



Losing your spouse is an emotionally devastating experience. It can also be complicated as you make decisions about your financial future. In addition to making final arrangements, contacting necessary businesses and government agencies, and settling your spouse's estate, you must also work to ensure your financial security. Regions Private Wealth Management is here to help you navigate the difficult and often unexpected events in life, including the death of your spouse. The following checklist provides a starting point for considerations and items that should be reviewed after such a loss.

Initial Tasks

- Coordinate with family, friends and clergy to arrange the funeral or memorial service.
 - _ Consider payment options, including insurance proceeds paid directly to funeral vendors.
 - _ Arrange for someone to be at your house during the funeral service, since burglars target homes after reading obituaries.
 - _ Ask the funeral director to help you obtain a death certificate, if needed, as well as five to 10 certified copies of the certificate. Copies will be needed for the bank, broker, probate court, etc.
- Locate all critical documents, including but not limited to:
 - _ Will/trust
 - _ Life insurance policy
 - _ Birth and marriage certificates
 - _ Social Security cards (yours and your spouse's)
 - _ Most recent tax returns
 - _ Bank statements
 - _ Investment account statements
 - _ Stock certificates
 - _ Pension or retirement plan statements
 - _ Loan statements
 - _ Mortgages, leases and deeds
 - _ Vehicle titles
 - _ Homeowners and health insurance
 - _ Bills
 - _ Safe deposit box key and information
 - _ Log-in information for electronic records and assetsIf applicable:
 - _ Storage locker contract
 - _ Business ownership or interest
 - _ Military service records
 - _ Divorce agreements from any prior marriage

- Make important phone calls:
 - _ Contact your estate planning attorney to address any immediate legal concerns.
 - _ Contact your financial advisor to address any immediate financial concerns.
 - _ Contact your employer regarding any time you need to take off work and whether you qualify for any bereavement leave.
- Meet with your estate planning attorney to discuss filing any necessary legal paperwork regarding your spouse's last will. Your attorney can also advise you regarding the role of any executor/executrix or administrator/administratrix named in the will. If your spouse did not leave a will or trust, your estate planning attorney can walk you through how the probate process will work. Your attorney should be able to help you understand whether or not your spouse's estate will cover any existing debts in your spouse's name, or if not, what your liability will be for those debts in the future.
- Contact your spouse's employer to let them know of the passing. You will want to speak to the human resources department about collecting salary or sick pay owed, to ask about health insurance coverage and survivors benefits for you and your children (if applicable), and to review any death benefits.
- Make sure you have a plan in place for all of your bills. If you were not responsible for the bills, reviewing past bank and credit card statements will help identify bills that were on an automatic pay system versus those paid manually. Discuss with your attorney whether all or only some of the bills should be put in your name. Creating a checklist of bills for each month can help you stay on track. If you are unable to pay the bills immediately, contact your creditors to discuss the possibility of delaying payments due to the circumstances.
- Contact any financial advisors or administrators of your spouse's investment or retirement accounts to start assigning assets to beneficiaries.
- Contact your spouse's employer to discuss any followup items regarding your spouse's retirement accounts. Before taking any action, consult with your attorney and financial advisor to review options and determine the best solution.
- Review all insurance policies (automobile, homeowners, credit card, accident, etc.) and contact each insurance agency to learn the proper procedures for filing claims and how to remove your spouse's name where applicable.
- Notify the Social Security Administration (SSA) of the passing and see if you are eligible to receive spousal and survivor benefits. In most cases, the funeral home will notify the SSA of the death, but you should confirm that this has taken place.
- Contact each of the three major credit bureaus (Equifax, Experian and TransUnion) to get copies of your spouse's credit reports to ensure you are aware of any existing debts. You should make this contact in writing, and your letter should include:
 - _ Date
 - _ Your name, address and relation to the deceased
 - _ Your signature
 - _ Spouse's date of death
 - _ Spouse's date and place of birth
 - _ Spouse's Social Security number
 - _ The addresses of your spouse for the past five years
 - _ A request that the credit report be mailed to you
 - _ A request to place a deceased alert on the credit file to prevent identity theft and unauthorized use of your spouse's credit
 - _ Copy of marriage license
 - _ Copy of death certificate

Tasks To Be Completed Within Six Months

- If an active life insurance policy was in place for your spouse, contact the provider. Try to get started as soon as you can on making a claim, as the funds can take several weeks to arrive.
- Make a list of all banking accounts, investment accounts, CDs, annuities, insurance policies, real estate and any other assets. Identify how each account is titled or how each asset is owned.
- Review your budget and address any immediate concerns for the next year. Your financial advisor can help you with this.
- Notify your tax preparer of your spouse's death. If you typically file your own taxes, you may want to consider having a tax professional assist you, as it may be more complicated in light of your spouse's passing.

Tasks To Be Completed Within 12 Months

- Consult your attorney about updating your own estate plan, including financial and healthcare powers of attorney.
- Revise beneficiary designations on your retirement plans, life insurance policies or other accounts in which your spouse was named as beneficiary.
- Consider changing all jointly held assets, including bank accounts, automobiles and investment accounts, to be in your name, a trust or other title.
- Contact your child's school in the event financial aid is needed.
- Cancel any memberships for your spouse, such as professional organizations or health clubs.
- Cancel all social media, music streaming and online accounts for your spouse.
- Change your emergency contacts to reflect the appropriate family member or friend.
- If your spouse had any business ownerships or interests, discuss this with your attorney. You may be advised to contact the business attorney or key clients or partners for these entities to help with any outstanding affairs.
- Review your short- and long-term financial goals. Work with your financial advisor to evaluate your current financial position and determine the best use of your assets to help you meet your goals.

We understand that this is a difficult time, and we're ready to do what we can to help make it easier. Please let us know if we can assist you in any way. For more information, visit regions.com/hervisionherlegacy or speak to a Regions Wealth Advisor.

her VISION
her LEGACY

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