



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS WHAT TO DO WHEN SOMEONE DIES

There are many people and organisations who need to be notified when someone dies. This information sheet answers the most commonly asked questions about the practical and legal tasks that need to be attended to by you or the person responsible.

### What needs to be done first?

After the funeral or cremation has been organised, you will need to start notifying the important people and services of the person's passing.

If the deceased had a Will, the Executor of the Will is usually the person who takes care of this. Where the deceased did not have a Will, then it will likely fall on the next of kin.

Whilst you will be able to notify the relevant people and services informally to begin with, most services will not be in a position to start actioning anything until you have received the Death Certificate and provided them with a certified copy.

The funeral home assisting you with the funeral service will generally take care of registering the death with the Registry of Births Deaths and Marriages and will make arrangements for the Death Certificate to be issued. They will also often make several certified copies of the Death Certificate for you once received.

### Who needs to be notified?

It is important to notify the relevant people and services of the deceased's passing as it helps to finalise the deceased's affairs and may assist you to get the help you need.

When determining who you need to notify, it can be useful to consider what makes up the deceased's estate (i.e. bank accounts, shares, superannuation, vehicles, property, etc.) and who they had dealings with (i.e. utility companies, insurance providers, lenders, etc.).

A detailed, but not necessarily exhaustive, list of the common people and services who may need to be notified is set out on page 3 of this information sheet.



There are also options to register the deceased's passing with the Australian Death Notification Service ([deathnotification.gov.au](https://deathnotification.gov.au)) which is a free government service to help you contact multiple organisations at once and the Australian Bereavement Register ([tabr.com.au](https://tabr.com.au)) which is a free service that assists with stopping unwanted direct mail, such as where the person was on a mailing list.

It is recommended you keep a list of who you are notifying and copies of any written correspondence or forms which are being sent back and forth.

### What do they need to be provided?

When making a notification you will generally need to provide the following information about the deceased:

- their full legal name and any other informal names they were known by
- their date of birth
- their date of passing
- their address
- any relevant membership, client or account numbers
- and if relevant, their tax file number or vehicle registrations

You will also likely need to show the original Will (if there is one) and the original Death Certificate as some services have a requirement to take their own copies of these documents.

There will be other times that you may be required to provide a service, often a bank or superannuation fund, with a copy of a Grant of Probate or Grant of Letters of Administration. If you are unsure whether you need a grant of either, this is something you should seek legal advice about.

And you may be asked to provide a copy of the deceased's and your own identity documents and your own personal details.

It can be useful to take a file or folder with you that has all these things and any other relevant documents in it to the services you are attending upon.



### What services might need to be notified?

Below is a list of the common services who need to be notified of the deceased's passing. You can use this as a check list to keep a record of who you have notified as you go along.

- Accident insurance
- Accountant
- Ambulance service
- Appliance rental company
- Australia Post (PO Box and Passport)
- Australian Electoral office
- Australian Tax Office
- Banks & Building Societies
- Centrelink
- Charities
- Chemist
- Church or other religious organisation
- Cloud storage
- Clubs and associations
- Credit card providers
- Credit unions
- Dentist
- Department of Transport (i.e. driver's licence, vehicle registration, etc.)
- Department of Veterans Affairs
- Doctors & specialists
- Electricity or power company
- Email providers
- Employer
- Executor of the will
- Gardening service
- Gas company
- Gym, fitness or sporting club
- Home delivery service
- Home nursing or care service
- Hospital
- Household cleaning service
- Insurance companies (i.e. house, life, health, pet, vehicle, etc.)
- Internet provider
- Landlord or tenant
- Lawyer
- Local council (i.e. rates, dog registration etc.)
- Local library
- Loyalty programs
- Meals on wheels
- Medicare
- myGov
- Neighbours
- Newspaper subscriptions
- Online social media accounts (i.e. Facebook, Instagram, etc.)
- Online payment processing accounts (i.e. PayPal, etc.)
- Optometrist
- Overseas pension service
- Professional organisations
- School or college
- Superannuation fund
- Telephone provider (i.e. mobile & home, etc.)
- Trade union
- Water corporation



## Where can further information & resources be found?

There is quite a bit of information online that can help you figure out what to do when someone dies and what other assistance you might need to seek.

Below are some suggested websites, though there are others that might apply to your situation, and you should do your research:

- **Centrelink** - [www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/death-loved-one](http://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/death-loved-one)
- **Citizens Advice Bureau** – [cabwa.com.au/help-categories/wills-estates/](http://cabwa.com.au/help-categories/wills-estates/)
- **Legal Aid Western Australia** - [www.legalaid.wa.gov.au/find-legal-answers/managing-your-affairs/wills-and-estates](http://www.legalaid.wa.gov.au/find-legal-answers/managing-your-affairs/wills-and-estates)
- **Probate Office (Supreme Court of WA)** - [www.supremecourt.wa.gov.au](http://www.supremecourt.wa.gov.au)
- **Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages** – [www.wa.gov.au/service/justice/civil-law/apply-death-certificate](http://www.wa.gov.au/service/justice/civil-law/apply-death-certificate)

## Who can provide advice?

It may be necessary for you to get specific legal advice about what you need to do to administer the deceased's estate or if you have issues with notifying any services.

GSCLS can provide a one-off legal advice appointment on deceased estates matters for people who are eligible for our services. Though, we do not provide any assistance with applications for probate or letters of administration or where there are disputes between the executors and beneficiaries (contested matters).

If you are not eligible for our services, then you may need to see another legal service or a private lawyer who specialises in Wills and Estates matters.

You can find a list of private lawyers servicing the Great Southern Region on our website: [gscls.com.au/private-lawyer-list](http://gscls.com.au/private-lawyer-list)

Alternatively, you can go to the Law Society of Western Australia's Find a Lawyer page: [lawsocietywa.asn.au/community/the-law-society-in-the-community/find-a-lawyer/](http://lawsocietywa.asn.au/community/the-law-society-in-the-community/find-a-lawyer/)