

124 Tasks that Must be Done on the Most Difficult Day of Your Life

On the day you are more overwhelmed than you have ever been, on the day when you would just like to sit down and cry, you suddenly find a very daunting task facing you. You've just lost a loved one and somebody has to make the final arrangements. The following is a list of 124 actions that must be taken immediately following death, a list that would be difficult even on a good day. Many of these items can be planned, arranged and/or paid for before the time of need.

A. Secure Vital Statistics

(required for documents)

1. Full legal name, complete address, telephone number
2. Social Security Number
3. Religious name (if any)
4. Date of Birth
5. Place of Birth
6. Marital status
7. Name of spouse (if married)
8. Spouse's maiden name (if wife)
9. Citizenship (American, Canadian, Mexican, etc)
10. Father's name
11. Father's birthplace
12. Mother's name and maiden name
13. Mother's birthplace
14. Number and full names and addresses of all children, grand children, etc.
15. Veteran's serial/service number (if ever in military)
16. Date and place of service
17. Date of discharge
18. How long at current residence/former residence(s)
19. Education attainment
20. Occupation, job title, nature of work and employment history.

21. Location of work place, address, telephone number

22. Family origin.

B. Pay some or all of the following

23. Estate/inheritance taxes
24. Funeral expenses
25. Purchase of family burial estate, mausoleum, or cremation niche
26. Permanent memorialization
27. Monument/marker engraving
28. Funeral director
29. Clergy
30. Organist and vocalist
31. Florist
32. Obituary
33. Clothing
34. Long distance telephone
35. Food
36. Transportation
37. Doctors
38. Nurses
39. Ambulance
40. Hospital/nursing home
41. Medication and drugs
42. Current and urgent bills

C. Collect documents and paperwork

43. Will (check for special wishes)
 44. Prepare legal papers, permits, etc
 45. Birth certificate/legal proof of age
 46. Citizenship papers
 47. Social Security card or number
 48. Marriage license
 49. Veteran's discharge certificate
 50. Insurance claims (life, health, accident, property, auto)
 51. Disability claims
 52. Bank books and list of accounts
 53. Other financial records
 54. Property deeds
 55. Cemetery deed or proof of ownership
 56. Auto titles or bill of sale
 57. Income tax returns, receipts and cancelled checks
- ## D. Decide and arrange within a few hours
58. Make cemetery arrangements
 59. Secure internment space and get exact location of burial and disposition
 60. Arrange for opening and closing of the grave/mausoleum/niche

61. Secure endowment care
 62. Arrange gravesite committal service
 63. Secure use of cemetery chapel for committal prayers
 64. Decide on embalming and other preparation of deceased.
 65. Choose restorative art
 66. Select a funeral home
 67. Location of funeral service
 68. Choose service type (religious/fraternal/military, etc.)
 69. Time and place for visitation and services
 70. Arrange for special religious services
 71. Provide information for eulogy
 72. Select casket (open or closed)
 73. Select out burial container and/or vault
 74. Select urn/niche space (if cremation)
 75. Provide vital statistics about deceased to newspaper
 76. Choose clothing for deceased
 77. Pick out jewelry and glasses for deceased
 78. Select cosmetology and hairdressing for deceased
 79. Selection scriptures and readings
 80. Schedule clergy to officiate
 81. Choose a grave marker
 82. Select memorial marker
 83. Select charitable contributions for memorials in memory of the deceased
 84. Choose register book, memorial prayer cards
 85. Select pallbearers
 86. Floral arrangements and transportation
- Before and after the service**
87. Select music
 88. Schedule organist, pianist, vocalist
 89. Arrange for funeral coach
 90. Arrange limousine for family and pallbearers
 91. Arrange funeral car for family members
 92. Select clothing for you and children
 93. Decide who will look after children and/or pets
 94. Clean loved one's home
 95. Locate extra chairs
 96. Transportation for family and guests
 97. Review and sign all paperwork
 98. Answering innumerable telephone calls, emails, letters, etc
 99. Set meetings with funeral director, lawyers, clergy
 100. Arrange transportation and lodging for out of town guests
 101. Acknowledge those who helped in a special way
 102. Decide how many certified copies of death certificate to order
 103. Provide food for family and out of town guests
 104. Gather items for memento display or memorial board
 105. Decide on memorial video production, pictures, music, etc
 106. Arrange for writing Thank You notes
- E. Plan to notify as soon as possible**
107. All family members
 108. All relatives
 109. All friends
 110. Minister and church
 111. Funeral director
 112. Pallbearers
 113. Cemetery
 114. Doctor
 115. Employer of deceased
 116. Employers or relatives not going to work
 117. Organist, pianist, vocalist
 118. Newspaper regarding notices
 119. Social Security Administration
 120. Veterans Administration
 121. Insurance agents
 122. Religious, fraternal, civic organizations and unions
 123. Attorney, accountant, financial planners and executor of estate
 124. Credit card companies