When a loved one dies, what’s next?

Contact Us

Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department
Vital Records Office
3629 S. D St.
Tacoma, WA 98418
(253) 798-6418
www.tpchd.org

Pierce County
Auditor’s Office
2401 S. 35th St.
Room 200
Tacoma, WA 98409
(253) 798-7427
www.co.pierce.wa.us

You need a death certificate to:

- Give to insurance companies.
- Probate a will.
- Claim benefits.
- Make an insurance claim.
- Update bank accounts, CDs and IRAs.
- File taxes.
- Process title transfers (e.g., vehicle and real estate transactions).
- Access social security and SSI benefits.
- Update credit card records.
- Settle an estate.
- Update utility records.
- Claim pensions and government employee benefits.
- Claim military benefits.
- Update records for 401(k) plans and stocks.

Order a death certificate:

In person:
Vital Records Office
3629 S. D St.
Tacoma WA 98418
Monday - Friday, 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
(closed holidays)

Pierce County Annex
2401 S. 35th St.
Tacoma, WA 98409
Monday - Friday, 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
(closed holidays)

By phone: (253) 798-6418

Online: www.tpchd.org/certificates.php
What’s Next?
To settle the affairs of your loved one, you may need to work with various departments in Pierce County. It’s a two-step process.

Step Two: Change Public Documents
Visit the Pierce County Annex.
2401 S. 35th St.
Tacoma, WA 98409
Monday - Friday
8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
The Auditor’s Office is in Room 200. Contact (253) 798-7427.
You can get help with:
• Vehicle and vessel titles.
• Real estate.
• Passports.
• Recording.
• Marriage license.
• Death Certificate.
• Birth Certificate.

Vehicle and Vessel Titles
To remove a deceased person’s name from the title of vehicles and/or vessels, you must present a certified copy of the death certificate. Because this is a title transfer you also need the vehicle or vessel title.

Real Estate
Real estate transactions sometimes require a certified copy of the death certificate. Every transaction is different. You should always consult with an attorney or professional who specializes in real estate.

Passports
If a minor child needs a passport, or needs to renew a passport, you need a certified copy of the death certificate of the deceased parent to mail with the passport application. The passport agency will return the death certificate when they issue the passport.
Visit www.travel.state.gov for more info.

Voter Resitration
We need a signature from a relative or friend to remove a voter from the voting rolls. We do not require a death certificate.
Contact the Pierce County Elections Center at (253) 798-VOTE (8683). Elections is located next to the Pierce County Annex at 2501 S.35th St., Tacoma, WA, 98409.

Property Taxes
If your spouse has died and both of your names appear on your property tax account(s), you need to provide a copy of the death certificate. If the person who died received an exemption from property taxes under the senior/disabled exemption program, you need to provide a copy of the death certificate.
Questions? Contact the Assessor-Treasurer Office in Room 142 or at (253) 798-6111.

Step One: Get a Death Certificate
A death certificate is an official legal record of death and includes information about the person who died and their cause of death. The funeral home prepares and files the death certificate.

Where do I get a death certificate?
Contact Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department’s Vital Records Office if your loved one died anywhere in Washington state.

You will need:
1. Decedent’s name.
2. Date of death.
3. Place of death.
4. Name, address and phone number of person applying.

There is a fee for the death certificate.
We accept cash, credit, and cashier’s check.