



THE FIRST 72 HOURS – CORE CHECKLIST

Print this and check off as you go.

Immediate Actions (First Hours)

- Confirm the death with appropriate authorities
- Contact the funeral home or transport service
- Notify immediate family or key support people
- Ensure pets, dependents, or vulnerable individuals are safe
- Secure the home, belongings, and important areas
- Locate identification and essential documents

Day One Essentials

- Notify extended family and close friends
- Begin gathering important documents (ID, insurance, will, medical info)
- Contact employer (if applicable)
- Identify immediate support needs (meals, childcare, transportation)
- Begin initial funeral home discussions
- Document valuables or property concerns

Legal & Administrative Tasks

- Request multiple copies of the death certificate
- Notify insurance companies
- Notify banks and financial institutions
- Secure mail and consider forwarding
- Review medical paperwork or pending decisions
- Locate will, trust, or advance directives
- Contact attorney (if applicable)

Home & Property

- Lock and secure all doors and windows
- Collect keys, access codes, and passwords (if known)
- Inventory personal property
- Note urgent repairs or safety issues
- Check utilities for safety
- Secure vehicles and locate titles/keys

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Notifications

- Employer(s)
- Landlord or property manager (if applicable)
- Close friends, neighbors, or community members
- Organizations, memberships, or volunteer groups

Financial & Insurance

- Locate life insurance policies
- Notify health insurance
- Notify pension or retirement plan administrators
- Review bank accounts and automatic payments
- Begin list of accounts to address later

Emotional & Practical Support

- Identify support contacts
- Ask for help with meals, childcare, or transportation
- Take breaks as needed
- Reach out to grief support resources
- Delegate tasks when possible

Funeral & Memorial Planning

- Review any pre-planned arrangements
- Meet with funeral home
- Discuss service preferences
- Identify decisions needed within the first 72 hours
- Begin gathering photos or personal items (optional)