



What To Do in the First 72 Hours After the Loss of a Spouse or Parent

A practical guide to help families navigate the first few days with clarity and care.

Welcome | First, Take a Breath

Losing a spouse or parent is one of life's most difficult experiences. In the middle of grief, families are often faced with immediate decisions, responsibilities, paperwork, and uncertainty.

You do not need to figure everything out at once. During the first few days, focus only on what requires immediate attention. Some decisions can wait, and it is okay to take things one step at a time.

First 24 Hours | Immediate Priorities

- Contact close family members and loved ones
- Notify hospice, hospital staff, nursing facility, or authorities (if applicable)
- Contact a funeral home or cremation provider
- Locate written final wishes or funeral preferences
- Secure the home, vehicles, pets, and valuables
- Gather medications, identification, and important belongings
- Begin a notebook or folder for important phone calls and notes

Hours 24–48 | Begin Gathering Information

- Locate the will, trust, or estate planning documents
- Gather insurance policies and account information
- Identify attorney, CPA, and financial professional contacts
- Begin funeral or memorial planning
- Notify employer (if applicable)
- Create a list of recurring monthly bills
- Identify automatic payments
- Secure mail and important paperwork

Disclaimer: EverSage Estate Advisors provides coaching, guidance, and organizational support only. We do not provide legal, tax, accounting, or investment advice.



Hours 48–72 | Slow Down and Get Organized

- Order multiple certified death certificates
- Create a list of financial institutions and accounts
- Locate deeds, titles, and legal paperwork
- Avoid closing accounts too quickly
- Avoid distributing assets prematurely
- Keep receipts for estate-related expenses
- Begin organizing important documents in one location
- Write down questions for attorneys, accountants, or advisors

What Can Wait?

Many important decisions do not need to happen immediately. Avoid rushing financial decisions while grieving.

- Selling a home or property
- Closing bank or investment accounts
- Distributing personal belongings
- Making large financial decisions
- Feeling pressure to figure everything out immediately

A Gentle Reminder

You do not have to navigate this process alone. Focus on what must be done today and allow the rest to unfold one step at a time.

EverSage Estate Advisors helps individuals and families organize the financial and practical responsibilities that follow a loss with clarity, compassion, and confidence.

Our Services

- Executor Support & Estate Settlement Organization
- Legacy Planning & Estate Readiness
- Financial Coaching
- Divorce Coaching

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