

THE FIRST TEN THINGS TO DO AFTER THE DEATH OF A LOVED ONE

1. SLOW DOWN

If this death was expected, the moment of death is not an emergency.

Who to notify:

- If the deceased is under **hospice care**, call the hospice.
- If the deceased is in a **hospital or care facility**, press the call button.
- If this death was **unexpected, accidental, or violent**, call 911.*

You can take time:



Most hospices, hospitals, and care facilities will wait before calling the funeral home or coroner's office so you can **spend some time with your loved one**. You can sit with them, dress them, comb their hair, talk to them, and hold them. Ask how much time you can have, and take as much of it as you want. This time can be precious.



4. FUNERAL PLANS

- If you don't already have plans with a funeral home, **shop around**. Prices for the same services, even in the same city, can vary widely. Ask about prices **before** allowing a funeral home to take your loved one into their care.
- The hospital or the coroner will often shelter the body, **at no charge**, for days or weeks if you let them know you are shopping for a funeral home or raising money to pay for services.

You can [visit our website](#) to view General Price Lists for New Orleans-area funeral homes (Resources/Funeral Home Pricing Guide).

2. WHAT IS URGENT?

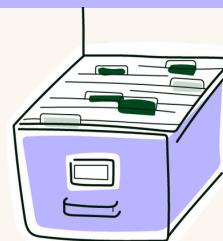
Plans may already have been made for care of the deceased's **dependents or pets**. If not, arrange temporary care to give yourself time to find a longer-term solution. Ask someone to help you make these arrangements.



3. WHO NEEDS TO KNOW?

- Who needs to know **immediately**, no matter what time of day it is? Can someone help you make those calls?
- Who needs to hear from you, **personally, within 24 hours** of the death?

Who can you ask to help notify the **wider community**?



5. IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS

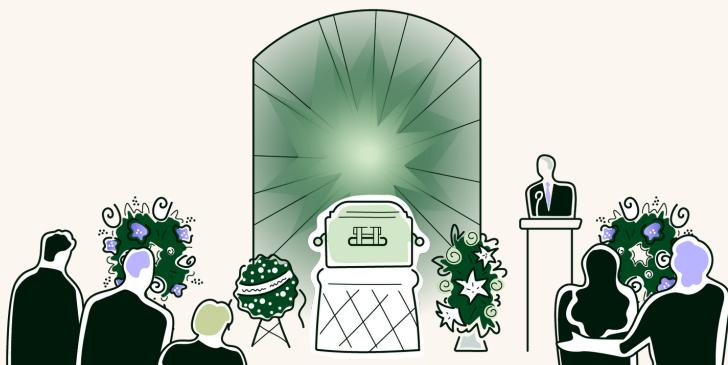
You can find a list of the information that will be required for the death certificate, as well as other documents/information you may need to wrap up affairs on our website [here](#) (Resources/Advance Planning in Louisiana/What's in my Folder?).

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6. FINALIZE ARRANGEMENTS

When meeting with the funeral home to finalize arrangements:

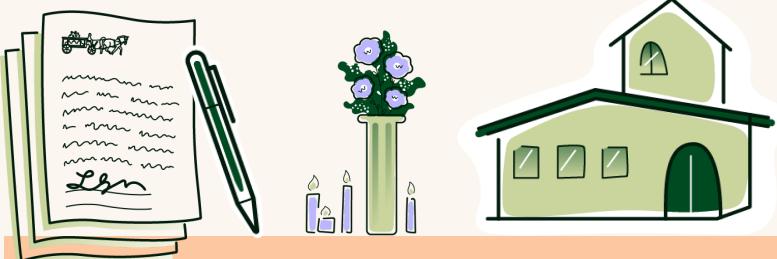
- Ask questions. Make sure you clearly understand what you are paying for.
- Consider bringing someone who is not grieving and can advocate for you.
- Remember that the amount of money you spend is NOT a measure of how much you loved and honored your loved one, and how much they will be missed.



8. MOMENTS OF REST

Grief is exhausting. It can also be disorienting. The "brain fog" of grief makes everything you are trying to accomplish that much harder. Do all you can to **give your body a break**.

Ask for help from friends.



7. OBITUARY

Placing an obituary in the newspaper can be expensive. Most funeral homes will post an obituary and a photo of your loved one on their website for free, and you can share that link with friends and family.

Many people include the obituary in a funeral or memorial program. Collecting the information, the photos, and writing the obituary can be very emotional. Give yourself time and ask for help. Wake can help you write an obituary and even help you get funeral programs printed at no cost. You can find guidance for writing an obituary [here](#) (Resources/How Do I Write an Obituary) or you can contact Wake (info@Wake.education or call 504-689-6330) for in-person assistance.

9. REMEMBER

Funeral services can sometimes feel like you're holding space for everyone else's grief, especially if you were closest to the deceased and you're not ready to say goodbye. Allow yourself to **remember your loved one in your own way** and at your own time.

10. YOU ARE NOT ALONE

Wake can help you:

- Prepare in advance for an expected death
 - Price shop for funeral homes and services
 - Write an obituary
 - Create and print funeral/memorial programs
 - Connect you with community resources for grief support
 - Share information about how to wrap up affairs after a death
- Call Wake at (504) 68998-6330 or email us at info@wake.education



*If your loved one's cause of death was criminal activity in the New Orleans area, Wake recommends the Crime Survivors Guide at crimesurvivorsnola.org.