



# WILLIAMSON COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

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We extend to you our deepest sympathy in the loss of your loved one. We understand the tremendous impact circumstances such as this have on family members and friends. It is our desire to help you during this difficult time by providing answers to some of the immediate questions you may have. The following information is provided to assist you in making arrangements.

If an autopsy is ordered by the judge, your loved one has been transported to one of the following medical examiners (indicated on the front of your envelope):

Travis County Medical Examiner  
7723 Springdale Road  
Austin, TX 78723  
512-854-9599

or

Hill Country Forensics LLC  
2332 Rockride Lane Bldg 1  
Georgetown, TX 78626  
512-240-1060

You may obtain information pertaining to an autopsy from the Justice of the Peace (JP) indicated on the front of your envelope.

Judge KT Musselman  
Justice of the Peace Pct 1  
1801 E Old Settlers #1  
Round Rock, TX 78664  
512-244-8622

Judge Edna Staudt  
Justice of the Peace Pct 2  
350 Discovery Blvd #204  
Cedar Park, TX 78613  
512-260-4219/825-2694

Judge Evelyn McLean  
Justice of the Peace Pct 3  
100 Wilco Way #204  
Georgetown, TX 78626  
512-943-1501

Judge Stacy Hackenberg  
Justice of the Peace Pct 4  
211 W 6<sup>th</sup> St  
Taylor, TX 76574  
512-352-4155

Call the funeral home of your choice to inform them of the death and your desire to use their services. They will make arrangements to transport your loved one to their facility and also make an appointment with you to come to their office to make funeral arrangements. Copies of the Death Certificate are available through the funeral home.

If applicable, you may obtain a copy of the police report from the investigating agency.

Please note that it takes varying amounts of time to obtain death certificates, autopsy, and police reports.

Notify the Social Security Administration of the beneficiary's death by calling 1-800-772-1213. They can assist or direct you to your local Social Security Administration Field Office. Visit [www.ssa.gov/pgm/links\\_survivor.htm](http://www.ssa.gov/pgm/links_survivor.htm) for more information.

If your loved one was a Veteran, please contact the Department of Veteran Affairs at 1-800-827-1000 or visit [www.va.gov/vba](http://www.va.gov/vba).

Crime Victims' Compensation: Call 512-936-1200 (Austin) or 1-800-983-9933 (Statewide) If the deceased was murdered, killed by a drunk driver, reckless driver or hit-and-run driver, you may be eligible for Crime Victims' Compensation to assist with medical, funeral and counseling expenses and for loss of wages. If there is a criminal case pending, contact the County or District Attorney in the county where the crime occurred for more information.

If you have any questions regarding this information, contact the Williamson County Victim Services Unit at 512-943-1373 or [wco-va@wilco.org](mailto:wco-va@wilco.org).

## Grief Support Groups

### Grief Share

[www.griefshare.org](http://www.griefshare.org)

Check website for location, dates and times.

Grief Share is for people grieving the death of a family member or friend. There are different locations nationally, the one locally is based out of the First Baptist Church in Georgetown, for other locations please visit the website. Grief Share groups meet weekly to help you face these challenges and move toward rebuilding your life. Each Grief Share session has three distinct elements: Video seminar with experts, support group discussion with focus and personal study and reflection.

### The Christi Center

2306 Hancock Drive  
Austin, TX 78756  
(512) 467-2600

[www.christicenter.org](http://www.christicenter.org)

This organization offers free, ongoing support groups for adults grieving the loss of a child, spouse, parent, sibling or other loved one. Participants receive the support of peers who can truly relate, from hearing how others have coped, and the realization that they are not alone in their experience of loss. They benefit from helpful guidance on how to manage and express their complex emotions in a healthy manner. The group serves as a safe place for people to come, share, connect, and heal.

## Funeral Homes in Williamson County

- Affordable Burial & Cremation Service  
Georgetown and Austin, TX  
(512) 354-2509
- Austin Area Dignity Memorial Funeral Providers  
Georgetown, TX  
(512) 863-2564
- Beck Funeral Home  
Austin, TX  
(512) 244-3772
- Beck Funeral Home  
Cedar Park – (512) 259-1610  
Pflugerville – (512) 251-3500  
Liberty Hill – (512) 778-5300
- Condra Funeral Home  
Taylor, TX  
(512) 352-3636
- Cook-Walden Davis Funeral Home  
Georgetown, TX  
(512) 863-2564
- Goodnight Funeral Home  
Bartlett, TX  
(254) 527-3228
- Providence Funeral Home  
Taylor, TX  
(512) 352-5909
- Ramsey Funeral Home and Cremation Services  
Georgetown, TX  
(512) 869-7775
- The Gabriels Funeral Chapel and Crematory  
Georgetown, TX  
(512) 869-8888

## What to do When a Loved One Dies, a Survivor's Checklist

### Immediately following the death:

- Notify close family and friends. (Ask some to contact others.)
- Contact your minister.
- Handle care of dependents and pets.
- If employed, contact the deceased's employer.
- Contact the deceased's doctor.
- Ask a friend or relative to keep an eye on the person's home, answer the phone, collect mail, throw food out, and water plants.
- If applicable, notify agent under Power of Attorney.
- Alert the executor of your loved one's Will.
- Notify religious, fraternal, and civic organizations that your loved one was a member of.
- Notify your attorney regarding the probate of the estate.

### Within a few days after death:

- Arrange for funeral and burial or cremation. Search the person's documents to find out whether there was a prepaid burial plan. Ask a friend or family member to go with you to the mortuary. Prepare an obituary. If the person was in the military or belonged to a fraternal or religious group, contact that organization. It may have burial benefits or conduct funeral services.
- Remove any valuables from the deceased's home, secure the residence, and take steps to make the home appear to be occupied (for example, use of lamp timers). Ask a friend or relative to keep an eye on the person's home, answer the phone, collect mail, throw food out, and water plants.
- Arrange for the disposal of any perishables left in the deceased's home- such as food, refrigerated items, and existing refuse.
- Alert the Post Office to forward the deceased's mail.
- Locate loved one's important documents:
  - Will
  - Birth certificate
  - Social Security card
  - Marriage license
  - Military discharge papers (DD-214)
  - Deed to burial property
  - Life insurance policies
  - Copy of funeral prearrangements
- Compile the following information that the funeral home will need to finalize the death certificate:
  - First, middle, and last name
  - Maiden Name (if applicable)
  - Home Address
  - Social Security Number
  - Date of Birth
  - Date of Death
  - Age
  - Gender
  - Race/Ethnicity
  - Marital Status
  - Spouse's first and last name
  - Deceased's highest level of education attained
  - Deceased's Occupation
  - Deceased's place of birth (City and State)
  - Deceased's father's information
    - Name
    - Birth city
    - Birth State
  - Deceased's Mother's information
    - Name
    - Birth city
    - Birth State
- If your loved one was a Veteran
  - Organization and Branch of Service
  - Entered Service Date
  - Entered Service Place
  - Service Number
  - Separated from Service Date
  - Separated from Service Place
  - Grade, Rank or Rating

### **Up to 10 days after death:**

- Obtain death certificates (usually from the funeral home). Get multiple copies; you'll need original certified copies for financial institutions, government agencies, and insurers. Recommended 10-20 copies.
- Take the will to the appropriate county or city office to have it accepted for probate.
- If necessary, the estate's executor should open a bank account for the deceased's estate. It may also be necessary to make an inventory of household goods & personal belongings in order that they can be accounted for and properly distributed.

### **Within One Month of the Death, You Should:**

- Consult with an attorney about probate.
- Meet with an accountant to discuss estate taxes.
- File claims with life insurance companies.
- Contact the Social Security Administration and other government offices that may have been making payments to the decedent. If the decedent was your spouse, inquire about your eligibility for new benefits.
- Notify the Registrar of Voters.
- If the deceased's home is unoccupied, cancel unnecessary home services, such as newspaper delivery, cable service, etc.
- Cancel deceased's prescriptions.
- Contact the Department of Motor Vehicles to cancel deceased's driver's license and transfer titles of all registered vehicles.
- If your loved one was a veteran, inquire about benefits that you may be entitled to through the VA.
- Contact the deceased's employer. Inquire about any 401 (k), pension, or company benefits that the decedent may be entitled to.
- Notify all 3 credit reporting agencies.
  - Equifax, [www.Equifax.com](http://www.Equifax.com), 1-800-685-1111
  - TransUnion, [www.TransUnion.com](http://www.TransUnion.com), 1-800-888-4213
  - Experian, [www.Experian.com](http://www.Experian.com), 1-888-397-3742
- Obtain a current copy of the deceased's credit report.
- If the death was accidental, verify whether benefits are available on existing insurance policies.
- Check for any life insurance benefits available through existing credit card or loan accounts.
- File any outstanding claims for health insurance or Medicare
- Obtain copies of deceased's outstanding bills.
- Locate and/or obtain other important paperwork of the necessary for the settlement of their estate:
  - At least 12 copies of the certified Death Certificate
  - Real estate deeds and titles
  - Stock certificates
  - Real estate titles
  - Loan paperwork
  - Last 4 years of tax returns
  - Bank and retirement account statements
- Advise all creditors in writing that a death has occurred. Contact the Agency providing pension services, to stop monthly check and get claim forms.
- Change ownership of assets and lines of credit.
- Update your Will.
- Update beneficiaries on your life insurance policies, if necessary.
- Send acknowledgement cards for flowers, donations, food, kindness. Also remember to thank pallbearers.
- Organize and distribute decedent's personal belongings.
- Remove loved one's from marketing and mailing lists.
- Contact Utility companies, to change or stop service, and postal service, to stop or forward mail.

## Normal Reactions to an Abnormal Event

Often those suffering from physical and psychological trauma experience an event that is beyond the scope of their everyday reality. Each person reacts to this trauma in his or her own way. Keep in mind that you are a normal person having normal reactions – the only thing that is abnormal is the situation you have just experienced.

Listed below are some of the reactions you might experience. Although any of the following reactions might occur, people differ in terms of the intensity and frequency of such reactions.

- Shock and numbness
- Difficulty sleeping
- Change in eating habits (not eating, over-eating)
- Confusion and difficulty focusing or concentrating
- Intrusive thoughts (thoughts that won't go away, memories of the event)
- Anxiety and depression; increased fear level
- Anger & irritability
- Feeling overwhelmed
- Fatigue
- Dreams/nightmares
- Withdrawal and isolation
- Avoiding anything that reminds you of the event (attempting to “forget”)
- Hyper-vigilance (jumpy/nervous)
- Feeling powerless; loss of control
- Physical complaints (headaches, stomach aches, etc)
- Survivor guilt (guilt over feeling glad it wasn't you or your family members)

**Remember...There is no right or wrong way to react!!**

### **Things that might help:**

- Try to return to your normal routine as much as possible.
- Do not make major decisions or changes right now (unless they are to ensure your safety).
- Eat healthy foods and drink plenty of water.
- Get plenty of rest/sleep – consult your doctor if you have trouble sleeping.
- Talk about your feelings and concerns with family and friends.
- Don't isolate yourself.
- Exercise, take a walk, do anything physical – you'll sleep better.
- Avoid using alcohol; it can act as a depressant.
- Avoid overuse of caffeine; it is a stimulant and could increase anxiety
- The more you talk about how you're feeling, the better you will feel.
- Seek the help of a professional who can help you deal with the effects of your experience.