



When a death occurs in your family, you will be faced with important tasks during a very difficult time. Remember that you are not alone. Fairfax Memorial Park is available to assist you with the details and offer our guidance. We have compiled the following checklist to help guide you through the steps you will need to take when a death has occurred.

## Immediately:

- Locate the will and notify the lawyer and executor.
- After a death has occurred, notify the funeral home of your choice.
- Answer basic questions. Some of the questions your funeral director may ask when you call are:
  - What is the full name of the deceased?
  - What is the location of the deceased (Hospital, Nursing Facility or Residence)? What is the address of this location?
  - What is your name, address, telephone number, and relationship to the deceased?
  - What is the name, address, and phone number of the next-of-kin (generally spouse or parent)?
  - Do you have pre-arrangements with the funeral home?

## Tomorrow:

- Your funeral director will set an appointment time for you to come to the funeral home to complete the details of the funeral arrangement. They will ask you to bring in some items and information that will be necessary to complete the arrangement. These items will include:
  - Clothing for the deceased
  - Social security number of the deceased
  - The deceased's birth date and city and state of birth
  - The deceased's parents' names, including mother's maiden name
  - Information about the deceased's education
  - Marital status of the deceased
  - Veteran's discharge papers or Claim Number
  - A recent photograph of the deceased (for hair and cosmetic purposes)
  - Funeral pre-arrangement paperwork – including plan name and number (if applicable)
  - Cemetery lot information (if applicable)

- The funeral home will call us (the cemetery) to schedule the interment.
- Contact your member of the clergy:
  - Decide on a time and place for the funeral or memorial service
  - Decide on type of service
  - Coordinate with musicians and those taking part in the service
- The funeral home will assist you in obtaining the proper number of death certificates.
- Make a list of family, friends and business colleagues, and notify each by phone. You may wish to use a "branching" system: make a few phone calls to other relatives or friends and ask each of them to make a phone call or two to specific people.
- If desired by the deceased or family, decide on an appropriate charity to which gifts may be made in lieu of flowers (church, hospice, library, organization, school).
- Gather obituary information, including a photo, age, place of birth, cause of death, occupation, college degrees, memberships held, military service, outstanding work and a list of survivors in the immediate family. Use this information to write the obituary. Be sure to include the time and place of the funeral services. The funeral director will deliver your obituary to the newspaper(s).
- Provide your funeral home with pictures and music for the tribute video. (Some funeral homes provide this as a complimentary service.)
- Arrange for family members and/or close friends to take turns answering the door or phone. Keeping a careful record of visitors and flower deliveries will make it easier to thank people later on.
- Coordinate the food supply in your home for the next several days.
- Delegate special needs of the household, such as cleaning, food preparation, lawn care, dog walking, etc., to friends and family who offer their help.
- Arrange for child care, if necessary.
- Arrange hospitality and accommodations for visiting relatives and friends. See Fairfax Memorial Park's website ([www.fmpark.com](http://www.fmpark.com)) for a list of local service providers.
- Select pallbearers and notify the funeral home. (People with heart or back difficulties may be named honorary pallbearers).
- Plan for the disposition of flowers after the funeral (to a church, hospital or rest home).
- Prepare a list of distant friends and relatives to be notified by letter and/or printed notice.

## Following the Service:

- Prepare a list of people to receive acknowledgments of flowers, calls, etc. Send appropriate acknowledgments, which may be a written note, printed acknowledgments, or both. Include "thank you" notes to those who have given their time, as well.
- If Social Security checks are deposited automatically, notify the bank of the death.

- Notify insurance companies of the death.
- Carefully check all life and casualty insurance and death benefits, including Social Security, credit union, trade union, fraternal, and military. Check on possible income for survivors from these sources.
- Check promptly on all debts and installment payments, including credit cards. Some may carry insurance clauses that will cancel them. If there is to be a delay in meeting payments, consult with creditors and ask for more time before the payments are due.
- If the deceased was living alone, notify the utility companies and landlord and tell the post office where to send the mail.
- Your Funeral Director will notify Social Security.