



What to Do When Death Occurs – A Checklist

Whether the death was sudden, or was a long time coming, the loss of a loved one makes us feel emotional and overwhelmed. Please know that all of us at Phillips Funeral Home and Cremation Service empathize with your loss, and we are here to help you through this difficult time.

We have put together the following steps to follow if you have just recently lost a loved one and you need help now. **We encourage you to contact a funeral director right away so that we can assist you with your arrangements:**

***Phillip's Funeral Home
17 West Pulteney Street
Corning, NY 14830
(607) 936-9212***

Checklist:

- When death occurs at home or a place of business:**
 - You must notify the police immediately:** if the person was not in a hospital or under hospice care, it is critical that you call your local police department by dialing 911. A police officer will be dispatched to your home, and they will contact the coroner or medical examiner.
 - Coroner or medical examiner must release the body:** The coroner or medical examiner will examine your loved one's remains, and will release the body following their examination, allowing a funeral home to become involved.

- When death occurs under hospice care, in a nursing home or at a hospital:**
 - Staff will notify the appropriate authorities
 - If family is present, the funeral director will ask some questions and set up a time for you to meet

- Call your local licensed funeral director:** The funeral director is an experienced professional and he/she will help you to:
 - Obtain a death certificate
 - Arrange transport of the body to the funeral home
 - Make arrangements including selection of a casket/urn, and planning the funeral or memorial service
 - Notify the decedent's employer, if applicable
 - Contact their insurance company
 - Assist with writing the obituary

- Schedule a face-to-face meeting with the funeral director:** It is recommended that you meet with the funeral director within 24 hours of a death to begin making final arrangements for your loved one. This is a very emotional time, and deciding on these final arrangements may seem a very daunting task. However, licensed funeral directors have years of experience and training and are here to hold your hand through every aspect of this challenging time.

Bring the following information with you to your first meeting with the funeral director:

- Full name and address of the deceased
- Marital status
- Race/ethnicity
- Date and city of birth
- Highest level of education

- Father's name, mother's name (including mother's maiden name)
- Spouse's name (if married or widowed)
- Occupation and employer

In addition, gather the following documents of the deceased and bring them to the meeting:

- Beneficiary designations
 - Life insurance policy documents
 - Last will and testament
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- Planning the Funeral or Memorial Service:** the funeral director will guide you through all of the following steps, incorporating your and your loved one's wants, needs, and desires as a foundation to create a memorable and meaningful service:
 - Selecting among burial or cremation options
 - Scheduling the location, date, and time for visitation and funeral service
 - Helping you to choose among traditional or non-traditional service options
 - Selecting the right funeral products
 - Arranging a cemetery plot
 - Preparing an obituary notice
 - Scheduling transportation arrangements
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- Pre-planning:** If pre-planning had been done for your loved one, most of the above arrangements will have already been made. For information on pre-planning options, please visit our website's Pre-planning page.
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- Personalization:** Today, families may choose among many options to personalize and celebrate the life of their loved one. Recalling fond, funny, or poignant memories may assist with the grieving process and will help to honor the life of your loved one.

Here are some ideas to consider when personalizing your loved one's memorial service:

- Did he/she have a favorite sports team?
- What was your loved one's passion?
- Did he/she have any favorite hobbies?
- Do you recall any specific, special moments with family?
- What activity was your loved one best known for?
- Did he/she have a unique motto or saying?
- Do you remember a funny story that represented your loved one's life?