Inflation-Protected Securities (TIPS) directly from the U.S. Treasury, without a broker. They may be able to help answer your question or redirect you to the right contact.

Stocks/Bonds/Mutual Funds

Investment Name or Broker	Company	Address	Account Number	Phone Number

Real Estate

If the deceased owned a home, you’ll need a copy of the deed.

Address: _____

Be sure to consider any other real estate, such as time shares, income property, vacation homes, condos, commercial property, land, etc.

Property Type: _____

Company: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____ Contact: _____

Unclaimed Property

The deceased may have property that has been unclaimed. A good place to look for this information is with the National Association of Unclaimed Property Administrators. You can search their website at www.naupa.org.



Claiming Benefits

Insurance Benefits

If you are the beneficiary of a life insurance policy, you must file a claim in order to receive your benefits – the payout is not automatic. Be sure to check for any benefits or refunds due under other types of policies as well, such as health, auto, homeowners, etc.

Insurance Company	Address	Phone Number	Type of Policy	Policy Number

If you have the policy documents for a final expense policy, you may ask the funeral home for help in filing the claim with the insurance company. If you know the name of the company, but don’t have the policy documents, call the insurance company directly to find out about the life insurance benefit(s). Begin searching for both individual policies and group life insurance policies.

1. **Individually-owned policies.** Check files or safe-deposit boxes for a policy. Look for cancelled checks to help you find a company name if you can't find the policy documents.
2. **Group life insurance policies.** Check with the deceased's employer, bank, credit agency or other professional or social organizations for any benefits. Look for a certificate of insurance or call and ask for help in collecting benefits on the following types of coverage:

Accidental death and dismemberment (AD&D). This coverage may be with a life insurance company; an employer; credit card; bank; auto and/or homeowner insurance company. Sometimes the coverage is offered in connection with a loan package, as a free benefit by banks, as a rider to an employer-issued insurance policy, or home or auto insurance policy.

Travel accident insurance. If your loved one was killed while traveling in a plane, boat or train, a policy may have been purchased at the same time as the tickets were purchased. If your loved one used a credit card to buy the tickets, you may automatically be entitled to a benefit if he or she died because of an accident while using those tickets.

Mortgage life insurance. Mortgage life insurance pays off the balance of the mortgage if the policyholder dies. Remember to contact the mortgage lender to see if there is a policy in place.

Credit life or credit card insurance. This insurance pays off the outstanding balance of a loan or account if the policyholder dies. Generally, the cost of the coverage is added to the monthly payments. Check account statements for possible deductions for this insurance or call the credit issuer.

Employee Benefits

If your loved one was employed, check with the current or most recent employer about:

- Any life, accidental death or travel insurance as part of the benefit package
- Any union or professional organization benefits that may be due
- Any unpaid salary or if payment is due for unused sick or vacation time
- Any payments that may be due under medical insurance
- If dependents were covered under medical insurance, whether that coverage can be continued, how long it will last, and how much it will cost
- Any money due from retirement, pension plans or stock option accounts

- If your loved one was already retired and receiving a pension, whether anyone is eligible to continue to receive a payment.

In some cases, it can be worthwhile to contact all past employers to determine whether any benefits or payments like these are due.

Compile your lists:

- 1) Employer: _____
Address: _____
Phone Number: _____
- 2) Employer: _____
Address: _____
Phone Number: _____



Social Security Survivors' Benefits

Survivor's Benefit from Social Security

Some of the Social Security taxes we pay go toward providing survivors insurance for workers and their families. Check with your local Social Security office or call 1-800-772-1213 for eligible benefits. If your loved one died and was already receiving benefits, do not deposit any checks after the death; contact Social Security. Even if your loved one was not due benefits, contact Social Security so they will flag the name and number so that no one uses the number under a false identity.

Social Security survivors' benefits may be paid to:

A widow or widower — full benefits at full retirement age, or reduced benefits as early as age 60.

A disabled widow or widower — as early as age 50.

A widow or widower (at any age) who takes care of the deceased's child — if the child or children are under age 16 or disabled, and/or receiving Social Security benefits.

Unmarried children under 18, or up to age 19 if they are attending high school full time. Under certain circumstances, benefits can be paid to stepchildren, grandchildren, or adopted children.

Children at any age who were disabled before age 22 and remain disabled.

Dependent parents age 62 or older — the deceased would have had to provide at least one-half of their support.

Social Security has Benefit Calculators that can help you figure how much your benefits will be. Go to www.ssa.gov/planners/calculators.htm for help in determining the amount.

To apply, call or visit your local Social Security Office. These locations can be found online at www.socialsecurity.gov/locator.

Applying for Social Security Benefits Checklist

(<http://www.ssa.gov/online/ssa-8.html>)

Name of Document in Hand	Have the Documents from the Appropriate Office	Sent For	Received
Deceased's Birth Certificate or other proof of birth			
Naturalization papers			
US Military discharge papers(s)			
W-2 forms(s) and/or self-employment tax returns for last year			
Death certificate			
Social Security Numbers			
Two forms (SSA-3368 and SSA-827) that describe your medical condition and authorize disclosure of information			
Final divorce decree, if applying as a surviving divorced spouse			
Marriage certificate			

Social Security accepts photocopies of W-2 forms, self-employment tax returns or medical documents, but they must see the original of most other documents, such as a birth certificate.

For more information on how to apply, what documents you will need, and what they will ask, visit www.saa.gov/online or ssa-8.htm or www.ssa.gov/ww&os2.htm.

Don't delay filing your claim just because you don't have all the documents. They will help you find out how or where to get the documents.

Depending on how long your loved one worked, Social Security may also pay a lump sum death benefit of \$255. This benefit is paid only to a widow/widower or minor children and is paid in addition to any monthly survivor's insurance benefits that are due.



Military Service / Veterans' Benefits

To determine and receive benefits, you will need a copy of a discharge certificate (DD 214) if your spouse or loved one was a veteran. For a copy of the certificate write to:

**The Department of Defense
National Personnel Record Center
9700 Page Boulevard
St. Louis, MO 63132**

*or
contact*

**The National Archives
(866) 272-6272
www.archives.gov/veterans**

Requests from deceased veteran's next-of-kin may be submitted online by using eVetRecs at www.archives.gov/veterans/evetrecs.

Discharge Papers

Branch of Service: _____ Serial Number: _____

Rank at Discharge: _____

Date and Place of Discharge: _____

Veteran's Benefits

According to the Veteran's Benefits Administration, there are benefits available to surviving spouses and dependents of military personnel who died while in active military service and to the survivors of veterans who died after active service.

Most benefits are the same regardless of whether the service member or veteran died on active duty or during civilian life. These benefits include:

Burial in a National Cemetery.

Burial benefits include, at no cost to the family, a gravesite in any of 130 national cemeteries with available space, opening and closing of the grave, perpetual care, a Government headstone or marker, a burial flag, and a Presidential Memorial Certificate. Some Veterans may also be eligible for certain Burial Allowances. For example, some veterans may be eligible to receive benefits which may include a lump-sum payment of \$300 for burial expenses and a \$150 allowance toward a plot in a private cemetery. Cremated remains are buried or inurned in national cemeteries in the same manner and with the same honors as casketed remains.

Burial benefits available for spouses and dependents buried in a national cemetery include burial with the Veteran, perpetual care, and the spouse or dependents name and date of birth and death will be inscribed on the Veteran's headstone, at no cost to the family. Eligible spouses and dependents may be buried, even if they predecease the Veteran.

Burial in a Private Cemetery.

Burial benefits that are available for Veterans buried in a private cemetery include a Government headstone or marker, a burial flag, and a Presidential Memorial Certificate, at no cost to the family. Some Veterans may also be eligible for certain Burial Allowances. There are no benefits available to spouses and/or dependents buried in a private cemetery.

The funeral director can help you apply for these benefits or you can contact the regional Department of Veterans' Affairs (VA) office. If the deceased was receiving disability benefits, the spouse and any dependent children may also be entitled to monthly payments. Check with the regional VA office; contact information can be found online at <http://www.vba.va.gov>. The VA is also very helpful in providing information from other federal agencies and organizations that offer related benefits and services to survivors and dependents.

You can contact VA Benefits at 1-800-827-1000 regarding:

Burial
Death Pension
Dependency Indemnity Compensation
Directions to VA Benefits Regional Offices
Disability Compensation
Disability Pension
Beneficiaries in receipt of Pension Benefits, call **1-877-294-6380**
For Life Insurance inquiries, call **1-800-669-8477**
For the Status of Headstones and Markers, call **1-800-697-6947**



Addressing Taxes

Various tax returns will need to be filed and any taxes due must be paid. Depending on your loved one's resident state, a state return may be necessary. The IRS has many publications that can help with federal returns. Publication 950 (<http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p950.pdf>) is an Introduction to Estate and Gift Taxes. IRS Topic 356 – Decedents (<http://www.irs.gov.taxtopics/tc356.html>) directs you to other various publications that may help. For information about state tax requirements, contact the state division of taxation.

- A federal estate tax return must be filed and taxes paid. An estate tax return, Form 706, must be filed if the gross estate, plus any adjusted taxable gifts and specific gift tax exemption, is more than the filing requirement for the year of death. Review IRS publication 950 for details.
- State Death Taxes may apply and they vary. The estate pays the state death tax to the state in which the deceased lived.
- State and Federal income taxes of the deceased are also due for the year of death. The income taxes are due on the normal filing date of the following year, unless an extension is requested. [For spouses, the year of death is the last year for which you can file jointly with your deceased spouse. You may be eligible to use qualifying widow(er) with dependent child as your filing status for 2 years following the year your spouse died. This filing status entitles you to use joint return tax rates and the highest standard deduction amount (if you do not itemize deductions). This status does not entitle you to file a joint return.]

Requirements for filing taxes can be confusing so you may want to discuss this with a professional.

Changing Ownership or Title

A transfer of ownership, change of property title, or revising other documents may need to occur. Here are some items to consider:

Automobiles

Contact the state's Bureau of Motor Vehicles and notify your auto insurance company of the changes. In addition, contact the leasing company if the car is leased. Try to locate the registration or obtain the following information:

Vehicle	VIN #	Make	Model	Year

Bank Accounts, Stocks, Bonds

If you had joint account(s) with your loved one, you will be able to access your accounts. Check with the bank about changing the title and signature card on the account(s).

If your loved one had a qualified account or IRA, the proceeds will pass to the listed beneficiary. Your financial advisor may need to ensure the funds transfer is done in a tax efficient manner — if done improperly the beneficiary could pay more taxes than necessary. Also, contact your financial advisor for changing stocks or bond titles.

If a bank account was held only in the name of the deceased, those assets may have to go through probate, however, this would not apply for trust accounts.

Safe Deposit Box

State laws vary regarding who has access to safe deposit boxes for the deceased. Most states make it easy for co-renters, family members or the executor (or "personal representative") to remove the will and certain other documents (such as life insurance policies and burial instructions) from a deceased person's safe deposit box. However, some states may require a court order or another official action to remove the will.

If a box is jointly rented with a spouse, child or other person, this person may have unrestricted access to the box. However, in some states the co-renter may face delays in accessing the box after death. It is also important to note that a power of attorney does not allow access to a safe deposit box.

Credit Cards

It is generally recommended not to immediately remove your spouse's name from your credit card accounts unless you have established credit in your own name. Wait 6 months to open accounts in your name only. Check whether any of the credit cards had a any death benefits. Some companies provide accidental death insurance, which pay off credit balances in the event of an accidental death.

Cancel any credit cards that were held exclusively in the name of your spouse. Any payments due on these cards should be paid by the estate.

Bank Name/ Department Store Name	Address	Phone Number	Credit Card Number	Balance



Remember – We are here to help

As you begin to work through the many decisions that need to be made by the loss of a loved one, it may be important for you to view a final expense plan as a simple extension of your future planning.

We at Colonial Penn are here to help you. We offer a free Will Planning Guide and additional preplanning guides to help you keep your own affairs in order. You can obtain copies of these guides by visiting our web site at www.colonialpenn.com. Or, if you prefer, you can call one of our customer service representatives at **1-888-865-0672**. They can help you make informed and thoughtful decisions to help you and your family.

Notes:

Notes:



Questions?

Call Toll Free **1-888-865-0672**

or visit us online at www.colonialpenn.com.

For over fifty years we have served the needs of our customers with a dedication to “old-fashioned” customer service. At the same time, our fully computerized operations, easy-to-read policies, and use of today’s many avenues of communication – including the Internet – mark us as an organization with an eye on tomorrow.

Colonial Penn Life Insurance Company has been in the business of providing affordable coverage to mature Americans for over 50 years. During that time, our policyholders have come to rely on us for their security and peace of mind. Their trust is important to us and we’ve worked hard to earn it.

This booklet is meant to provide basic information following the loss of a loved one. It is not a legal document and it is not meant to be a substitute for professional or legal advice.

Resources:

Social Security Administration

(800) 772-1213
www.ssa.gov
www.ssa.gov/ww&os2.htm

Civil Service Office of Personnel Management

(888) 767-6738
www.opm.gov

Department of Veterans Affairs

(800) 827-1000 www.va.gov

Veteran’s Benefits

Application for Accrued Benefits by
Veteran’s Surviving Spouse,
Child, or Dependent
Form Number: 21-551
Agency: Department of Veterans Affairs
Bureau: Veterans Benefits Administration
Survivors’ Call Center – (800) 749-8387
<http://www.vba.va.gov/VBA>
<http://www.cem.va.gov/bbene/bbene.asp>

Military Casualty Assistance Office

Army (800) 626-3317
Navy (800) 368-3202
Air Force (800) 433-0048
Marine Corp (800) 847-1597

Military Service – The National Archives

(866) 272-6272
<http://www.archives.gov/veteran>

Defense Finance and Accounting Service Casualty Assistance

DFAS Cleveland Center,
Anthony J. Celebrezze,
Federal Building
1240 East 9th Street
Cleveland, OH 44199-2055
(800) 321-1080 – Information
(800) 269-5170 – Casualty Notification
www.dod.mil/dfas/http://usasearch.gov

Search topics on:

(insert your state’s names) intestacy laws
(insert your state’s names)
Order death certificate
(insert your state’s names)
Marriage certificate
(insert your state’s names) probate
<http://smartaboutmoney.org>

Enter search topic:

DEATH OF RELATIVE

Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (locating bank accounts)

FDIC Call Center:
(877) 275-3342 ((877) ASKFDIC)
8:00 am - 8:00 pm ET; Monday-Friday
9:00 am - 5:00 pm ET; Saturday-Sunday
For the Hearing Impaired;
<http://www.fdic.gov>

Internal Revenue Service

Research Topic 356 – Decedents
<http://www.irs.gov>

Tips on Choosing A Reputable Credit Counseling Agency

NATIONAL CONSUMER LAW CENTER INC
77 Summer Street, 10th Fl Boston, MA 02110
(617) 542-8010
<http://www.nclc.org>