

Steps After A Death - Checklist

Coping with the passing of a loved one is difficult. The GTC has provided the following checklist of things to consider while going through this very difficult time. Please note that while most of the contact information provided is specific to Gwich'in Participants, non-Gwich'in residents can still use this checklist to ensure that all matters are dealt with. This is not a legal document but just a guide to help you through the process.

IMMEDIATELY

- Notify friends and family.**
- Deal with intentions as to donation of organs, cremation, or burial.**
- Apply for a Burial permit.**
- Complete a Registration of Death.**
- Locate your loved one's will and advise the executor.**
- Locate other key documents** (i.e. marriage certificate, birth certificate, driver's license, social insurance number, health care card, bank records, insurance policies, military records, status card and enrolment card).
- Lock up your loved one's house, belonging's** (clothes and personal effects) **and other assets** (vehicles, trucks, skidoos, equipment, jewelry, art, etc.).
- Make a list of the assets** (vehicles, trucks, skidoos, equipment, jewelry, art, etc.). *You can also attach pictures of assets to the list.*
- Keep track of all expenses and attach receipts** (i.e. for food, material and supplies for casket/cross/urn, fuel, etc.).
- Apply for Canada Pension Plan for survivor benefits, if applicable.** Application kits are available from the Service Canada Centre in Inuvik. Your Government Service Officer in your community may also help with this process. There are three types of benefits: i) one-time payment to the estate, ii) survivors pension payable to spouse or common-law partner and iii) monthly benefit for dependent child. If you do not apply, you may lose benefits you are entitled to receive.

Two Weeks After Death

Secure certified copies of death certificates

Get several copies. You are going to need death certificates to close bank and store accounts, to file insurance claims and to register the death with government agencies, among other things. You can order them from the vital statistics office in the province/territory in which the person died. For the NWT, you can order on-line using your credit card at <https://www.hss.gov.nt.ca/sites/hss/files/application-birth-marriage-death.pdf> or call 1-800-661-0830. The Vital Statistics office is located on the 2nd floor of the IDC building in Inuvik, NT.

Diane Baxter is a Notary Public so she can certify copies of a death certificate if you require copies. Her contact information is (867) 620-1053. She provides this service 'free' to Gwich'in Participants.

Find the will and the executor

Your loved one's survivors need to know where any money, property or belongings will go. Ideally, you talked with your relative before they passed, and they told you where they kept their will. It is a very difficult topic to broach but one that needs to happen before a person dies. If a discussion did not take place, do not stress, look for the document in a desk, a safety deposit box or wherever they kept important papers. People usually name an executor (the person who will manage the settling of the estate) in their will. The executor needs to be involved in most of the steps going forward.

If there is not a will and they are a status Indian, contact your local band office to assist at:

Aklavik Indian band	(867) 978-2340
Teetl'it Gwich'in Band	(867) 952-2006
Inuvik Native Band	(867) 777-5868
Gwichya Gwich'in Band	(867) 953-3201

or contact the Public Trustee office at (867) 767-9252.

Brian Asmundson, Public Trustee	ext. 82447
Jackie Coulombe, Public Trustee Officer	ext. 82047
Aviva Forget-Manson, Public Trustee Officer	ext. 82046
Alanna Williams, Legal Assistant	ext. 82048

In certain situations, the Public Trustee will manage a deceased person's estate. For more information on the estate administration in the NWT, you can find it here:

<https://www.justice.gov.nt.ca/en/estate-administration/>

The Government Services Officers (GSO's) in the communities can also help you to navigate the process of what to do. The GSO's for the (Gwich'in Settlement Area) GSA Communities are as follows:

Shandel McLEOD	(867) 978-2285	Aklavik, NT
Mary Rose TETLICH	(867) 952-2060	Fort McPherson, NT
Maureen CARDINAL-CLARK	(867) 953-3726	Tsiigehtchic, NT

You can also hire a lawyer too if you wish to go that route.

Lastly, the Department of Health and Social Services has provisions to assist families with funeral expenses as a last resort. There is an application package which a Community Social Worker will complete with the family, which includes a financial assessment. If the applicant is verified indigent, then they are approved for assistance. The department seeks reimbursement for costs through the Canada Pension Death Benefit Plan, third party insurance payments, employee death benefit, and/or through the estate. Contact information is as follows:

Inuvik – Adult Services Worker 777-8239
Aklavik – Community Social Worker 978-2613
Fort McPherson – Community Social Worker 952-2245
Tsiigehtchic – via Fort McPherson Community Social Worker 952-2245

In terms of counseling services regarding bereavement, please contact Karen Woo, the new Regional Manager for Mental Health and Addictions, and she can provide you with contact information and services provided.

IMPORTANT: When buying food, supplies for casket/cross, travel for family, etc., please remember to advise the company that this is for a funeral as most places will offer a discount.

Note: See attached document for more information as well that can be found on the following website: <https://grievingtogether.ca/what-now/checklist/canada-info/>