**My Loved One Has Just Died…What do I do now?**

**Initial Steps to Take:**

*If they died at the* ***hospital***

 Talk with doctors and other medical personnel about post-mortem decisions

* What was the cause of death?
* Will there be an autopsy?
* Will you donate the organs of the deceased?

*If they died at* ***home***

* If they were under hospice care, call the hospice nurse.
* If they were not under hospice care, call 911. If there is a Do-Not-Resuscitate (DNR) document, have it on hand. Otherwise they may begin emergency procedures and ultimately take the deceased to the hospital for declaration.
* Notify close family and friends.
* Find appropriate care for dependents as well as pets.
* Notify the doctor of the deceased or the county coroner.
* Arrange for the body to be transported to a mortuary.
* Notify the employer of the deceased. Ask about benefits, including if there was a company life-insurance policy.
* Notify your own employer of the situation.

**Next Steps:**

* Arrange for a funeral or cremation. Look for documentation to see if the deceased already had a burial plan.
* Prepare an obituary for the newspaper.
* Post on Social Media if you so desire.
* Cancel services: Deliveries, appointments, subscriptions, etc.
* Check with fraternal organizations for possible death benefits.
* Notify the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs if the deceased was a veteran.
* Contact an attorney or the executor named in the deceased’s will.
* Check if Full Legal Name is the same on all documents?

**Additional Steps:**

* Make sure to get multiple copies of the death certificates – the funeral home will often supply these.
* Have a friend or neighbor to check on the home of the deceased if it is vacant: collect mail, clean the refrigerator out, water plants, care for pets, etc.
* Locate and safeguard any valuables of the deceased.
* Make sure the deceased’s bills (mortgage/rent, utilities) are paid. Stop services if they are unnecessary.
* Check insurance policies for death-related benefits.
* Transfer titles, deeds, accounts and policies to spouse or dependents.
* Make changes to your own documents if deceased was a beneficiary for your insurance policies or in your will.

**Also Contact:**

* The bank of the deceased, to find accounts and the safe deposit box.
* An accountant or tax preparer to find out whether an estate-tax return or final income-tax return should be filed.
* The Social Security Administration; apply for survivor benefits if applicable.
* The deceased’s investment advisor for information on holdings.
* Post Office, to stop or forward mail.
* Pension Services, stop payment or get claim forms.
* Close computer accounts, transfer or close social media accounts, on-line subscriptions.