

GUIDELINES/SUGGESTIONS OF THINGS TO BE DONE WHEN DEATH OCCURS

LEGAL INFORMATION

- ___ Locate the will of the deceased (it may contain information as to the burial wishes of your loved one).
- ___ Notify lawyer and/or executor (they may have information pertaining to burial instructions).
- ___ Check carefully for life and casualty insurance and death benefits, including social security, credit union, trade union, fraternal, military, etc. Also, check on income for survivors from these sources.
- ___ Notify utilities, landlord and the post office where to forward mail, if the deceased was living alone.
- ___ If the deceased was living alone, notify utility companies and landlord of the death. Inform the post office of where to forward mail.
- ___ Check promptly on all debts and installment payments. Some may carry insurance clauses that will cancel the account(s). If there is going to be a delay in making payments, consult with the creditor's and ask for more time before the payments are due.

PERSONAL NEEDS

- ___ Decide on a mortuary to be used, as well as, decide on the time and place of the funeral or memorial service(s).
- ___ Make a list of immediate family, close friends, employer or business colleagues to be notified about the death. Attempt to make contact with these people.
- ___ Select pall bearers (if you so choose) and notify them of selection. (Avoid people with heart or back difficulties or make them honorary pall bearers.)
- ___ Arrange for member(s) of the family or close friends to take turns answering the door or phone. Keep a careful record of the calls received.
- ___ Arrange appropriate care for children, after determining to what extent you would like the children to be involved in the funeral/burial services.
- ___ Coordinate food and pet care if appropriate for the next several days.
- ___ Consider any special needs of the household, such as cleaning, etc. which might be done by friends.
- ___ Prepare a list of distant persons to be notified by letter and/or memorial folder. Decide which to send and to whom.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/NOTES

- ___ Decide on an appropriate memorial to which gifts may be made, if flowers are to be omitted (e.g., church, library, school, or charity).
- ___ Write the obituary. You may want to include, age, place of birth, date and cause of death, occupation, college degrees, memberships held, military service, outstanding work and list the survivors in the immediate family. Give the time and place of the service. The finished copy can be delivered in person or by phone to newspapers.
- ___ Prepare information and any pictures to be used in a Memorial Folder or Prayer Card, if one is desired.
- ___ Prepare a list of persons to receive acknowledgements of flowers, calls, etc. Send appropriate acknowledgements (these can be written notes, printed acknowledgements or some of each).
- ___ Plan for distribution of the flowers after the funeral (i.e., hospital or rest home).