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## ***Stage 1 – Getting Your Financial House In Order***

- **Reach Out** - Contact trusted advisors such as your wealth manager/financial advisor, estate planning attorney, and accountant to notify them of your loved one's passing and setup meetings, as appropriate.
- **Important Documents** - Check safe deposit boxes and/or important files for special instructions/messages and order Certified Death Certificates through the funeral home (approximately 10-20).
- **Cash Flow** - Evaluate your short-term cash flow needs to ensure you have sufficient cash on hand for expenses coming due within the next few months.
- **File for Benefits** – Alert Social Security and apply for Survivor's Lump-Sum Benefit (go to local office or call 1-800-772-1213) and file for any survivor pension benefits.
- **Real Estate Taxes** – Apply for any eligible real estate exemptions/freezes as these typically need to be applied for and renewed annually.
- **Life Insurance** – Review life insurance death benefits and make sure to discuss with your wealth manager/financial advisor before filing for benefits to ensure no disclaimers are appropriate.
- **Health Insurance** – Verify your health care insurance coverage.
- **Asset Review** – Gather recent statements, documents and information to prepare for the meetings with your trusted advisors such as:
  - Bank statements
  - Brokerage & Retirement Account statements
  - Benefits & Insurance information
  - Beneficiary designations for IRA accounts, retirement accounts, college accounts, TOD (transfer of death) or POD (payable on death), annuities, and insurance policies
  - Property deeds/titles for real estate, cars, etc.
  - Tax returns
  - Estate planning documents (wills, trusts, powers of attorney)
  - Business owners: Copies of buy-sell agreements, business succession plan, bylaws and articles of incorporation
- **Credit Agencies** – Notify the credit agencies (Experian, TransUnion, and Equifax) so they can add a flag to Protect against identity theft and fraud.
- **Estate Settlement** – Work with your trusted advisors to settle the estate.

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## *Stage 2 – Redefining Your Plan*

- **Pre or Post Retirement Considerations & House Decisions** – Review how your income and assets line up with your expenses and retirement goals and needs. Consider how this may impact decisions on your home.
- **Investments** – Review your investment portfolio and get educated on your asset allocation to ensure it is positioned appropriately for your risk tolerance and needs.
- **Tax Planning** – Review your tax situation to understand where you are from a tax perspective and any potential tax saving or planning opportunities.
- **Insurance Planning** – Review your tax situation to understand where you are from a tax perspective and any potential tax saving or planning opportunities.
- **Basic Estate Planning** – Review your current estate planning documents and update beneficiary designations as appropriate. If you do not have any documents, meet with an attorney to create basic documents.

## *Stage 3 – Progressive Planning*

- **Advanced Estate Planning & Charitable Planning** – Revisit your estate plan and make sure it captures your wishes including any charitable giving.
- **Special Family Considerations** – Work with your trusted advisors when thinking about helping your family such as setting up an education fund for grandchildren.
- **Independence & Grace** – Continue to find purpose and fulfillment in your own independence and rely on your trusted advisor as a sounding board and thinking partner.

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