

Guiding you through the loss of a loved one

We're here to help you with some of the difficult steps and decisions ahead.



What's in this guide

We understand there's no easy way through the loss of a loved one, and dealing with practical issues or making any kind of important financial decisions while you grieve can feel overwhelming.

We created this guide to help you with some of the difficult steps and decisions ahead. And please know we'll do our best to support you through them. Hopefully it means you can focus on friends, family and the things that are most important right now.

The first part of this guide explains the initial steps you'll need to take, things like registering the death, notifying organisations your loved one was with, and locating the Will. We'll also let you know which areas we can help you out with.

The second part explains what happens to any accounts or investments your loved one had with us at St. George and the Westpac Group. We'll let you know what to expect from us, depending on whether you're the partner, a close family member helping with co-ordination, the Executor or you're involved in another way.

Lastly, we've covered off as much helpful information as we can. You'll find a section with frequently asked questions and a glossary of the legal terms for some of the jargon and phrases you might start to hear.

If you need a hand making sense of this guide, please give us a call on **(02) 9767 1164**. We'll do our best to help you through the tough parts, so you can concentrate on what's most important.



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Your step by step guide

Six things you need to do:

Step 1:

Obtaining the Doctor's Certificate

You'll need to locate the Doctor's Certificate or Proof of Death before you can move forward with the funeral arrangements and administration of the Estate.

Step 2:

Locating the Will (if there is one)

If your loved one has a Will, you'll need an original, signed and witnessed version. If there isn't a Will, a legal personal representative (a Solicitor for example) can act on the deceased's behalf. Alternatively, direct next of kin can instruct us, but you'll need to let your local branch know this and provide 'proof of death'.

Step 3:

Making funeral or memorial arrangements and registering the death

Planning a funeral or memorial can be an extra financial stress at an already tough time. We might be able to help by releasing funds from the Estate specifically for funeral expenses.

When someone passes away, there are a number of things you need to take care of as soon as possible. You might have already made a start, but don't panic if you haven't. Just use the guide below and take it one step at a time.

Remember, it's also a good idea to notify your bank quickly to help safeguard the Estate and start the proceedings. Here's a brief description of what needs to be sorted, and you can find more details in each section.

Step 4:

Notifying organisations and people

You'll need to let people and organisations know about your loved one's passing. We can help you work out who you need to notify.

Step 5:

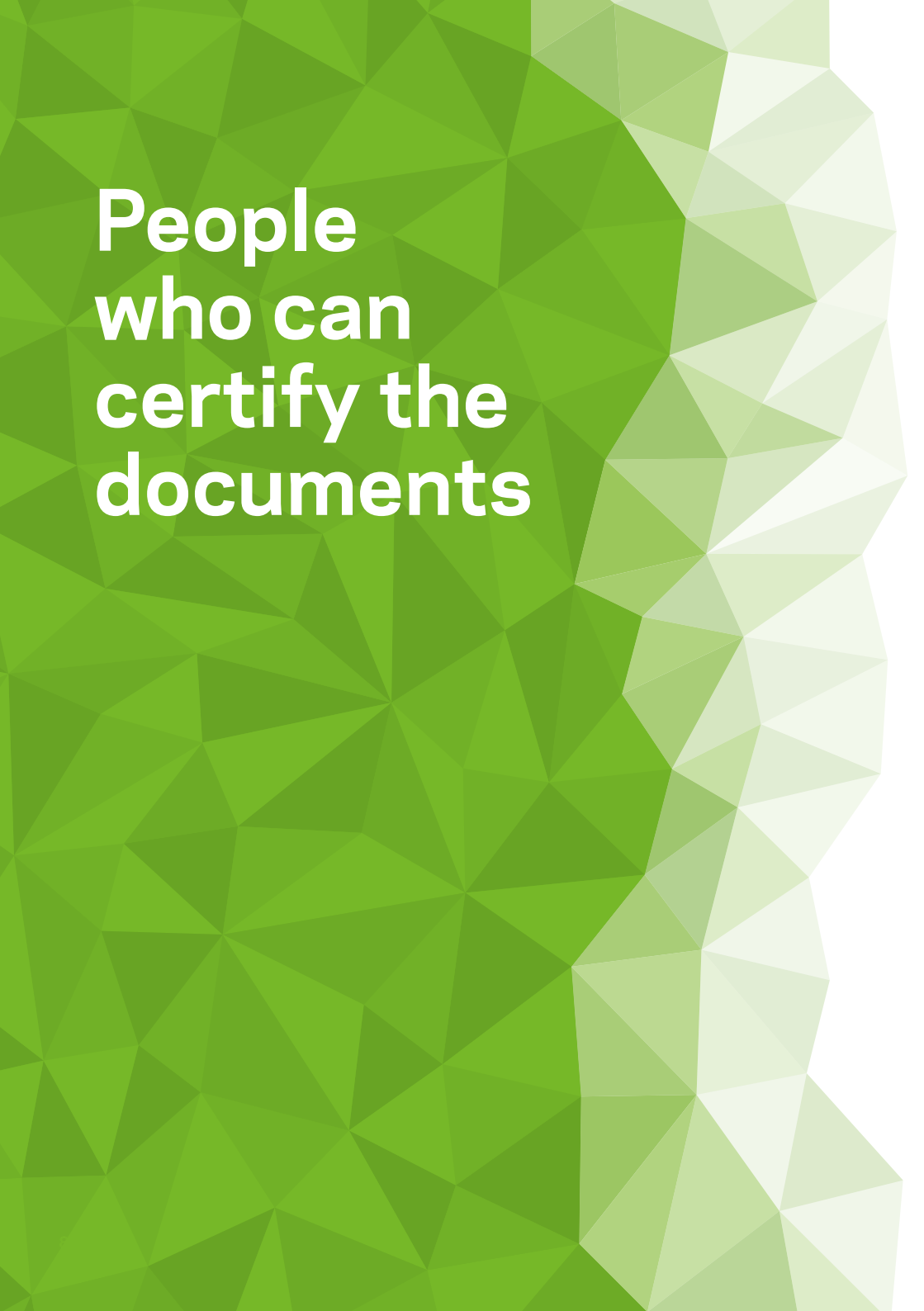
Identifying yourself and important documentation

If you're not a St. George customer, but the deceased's accounts are with us, then you'll need to identify yourself in person in one of our branches.

Step 6:

Handling the Estate and important considerations

Every Estate is different, and depending on the complexity and number of accounts held, it can take time to finalise. We'll do our best to keep things moving and let you know what documentation we need as we move forward.



**People
who can
certify the
documents**

You can bring the original documents into a branch and any staff member with 5 or more years of continuous service can verify them for you. Alternatively, you can bring in photocopies but they'll need to be certified by a qualifying witness.

People who can certify copies of your original documents include within Australia:

- Justice of the Peace.
- Commissioner for Affidavits.
- A permanent employee of the Australian Postal Corporation with 5 or more years of continuous service. They also need to be employed in an office supplying postal services to the public.
- A person who is enrolled on the role of the Supreme Court of a state or territory, or the High Court of Australia, like a barrister or solicitor.
- Notary Public.
- Police officer.

A full list of eligible signatories can be found at border.gov.au/Trav/Citi/App/What-documents-do-you-need/Designated-list-of-occupations-and-professions

If you live overseas, you'll need to visit your local court and get a notary public or Australian consular official to sign the original documents as well as certify the copy document.

Step 1:

Obtaining the Doctor's Certificate

When a loved one passes away, one of the first things you need to do is get hold of the official proof of death documents. You'll need these before you can move forward with anything like funeral arrangements and dealing with the Estate.

Doctor's Certificate of Cause of Death

A doctor will sign a certificate called the 'Doctor's Certificate of Death' which confirms your loved one has passed away. It's important you keep it in a safe place, along with the death certificate (this is issued at a later stage) and any other proof of death documents that allow access to the Estate.

Once you have the Doctor's Certificate of Death, the funeral company can take your loved one into their care and the Next-of-Kin can plan the funeral and formally notify everyone.

If the Executor/s of the Will, or the Next-of-Kin (if no Will exists) request, they can also access funds from your loved one's account to help cover valid funeral expenses.

You'll need to find the following information about the deceased as soon as possible:

- Driver's licence number
- Marriage certificate
- Divorce decree (outcome of a divorce, signed by a judge)
- Member numbers: Locate member numbers of any memberships in professional, social, fraternal or military organisations
- Centrelink details (particularly if deceased was receiving a pension)
- Passport number
- Birth certificate

You might also need to provide copies of these documents to various other parties as the Estate is finalised.

The Department of Human Services has more information on what to do following a death at humanservices.gov.au/customer/subjects/what-do-following-death

Losing your partner and your household income

We want to support you as much as possible. If losing your partner has also meant losing your main household income, or you're struggling to pay the funeral bill, you might be entitled to financial help or benefits. Please get in touch and we'll see how we can help.

If you want to talk to someone about ongoing support for the financial road ahead, you can contact us at Customer Assist on **1800 629 795**.

Step 2:

Locating the Will (if there is one)

In a nutshell, a Will is a legal document that explains how a person's belongings should be distributed after they've passed away. You'll need to find the last known signed and witnessed version of it.

It might be at the home of the deceased person, but if you can't find it try asking their solicitor, bank, or financial advisor if they have it.

If the Will is in a safety deposit box and you need access to it, you'll have to provide at least one of the proof of death requirements (for example a Medical Certificate, Death Certificate, Funeral Bill, Solicitor's or Coroner's Letter, Grant of Probate, Letters of Administration or a Probate Bond). When you access the safety deposit box, two bankers will be there with you. So you know, you can't take the Will with you. A certified copy will be provided to you as long as you're named as an Executor, or you can prove that you're an authorised nominee of the Executor/s.

There should be someone responsible for distributing the deceased person's assets as outlined in the Will. They're known as the Executor of the Will. There's usually one or more Executor/s who are responsible for dealing with the administration of the deceased's Estate.

An important thing to know is that a Will, or multiple versions of Wills, might be invalid if they don't comply with the legal formalities. If this happens the document you need for finalising Estates is called a grant of probate. It's an order of the court stating this particular Will is valid, and that the Estate entitlements are governed by it.

For more information on Executor/s, see **Section 6: Dealing with the Estate**.

What to do if there isn't a Will

There are a couple of things that happen if the person who passed on hasn't left a Will. Usually the Next-of-Kin is expected to become the person we can talk to about settling matters, they're known as the Administrator. The main reason St. George will request the Death Certificate is because it usually lists the Next-of-Kin.

When someone hasn't left a Will, you also might hear them described as having died 'intestate'. This means the Estate is then shared under a set legal formula. You can refer to your local State Public trustee for more information, and to determine next steps. Property can only be transferred by a grant of letters of administration, which is essentially a court order that determines everyone's entitlements.

Step 3:

Funeral or memorial arrangements and registering the death

It's normal to struggle with planning a funeral or memorial – it can be pretty confronting.

Despite that, you might already know how your loved one wanted their funeral or memorial, or there might be instructions in the Will or other papers. Most people also use a funeral director to help make all the necessary arrangements, this can take some of the pressure off.

While you might not want to think about money right now, funerals or memorials can be expensive, and they sometimes need to be paid for immediately. If a loved one had a prepaid funeral or memorial arrangement in place it can help manage the cost. If not, it's worth checking how much money is available to pay for it.

Using funds from the deceased's Estate to pay for the funeral or memorial

We are able to assist with paying for the costs for the funeral or memorial from the deceased's accounts. This is subject to their being funds available and all the Executor/s, solicitors or Next of Kin/s agree and make a request.

The cost of a funeral or memorial

Depending on what sort of ceremony is planned, the cost can vary hugely. You should allow upwards of around \$7,000, though again it depends on the provider and the type of funeral chosen.

So you know what to expect, the major expenses for a funeral are:

1. Funeral Director fees
2. The cost of the coffin, casket or urn
3. Burial or cremation fees
4. The cost of arranging memorials

For more information on funerals and finding a funeral director, visit the Australian Funeral Directors Association afda.org.au

If there are funds in the deceased account you can send us the original tax invoice and we will make the payment on your behalf. If there aren't enough funds in the account we will make a part payment with the money available and close the account.

If you would like to claim for costs already paid you can send us the original invoice and tax receipt, with the payee's name clearly stated, and we will reimburse the payee directly.

You may be eligible for a bereavement allowance

If you're an Australian resident, there are also a number of organisations that can provide you with bereavement allowances which can help cover funeral costs.

These are the organisations you should talk to:

- Centrelink
- Department of Veterans Affairs
- Insurance companies
- Some private health funds
- Unions that the deceased belonged to

So you know, entitlements to these bereavement allowances can change without notice. We recommend you contact your nearest Centrelink Office for the most up-to-date information, or call them on **13 23 00**.

Using funds from the deceased's Estate to pay for other costs

On top of the funeral expenses, there's a range of other costs that you or the representatives of the Estate might find you need to cover. Funds from the Estate may be available to help pay these costs. If this is the case, St.George may be able to help. We will:

- Consider releasing funds from the account(s) to cover our late customer's utility bills, money owed in tax, aged care facility bills and medical fees
- Assess other bills on a case-by-case basis
- Assist and release funds to help cover costs associated with lodging an application for a Grant of Probate, Letters of Administration or a Probate Bond. Please be aware we're unable to release funds to pay for solicitor fees.

Registering a death

When someone passes away, their death needs to be officially registered with a certificate. This document takes longer to process and issue than the Doctor's certificate.

Usually a death certificate can be issued by the Registry of Birth, Deaths and Marriages in your state or territory. If you have a funeral director, they'll ask you for the information that's required and register the death after the funeral has taken place.

If you're not using a funeral director, the person managing the final arrangements for the deceased is responsible for registering the death. Depending on which state you live in, a doctor or coroner is also responsible for registering deaths.

You can find more information on this from the Australian Government site: **australia.gov.au** in the information and services section, under family and community - births deaths and marriages registries.

Step 4:

Who to notify

When a loved one passes away, you'll probably need to notify a number of people and organisations, like friends and family, as well as any other banks, utility companies or building societies. You'll also have to find legal documents like their passport or drivers licence that will need to be returned and cancelled.

At the end of this document we've included a checklist with financial organisations, Government organisations, people and groups you might need to notify - hopefully that makes it simpler.

You can usually inform them via phone, and if you have the relevant account number or reference before calling it'll be an easier process. Each organisation will tell you if they need to see any documents, like a copy of the death certificate.

Why should you notify them as soon as possible?

It's probably the last thing you want to think about right now, but fraud and identity theft is a real risk. Opportunists count on you being too distracted to act quickly, so keep an eye out for unusual bills or an increased number of solicitations for credit card or loan offers.

Here are some simple steps to stop them from taking advantage:

- Limit the details you put in the obituary, like birth date, mother's maiden name, or other personally identifying information
- Send a copy of the death certificate to the ATO, they'll flag the account as You can find more information at ato.gov.au/Forms/Notification-of-a-deceased-person
- Make sure the death of your loved one is registered as soon as possible
- Keep the death certificate secure as it's an incredibly important identity document

Notifying St.George

Letting us know a loved one has passed away is an important step in securing their Estate and starting the Estate management process.

You have two ways to do this:

1. Call our Estate Management Specialists
2. Visit one of our Branches

Documentation required to settle accounts

You'll need to provide us with a Proof of Death document issued by Births, Deaths and Marriages. You can do this by visiting any St.George branch, but if you're not a customer of ours then please bring some identification with you.

What is a Proof of Death document?

This could be any one of the following:

- Death Certificate.
- Doctor's Medical Certificate.
- Funeral Bill.
- Solicitor's or Coroner's Letter.
- Grant of Probate.
- Letters of Administration.
- Probate Bond.

When you notify us with at least one of the proof of death documents, we can make the hold on their accounts permanent.

We restrict access to the account:

If the account is solely in the deceased's name, then we'll put it on hold.

This means:

- No money can be taken out of the accounts
- St.George will still allow all credits into the deceased person's accounts
- We put a restraint on the account to stop any Direct Debits from being taken out, things like utility bills, mortgage or loan payments

To keep paying bills, home loans, and so on, alternative arrangements may need to be made. We understand this is a trying time for you and are able to provide you with a full list of information to assist with this task.

Joint Accounts

For joint account holders, the joint holder will still have access to the account (credits and debits) as per normal (except for term deposits and if joint holder is a secondary holder of the product), the surviving account holder will not need to be formally identified in order to access funds from the joint accounts. Joint accounts will be transferred into the name of the surviving joint account holder(s) once we have received a certified copy of the Death Certificate, in accordance with the products terms and conditions.

When should I close someone's accounts after they've passed away?

There are some things you need to check before you close the account. It's highly likely you'll need to make payments from your loved one's accounts in the months after they've passed on. Things like Superannuation benefits, shares, tax refunds, lost superannuation benefit cheques in their name and so on. If an account is closed, it might need to be re-opened in the name of the deceased, this can be a lengthy and time consuming process. Keeping their accounts open also means that funds can be accepted into the Estate easily.

Contacting Us

Call the St.George Estates Management team on 02 9767 1164

Email: Estatesmanagement@stgeorge.com.au

Mail: Estates Management - IBN77

GPO Box 3433

Sydney NSW 2001

Other notifications within St.George and the Westpac Group

We'll do everything we can to help, so as soon as we're notified of a death, we inform all parts of St.George and Westpac Group, and we'll let you know if you need to do anything else regarding specific accounts.

So you're aware, we print and prepare all our mail several weeks in advance. So even after you've notified us there could be small window where a deceased person still receives our mail. We'll do everything we can to stop this from happening, but if anything slips through then please accept our sincerest apologies.

What happens to your lost loved one's accounts when you notify us?

- We'll provide a 'Certificate of Balance'

This gives you details of all the accounts with St.George and Westpac Group. The person(s) representing the Estate – the Executor/s or Administrator(s) or Solicitor acting for the Estate – will all need to request a Certificate of Balance individually in writing, and they'll need identification.

- We'll start settling the accounts and releasing funds to the Executor/s, Administrator(s) or Solicitor acting for the Estate.

Other documents you might need

After we've identified all the accounts held by your loved one, we might also need: Letters of Administration, Probate or a Probate Bond.

For information on how to apply for a Probate Bond, we recommend you contact:

Australian Probate Bonds Underwriting Agency (ABN: 31 774 476 400)

Web: **austprobate.com**

Telephone: **07 3350 4225**

Please note: All Power of attorneys, Guardianships and authorised signatories cease once a person is deceased. Only the Next-of-Kin or Executor/Administrator/Legal representative will be able to engage with the bank regarding the deceased's accounts after their passing.

Step 5:

Identifying yourself and important documentation

Identifying yourself

If you're not a St. George customer, but you're managing the financial affairs of one of our customers, then you'll need to identify yourself in one of our branches. This is so we know who we're talking to, and who we should be receiving Estate requests from. Once it's all sorted, no matter what part of the bank you contact, we'll be able to identify you easily and move ahead with your requests.

A. You'll need to show at least one form of ID – a driver's licence, passport or birth certificate. If any document is written in a language other than English, you'll need to provide an English translation prepared by an accredited translator along with it.

B. Once we have your documents, we'll review all the accounts held with us. Within 7 to 10 business days, you'll receive a 'Letter of Requirement' as part of the statement of position. This includes a reference number for you to quote when you contact us, as well as a list of any further information we need.

C. Depending on the value of the Estate, we might also ask you for documents like the Will, Probate, Probate Bond or Letters of Administration. We take a lot of care to handle everything fairly and accurately on behalf of your loved one, but once we have everything we need, we'll finalise the accounts as quickly as we can for you.

D. If you've asked us to make payments directly to beneficiaries, like those mentioned in the Will or Next-of-Kin, we'll require those beneficiaries to be identified as well. We know there are a lot of steps, but this is mandatory under the Government's Anti-Money Laundering/Anti-Terrorist Funding safeguards, these are in place to protect us all from fraud. If we're finalising a bank cheque for an "Estate of the Late" account, we don't need to identify all beneficiaries, but we do need to identify whoever is asking us to make payment, generally the Executor or Administrator.

Step 6:

The Estate and important considerations

While we'll do our best to keep it all moving swiftly for you, every Estate is different. Depending on the complexity and number of accounts held, the time it takes to finalise everything can vary hugely. It can also depend on the type of banking products involved, whether a Grant of Probate is needed and whether we can access all the necessary information.

If there's a Will, any person nominated in the Will as responsible for carrying out the wishes of the deceased and administering the Estate is an 'Executor'. If there's no Will, then the immediate Next-of-Kin are responsible.

What Executors (or Next-of-Kin if there is no Will) have to do:

- Make an inventory of everything in the Estate and work out the total value
- Calculate and settle any inheritance tax and other tax liabilities
- Apply for Probate, if required
- Collect all the assets (like shares and investments) and settle any debt, including mortgages and loans
- Sell any property or investments that the Will doesn't specifically transfer to someone else
- Distribute the Estate to the beneficiaries

The process we follow in order to finalise the Estate is decided by the value of your loved one's account balances with St. George. We understand that can be pretty confusing, especially when you're grieving, so here's a breakdown of how it all works – we hope it helps.

Requirements to Finalise an Estate

Total value of accounts held at St.George	Requirements	How?
<p>Below \$15,000.00</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Death Certificate 	<p>This can be done in the branch and straight away as long as you have all the documentation and the relevant authorisations. Please note, if there are lending products, the branch will need to forward this request to the Estates Management Team who will go ahead and complete the request for you.</p>
<p>Between \$15,000 and \$100,000</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Death Certificate • Completed and Signed Notification of Death, Funds Distribution & Indemnity Form <p>And one (1) of the following, if applicable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Grant of Probate/Letters of Administration – Probate Bond (if there is no lending products) 	<p>This can still be initiated at the branch, but the staff there will forward all the documentation to the Estates Management team. That team will then go ahead and process as requested on the Notification form. In cases where there is no Grant of Probate or Letters of Administration, we will accept a written "Letter of Direction" if it is signed by all Next-of-Kin.</p>
<p>Above \$100,000</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Death Certificate • Completed and Signed Notification of Death, Funds Distribution & Indemnity Form <p>And one (1) of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Grant of Probate/ Letters of Administration – Probate Bond (if there is no lending products) 	<p>This can still be initiated at the branch, but the staff there will forward all the documentation to the Estates Management team. That team will then go ahead and process as requested on the Notification form. This form must be signed by the listed Executor, Administrator or the listed person on the Probate Bond.</p>

We understand you might have more questions, so here are some useful explanations that might make things a bit clearer.

Who is authorised to represent the Estate?

There are a number of options here. If it's a Solicitor, you'll need to ask them to write to St. George confirming that they're authorised to represent the Estate. If it's the Executor of the Estate, as per the Will, then we'll need a certified copy of a valid Will.

If an Executor hasn't been appointed, or if there's no Will, we'll need Letters of Administration or something called a Probate Bond – our Estates Management Team can tell you which, and how to go about it.

For information on how to apply for Letters of Administration, you should talk to your Solicitor. For information on Probate Bonds, and how to apply for one, contact Australian Probate Bonds Underwriting Agency.

If the authorised representative lives overseas, they'll need to contact the Estates Management Team on **02 9767 1164**. Once we know we need the Probate, Letters of Administration or a Probate Bond, our Estates Management Team will review the accounts and let you know what you need to do.

What does an Executor do?

The Executor is the person who administers the Will. They're responsible for locating a legal copy of the Will and following the instructions for funeral requirements, collecting all assets, finalising outstanding liabilities and distributing the assets in the way your loved one instructed. If you hear the word, Executrix it's the name used for a female Executor.

Do I need a Solicitor?

Whether or not you use a solicitor is a decision only you can make. They can help with complex issues like trusts, bankruptcies and foreign assets. Things to consider are the size of the Estate, as well as the variety of assets including things like Real Estate and investments, the number of beneficiaries there are, their location and whether or not you anticipate any disputes.

What happens to a Power of Attorney?

Once someone has passed away, a Power of Attorney issued by them won't be valid anymore. So, even if your loved one appointed you before they passed away, you won't be able to rely on that Power of Attorney to access their bank accounts or handle any other transactions on their behalf.

Who can apply for Probate?

An Executor, Trustee, Administrator, Legal Representative or Next-of-Kin can all apply for Probate. They'll need to contact the Supreme Court in the state where the assets are held. You can get advice from Centrelink, the Public Trustee in your state, or your solicitor. If your loved one only had joint accounts with someone else, and you don't need Probate, the personal representative might be able to deal with everything in a few weeks. But if you do need Probate, or if the person owned property, this process can take some time.

Can you waive the requirement for Probate or Administration?

If it's less than \$100,000 total value (you can see this in the requirements table) then you can request us to waive the requirements. If this happens, all the next-of-kin will need to sign the St. George Notification/Indemnity Form which means everyone is aware of the decision to waive the probate requirement.

What is an 'Australian Probate Bond'?

If you need to release cash from the Estate in lieu of a Grant of Probate, you can apply for something called a Probate Bond. It's a document issued by Australian Probate Bonds Underwriting Agency (APBUA) ensuring the bank no financial loss be incurred if they don't receive an alternative legal document like:

- A Grant of Probate
- Letters of Administration
- Reseal of Probate

Australian Probate Bonds Underwriting Agency is underwritten by QBE Insurance. So you know, you won't be able to use a probate bond when real estate forms part of the Estate.

Does St.George follow the instructions of the Will when you are finalising?

We'll always follow the instructions of the Executor, not the Will. They'll advise us on how they want the funds to be finalised. This is because we might not always hold the entire Estate of our customer, and won't be able to understand or fulfil the instructions in the Will, so we rely on the Executor as the authorised person to instruct us.

Tax and Deceased Estates

There are no inheritance or Estate taxes in Australia. However, when a loved one dies, there are some important tax and superannuation issues for the Executor and the beneficiaries, including:

- Notifying the ATO
- Completing the final tax returns for a loved one
- Completing trust tax returns for a Deceased Estate
- If you are a beneficiary of a Deceased Estate

The ATO website has some helpful information around Deceased Estates, as well as a useful checklist. If there are complex tax implications in the Estate, expert advice on tax may be necessary.

What happens with business accounts?

It depends on how they were set up, but business accounts can be pretty complex. If you can, speak with your loved one's Business Banking Relationship Manager or get independent advice.



How St.George helps you

It's never an easy time, but we'll do everything we can to make it less difficult. Once you've notified us of your loss, we'll provide authorised persons or Estate administrators with a letter outlining the details of any accounts or services they held, and what's required in order to finalise these. It'll be provided within 7-10 days and will include a reference number to quote when contacting us, as well and a list of any further information we need.

This is called a 'Certificate of Balance' and it details most, if not all, the accounts with St. George and the Westpac Group. Whoever is representing the Estate, whether this is the Executor/s, Administrator(s) or Solicitor acting for the Estate, will all need to request a Certificate of Balance individually in writing.

Once we have everything we need (depending on the nature of the Estate), we'll finalise the accounts as soon as possible. This means we'll start settling the accounts and releasing funds to the Executor/s, Administrator(s) or Solicitor acting for the Estate.

Joint accounts, transaction and savings accounts

The Estates management team will be able to settle and close these accounts on behalf of your loved one.

1. What happens to transaction accounts and joint bank accounts?

When you notify us with at least one of the proof of death documents, a permanent hold on the transaction account can be actioned as per above. Alternative arrangements may need to be made to continue to pay the bills if these accounts are the sole source of funds for the household. We'll provide you with a full list of information to assist with this task.

For joint account holders, the joint holder will still have access to the account (credits and debits) as per normal (except for term deposits and if joint holder is a secondary holder of the product), the surviving account holder will not need to be formally identified in order to access funds from the joint accounts. Joint accounts will be transferred into the name of the surviving joint account

holder(s) once we have received a certified copy of the Death Certificate, in accordance with the products terms and conditions. In some instances we may need to change the type of account held in order to do this as the account held may no longer be available. We will select the newer product that best corresponds with the obsolete product.

Please note we are unable to do this for term deposits as there are tax implications. Where two or more signatures are required to operate the account, some different restrictions apply. Visit a St. George branch if you require clarity of what restrictions apply and our requirements.

2. How do I cancel or change a direct debit (automatic payment)?

If your loved one's account is still open, we can post you out a list of all the direct debits attached to it called a 'Regular Payment Summary'. If you're the authorised representative then you can simply contact a St. George branch to request a copy and should receive it within 5-7 business days.

If the transaction account is held solely in the name of you loved one, a restriction will be put on the account preventing further direct debits. This doesn't mean that direct debits attached to the credit card will stop, you'll need to contact each separate creditor to cancel those.

If the account is already closed, we can give you copies of the last 12 months of statements for both a transaction account and a credit card facility. You'll need to work out which organisation(s) to contact, which could include gyms, telephone accounts, insurance, annual subscriptions like computer software protection or any other memberships. If you are having difficulty dealing with a particular organisation or supplier then St. George might be able to help - call us or come and see us at your local branch.

3. What happens to your loved one's term deposit?

Sometimes we're able to release funds before a term deposit is mature, assuming we've received the required documentation. All the fees and charges will be waived, and interest that's accrued up until the date of closure will be paid.

Credit cards and home loans

1. What happens if they had a credit card and there's more money owing?

Our team will send you a letter advising you of the details of any outstanding debts and our requirements for closing the account. Where possible, we will offset the credit card debt using the funds available from any savings and transaction account, in accordance with the products terms and conditions. You'll need to cancel any existing direct debits attached to the card.

2. The credit card was an Amplify card and had Amplify Reward Points. What happens to the points?

If there are Amplify Reward points, we can redeem them for cash and credit it to your loved one's card(s). It usually takes about four weeks from when we you've notified us of their death. So you know, we can't transfer the points themselves due to tax implications. The points also form part of the Estate and so they'll be disbursed along with all the other assets as outlined in the Will. If the card was closed before your loved one passed on, then unfortunately any available points were forfeited by them and aren't redeemable.

3. My deceased loved one and I have a home loan together. What happens to it?

You will need to continue paying your loan and interest will still accrue on the account until the loan is finalised – the Estate Management team will inform you of when the loan will finalise. If you require the deceased's name to be removed from the title deeds contact your local or preferred solicitor for more information on how to do this. If you are unable to meet your regular loan repayments, you may contact Customer Assist on **1800 629 795**.

4. How do I remove a name from a St.George home loan after someone has passed away?

Get in touch with your local or preferred solicitor for more information on how to do this.

Life Insurance, Superannuation, Investments & other banks

Step 1: Call us on **1300 366 416**. You will be assigned a Claims Consultant, who will help you every step of the way.

Step 2: Claims Kit. We will mail you a Claims Kit that contains important forms for you to complete, and helpful information about making a claim.

Step 3: Collect information. We will let your financial adviser know that you need to make a claim on your policy so that they can support you through the process. Please let us know if you would prefer us not to contact your financial planner. Please complete the forms contained in your Claims Kit. Depending on the type of claim you are making, some of the forms may need to be completed by your medical or financial professional. It is your responsibility to arrange for these professionals to complete the form for you. Please read the forms carefully as they may ask you to attach additional information with the forms, e.g. birth certificate, marriage certificate, death certificate. Please return the completed form to:

St. George Claims
GPO Box 4582
Sydney NSW 2001

Step 4: Assessing the claim. Your Claims Consultant will review all the information you have provided, and make an initial assessment of your claim. They will then call you to discuss the assessment. We will also send you a letter to confirm the details of your claim and provide you with the contact details of your Claims Consultant.

Step 5: Decision. Once your claim has been approved, we will arrange your payment by a direct deposit or cheque. We will call you to confirm that your payment has been processed. Claims payments can often be very large lump sums. You may wish to discuss the best way to use your payment with your financial adviser. Payments under a life insurance policy may be made to the spouse of the deceased, or someone mentioned in the will, or someone entitled under the intestacy provisions, up to a maximum of \$50,000 (without the need for a grant of probate or letters of administration).

What happens with superannuation?

If your loved one had a Will, it might list their specific wishes, or have binding death benefit nominations around their superannuation. If not, superannuation law determines who's eligible to receive death benefits from the fund. These individuals are beneficiaries of a deceased member, and can either be a 'dependant' or the Legal Personal Representative (LPR) of the member which is defined by superannuation law and at the time of the member's death.

Dependants known as Superannuation Industry Supervision (SIS) dependants and include:

- Spouse of the member
- Child of the member (any age)
- Financial dependant
- A person with whom the member had an interdependent relationship.

Additionally, superannuation death benefits can be paid to the Estate or Legal Personal Representative of the deceased member. In cases where the deceased loved one would like their parents or siblings to receive their death benefits, then they could consider nominating their Estate or Legal Personal Representative (LPR) as the beneficiary of the superannuation death benefit, and directing the payment to them in accordance with the Will of the deceased member.

For St.George and/or BT Financial Group's superannuation funds, you'll need to complete a Death Benefit Information Form (we can give this to you), and provide a certified copy of the Death Certificate. Usually you'll need to provide a certified copy of the Will and a Grant of Probate or Letters of Administration (where there is no Will) as well. For superannuation that are funds held somewhere else, you'll need to contact the Trustee and/or Administrator of the superannuation fund for details about their death benefit notification requirements.

What happens to other wealth products?

If your loved one owned shares or other wealth products issued by the relevant BT Financial Group entities that aren't mentioned in the Will, you can contact your local Office of State Revenue or the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (as applicable) to help to track down any lost money or assets. For shares in particular, many of the larger listed companies in Australia use the share registry services of two firms, Computershare or Link Market Services. You can contact these registries (or the relevant share registry for the share owned) to find out whether your loved one held any shares with them.

If you're unsure, you can contact the issuer of the product for more information. So you know, they'll require the necessary identification and documentation from you (that's everything we've explained in this guide) before they can give you any information.

What happens to Trust accounts?

This varies considerably from case to case. If your loved one held a trust account, and you're a beneficiary, it's a good idea to get independent financial and/or legal advice. You'll also need to visit a branch to make any changes to the trust account.

Assessing your own financial affairs after the death of a loved one

When someone close to you dies, it can focus your mind on your own financial affairs, or change your situation so significantly that you need to update your plans. Speak to us if you are seeking more information about your finances and what options are available to you.

BT Financial Group Estate and Claims Management Team

This is the team responsible for managing the end to end customer experience for BT Financial Group customers following any notification of death, divorce, financial hardship, total and permanent disability or illness. They know how tough it is and will do everything they can to help, making sure individual circumstances are met during their time of need.

Call 1300 366 426

The background features a low-poly geometric pattern of triangles. The left side is dominated by various shades of green, ranging from dark forest green to bright lime green. The right side transitions into lighter shades of green and white, creating a gradient effect. The overall style is modern and abstract.

Frequently asked questions

My loved one has recently passed away. What do I do now?

We hope this step-by-step guide is helpful – you can also access it online or download a copy and share it with family or anyone else involved. You should also get in touch with us as soon as possible so that we can start to help you through the process. Please notify us in person, or by telephone.

What if there is no Will?

If a person has passed away and didn't leave a Will, the Next-of-Kin will need to act on behalf of the Estate, or an administrator will need to be appointed by the Supreme Court in the state or territory where the assets are held.

Please contact your local branch with the Death Certificate, and explain to them that no Will has been located. **Take a look at Step 2: Locating the Will.**

Should I close their accounts?

There are some things you need to check first. It's highly likely you'll need to make payments from your loved one's accounts after they've passed on. Things like Superannuation benefits, shares, tax refunds, lost superannuation benefit cheques in their name and so on. If an account is closed, it might need to be re-opened in the name of the deceased, this can be a lengthy and time consuming process. Keeping their accounts open also means that funds can be accepted into the Estate easily.

I have power of attorney over the deceased's accounts, does this still stand after their passing?

Unfortunately, no. All Power of Attorneys, Guardianships and authorised signatories cease once a person has passed away. Only the Next-of-Kin, or Executor/Administrator/Legal representative will be able to engage with us regarding your loved one's accounts after their passing.

When will I need probate or letters of administration?

Each Estate's individual circumstances are assessed by us, and in some cases, we need probate or Letters of Administration to be granted before we can release the funds. If this is the case, we'll let you know in writing.

Where do I get the death certificate?

You can usually get a death certificate from the Registry of Birth, Deaths and Marriages in your state or territory. **Take a look at Step 3: Funeral arrangements and registering the death.**

How long will it take for Estate funds held in bank accounts to be released?

Unfortunately we can't give you a time frame, each Estate is different, so the amount of time it takes to settle varies. However, the earlier you can get us the documentation we need, the sooner we'll be able to process everything. Take a look at Step 6. How St.George helps you.

Why do I need to be identified by St.George?

This is a legal requirement by the Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorism Act 2006, It states that all signatories must be identified if instructing a financial institution about a Deceased Estate's funds before any money can be released. **Take a look at Step 5: Identifying yourself.**

What do I do if St.George is still sending mail to someone who's passed away?

It's normal to receive a final statement for any transaction account once it's been finalised, showing a nil balance. Also, when accounts have a debit or small credit balance, you'll continue to receive statements until the balance is nil.

If you keep getting mail in our late customer's name beyond this point, please contact our Estates Management Team on **02 9767 1164**.

What is Safe Custody?

Safe Custody is the safe keeping of important documents and valuables. Items customers commonly ask to be held in safe custody by the bank include property deeds, a Will and other valuables and documents.

If you need access to a safety deposit box see the Will, you'll need at least one of the proof of death requirements (a Medical Certificate, Death Certificate, Funeral Bill, Solicitor's or Coroner's Letter, Grant of Probate, Letters of Administration or a Probate Bond). When you access the safety deposit box, two bankers will accompany you, and you won't be able to take the Will with you. A certified copy will be provided to you as long as you're named as an Executor, or you can prove that you're an authorised nominee of the Executor/s.

Checklist

Organisations	Reference/ Member number	Phone Number	Date posted/ person spoken to
Government			
Centrelink		300 132	
Medicare		011 132	
ATO		865 132	
Child Support services		272 131	
Veterans' Affairs		254 133	
Local Council			
Local Post Office			
Local Library			
Australian Electoral Commission		326 132	
Foreign pension authority (if unknown contact Centrelink's International Services)		673 131	

Organisations	Reference/ Member number	Phone Number	Date posted/ person spoken to
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Utilities & housing

Landlord, tenants			
Home Phone			
Mobile Phone			
Internet			
Gas			
Water			
Electricity			
Entertainment (Foxtel)			

Bank accounts

St.George		02 9767 1164	
Westpac		1300 130 240	
CBA			
ANZ			
NAB			
Other			

Credit / store cards

Loans

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Organisations	Reference/ Member number	Phone Number	Date posted/ person spoken to
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Superannuation

Policy 1			
Policy 2			

Other financial

Funeral Bonds			
Funeral insurance			
Shares			
Term Deposits			
Safety deposit box			

Insurances

Health Insurance			
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Home Insurance: If property is now empty, the provider will have certain requirements to continue the insurance.

Policy 1			
Policy 2			
Policy 3			

Car Insurance: If insured under the deceased's policy, you will no longer be legally covered to drive.

Policy 1			
Policy 2			

Life Insurance: This may be within superannuation policies or a stand-alone policy.

Policy 1			
Policy 2			

Organisations	Reference/ Member number	Phone Number	Date posted/ person spoken to
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Insurances cont

Income protection			
Trauma/TPD			
Landlord insurance			
Business Insurance			
Credit card insurance			

Others

Religious adviser/leader			
Clubs (e.g. RSL, Gym)			
Employers/ Past Employers			
Travel tickets/ smart cards			
ADMA - removing deceased's name from mailing lists		ADMA GPO Box 3895 Sydney NSW 2001	
Motor Vehicle Registration			

Health professionals: (e.g. doctor, physiotherapist, dentist, podiatrist, optometrist).

Glossary

Administrator

Person or persons legally authorised by Letters of Administration to administer the Estate when there is no Will or when there is a problem with the Executor named in the Will.

Beneficiary

A person who is left something in a Will, or a person for whose benefit property is held by Trustees or Executor/s.

Certificate of Balance

List of accounts held by the Deceased containing balances and accrued (but unpaid) interest amounts as at date of death.

Certificate of Death

An official certified copy of the information registered when someone passes away, including the date, place and cause of death.

Deceased Estate Or Estate

The property and assets belonging to a person who has died is called their Deceased Estate. The Deceased Estate is held in trust from the death of the person until the transfer of the property and assets to the beneficiaries.

Executor

Person or persons nominated in a Will to administer the Estate on behalf of beneficiaries of the Deceased. The Executor administers the Will. They are responsible for locating the Will and following the Will's instructions for funeral requirements, collecting all assets, finalising outstanding liabilities and distributing the assets in accordance with the Deceased person's instructions. An Executrix is the name used for a female Executor.

Funeral Bond

A Funeral Bond allows you to set aside an amount of money to cover your funeral expenses and, if you wish, specify how your funeral is to be conducted. If the customer had a Funeral Bond, be sure to contact the provider.

Intestate

When a person passes away without a valid Will they are said to die 'intestate'.

Letters of Administration

Letters of Administration refers to a certificate issued by the Supreme Court that authorises a person to act as an Administrator when there is no Will or when there is a problem with the Executor named in the Will.

Power of Attorney

A Power of Attorney is a formal instruction whereby a person (who is called the Donor) appoints another person (called the Attorney) to act on their behalf. Power of Attorney ends with the death of the Donor.

Probate

Order granted by State Supreme Courts confirming the identified Will is the true and last Will of the Deceased, and declaring the Executor/s are lawfully entitled to finalise any Deceased Estate matter within the state the Probate is granted only. Probate is usually required when there is a large sum of money or assets involved and particularly when there are multiple beneficiaries.

Tax Invoice

A tax invoice is an original invoice as identified by Australian GST taxation legislation. The requirements vary depending on the total taxable sales but items the invoice must include are: the words 'tax invoice' stated prominently; the name of the supplier; the ABN of the supplier; the date of issue of the tax invoice; the brief description of the service provided; and the total price invoiced (including GST).

Tax Receipt

A tax receipt must include the same information listed under tax invoice above, and be presented in the form of a receipt or, alternatively, an invoice which has been stamped and dated as 'Paid'.

Testamentary Trust

A Testamentary Trust is a trust established by a Will. It does not come into effect until after the death of the person making the Will. At this point, specified Deceased Estate property is transferred to a Trustee who holds the assets in trust for the beneficiaries. A Testamentary Trust is not the same trust as the Deceased Estate. A Testamentary Trust may last for many years after the Estate has been fully administered. The information provided within this document does not apply to Testamentary Trusts. Additional information about Testamentary Trusts can be found on the Australian Taxation Office website at ato.gov.au

Will

A Will is a legal document that contains information on who receives assets and belongings after a death. A Will can also be used to appoint a guardian to look after children until they are old enough to look after themselves.

Contacts

Need to contact our support team?

You can call the Estates Management Team on **02 9767 1164**, Monday to Friday 9:00am – 5pm (Sydney time).

If you are calling from overseas, call **+61 2 9767 1164**.

The Estates Management Team can help you consolidate any other banking matters you may have across our Westpac Group: St. George Bank, Westpac Bank, Bank of South Australia, Bank of Melbourne, BT Financial Group, RAMS, Capital Finance Australia Limited and Westpac General Insurance.

Email: **Estatesmanagement@stgeorge.com.au**

Mail: St. George Bank
Estates Management IBN 77
GPO Box 3433
Sydney NSW 2001

Visit **stgeorge.com.au/bereavement** for more information.



Things you should know: This document has been prepared by St.George – A Division of Westpac Banking Corporation ABN 33 007 457 141 AFSL and Australian credit licence 233714. It provides an overview or summary only and it should not be considered a comprehensive statement on any matter or relied upon as such. Any tax considerations outlined in this document are general statements, based on an interpretation of the current tax law, and do not constitute tax advice. This document may contain material provided by third parties derived from sources believed to be accurate at its issue date. While such material is published with necessary permission, no company in the Westpac Group accepts any responsibility for the accuracy or completeness of, or endorses any such material. Except where contrary to law, we intend by this notice to exclude liability for this material. Information current as at May 2018. St.George Bank – A Division of Westpac Banking Corporation ABN 33 007 457 141 AFSL and Australian credit licence 233714. ST90439 1018