



Estate Planning and Preparedness Checklist

Financial Planning and Documentation

- Create a household financial summary and review it every two years (see the PRI Estate Summary).
 - Include all financial accounts and assets documenting the owner's name, account type, account number, custodian/financial institution, estimated balance and named beneficiaries.
 - Include all income sources including recipient, payor, amount, frequency and survivor benefit, if any.
 - Examples: earned income/wages, annuities, pensions, Social Security, etc.
 - Include a list of all insurance policies including the policy owner's name, benefit amount, premium amount and payment frequency.
 - Examples: life, disability, home, auto, liability, etc.
 - Document whether the premium is paid manually or automatically drafted.
 - Include a list of all household bills and creditors documenting the account owner's name, account number, payee/financial institution, payment frequency & amount, estimated remaining balance and whether the bill is paid manually or automatically drafted.
- Securely record credentials (user names, passwords, and pin numbers) for cell phone, safes and important websites.
- Organize and record the location of important statements and documents:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Estate summary • Last Will and Testament (LWT) • Insurance policies • Mortgages and notes • Automobile records, titles, and registrations • Tax records • Birth certificate(s) • Marriage certificate • Deeds and titles • Including deed to cemetery plot, if applicable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trusts • Safe deposit box location and key <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tip: Do not use the safe deposit box to store medical directives, POAs, LWT, trust documents. • Social Security benefits information • Veteran discharge papers • Citizenship papers • Benefits from fraternal, veteran, or union organizations
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- Maintain a list of important names and contact information, prioritizing who should be contacted immediately upon death.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employer, if applicable • Medical / health proxy • Next-of-kin • Named guardian of minor children • Trustee • Executor • Financial Planner • CPA / Tax Attorney 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Estate Attorney • Power of Attorney • Trustees • Funeral Home / Director • Grief Counselor • Support Person • Other Emergency Contacts
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Health Care

- Document existing medical and dental insurance policies, including who is covered under the plan, how the plan premiums are paid and make arrangements to replace/alter coverage if changes are needed after a spouse's death.
- Create a plan to incorporate home care to extend independent living.
 - Organizations like [Home Helpers Home Care](#) provide in-home services that may be covered by Medicare.
- Create a living will, also known as a medical directive, and review it frequently. This medical (advance) directive is a legal document that specifies a person's wishes for medical care if they are unable to communicate them.
 - A trusted person must be named to make decisions on your behalf (your healthcare proxy). Ensure your proxy is up-to-date and aware of the location of your living will.
 - Tip: The American Bar Association offers a [Tool Kit for Health Care Advance Planning](#) to help you begin the process.
 - Tip: Medical directives can be created through an estate attorney or online through [FiveWishes.org](#).

Estate and Funeral Planning

- Research local funeral homes and interview funeral directors to begin creating your funeral plan/final arrangements.
 - Decide what kind of memorial service you want, if any, and how your remains will be cared for.
 - Discuss options for pre-payment, if so desired.
 - Tip: The National Funeral Directors Association maintains a database to help you [find a reputable funeral home](#) in your local community.
- Align on your estate plan and how your assets will be distributed upon passing.
 - Consider consulting with an estate planning attorney to align on what documents should be drafted to carry out your legacy wishes.
 - Draft and/or Update Last Will and Testament (LWT): Ensure the will is current and reflects your wishes.
 - Designate a Power of Attorney, a trusted contact who can handle your financial and legal matters in the event you become incapacitated.
- Determine and document guardianship for minor children and pets, if applicable.
- Ensure beneficiary designations are properly set according to your final wishes.
 - Note: Beneficiary designations supersede directives set in a Last Will and Testament (LWT). Regularly check beneficiary assignments on life insurance policies, retirement accounts, and bank accounts.