
FROM “IN CASE ANYTHING HAPPENS”

Checklist After the Death of a Parent

The first few days, the first two weeks, the first few months. In order.

THE FIRST FEW DAYS

- ☐ **Pronouncement and transport** — hospice line if they were in hospice, 911 if unexpected at home, hospital staff otherwise
- ☐ **Call your siblings** before anyone else; divide the wider calls among yourselves
- ☐ **Your surviving parent**, if there is one — medications, meals, whether they should be alone at night
- ☐ **Secure the house** — lock up, park the car, empty the fridge of what will spoil. Don't start sorting belongings
- ☐ **Look for written wishes** before funeral decisions — a will, a prepaid funeral contract, a planner or binder

THE FIRST TWO WEEKS

- ☐ **Order at least 10 certified death certificates** through the funeral home
- ☐ **Find the will** and identify the executor
- ☐ **Social Security** — the funeral director usually reports the death. Confirm, or call 1-800-772-1213
- ☐ **Notify one credit bureau** — Experian, Equifax, or TransUnion; it shares the notice with the other two
- ☐ **Life insurance and pensions** — locate policies and begin claims
- ☐ **Don't cancel their phone or email** — login codes and password resets flow through them
- ☐ **Mail** — forwarding needs proof you are the executor or administrator. The mail pile is your map of their accounts

Organizer's list: what to gather, who to call, what to check. Not legal, financial, tax, or medical advice. Full explanations and sources: incaseanythinghappens.com/blog/checklist-after-death-of-parent

THE FIRST FEW MONTHS — ESTATE, HOUSE, DEBTS

- ☐ **Probate** — the executor opens the estate if required; it depends on the state and the estate size
- ☐ **Debts** — paid out of the estate. You are generally not personally responsible for a parent's debts
- ☐ **The final tax return** — filed for the year of death
- ☐ **The house and belongings** — nothing distributed until the executor confirms what the will says
- ☐ **If your parent was a veteran** — burial and memorial benefits have application windows; the DD-214 opens them
- ☐ **Your surviving parent's paperwork** — their will, beneficiaries, and powers of attorney likely named the person who died
- ☐ **Your own paperwork** — one evening with the getting-your-affairs-in-order checklist

WRITE IT HERE

The executor is

Who is looking after our surviving parent

Where the death certificates and the will are kept
