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Avalon

FUNERALS™

Reach for the Helping Hand

WHAT TO DO WHEN A DEATH OCCURS

Dear Reader

This information has been compiled to assist you with the practical and logistical arrangements during the difficult event of a death. As most cases occur in health care facilities such as hospitals, retirement homes or care units, staff on duty should be notified in advance of the family's personal needs when the time comes. If a death occurs at home, the person's family doctor must be notified immediately. If the death occurs untimely, unforeseen or in suspicious circumstances, the local police must also be notified immediately.

STEP ONE

- Give instructions, contact numbers and names of who to call to the care facility staff with admission.
- If at home contact family doctor and Emergency Services such as VR Med, or police if necessary, to confirm the death if at home through on-site declaration.
- Contact Avalon Funeral Services with the following information:
 - Deceased's full names and surname;
 - Where did your loved one pass? Is he / she still there?
 - Who are the next of kin and what are their contact details?
 - Your name and contact details if you are not the next of kin.

We then arrange immediately to bring the deceased to the safety of our care.

STEP TWO

Registration at Home Affairs and Family consultation

- Confirm a time and place for us to visit you and obtain the necessary signatures. We then attend to the registration on your behalf and supply all certificates including certified copies.

For the registration we'll require your Beloved's:

- ID Document
- Residential address
- Highest qualification
- Marital status and spouse's details
- Date and place of birth
- Citizenship
- Occupation during lifetime



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Official Documentation at the time of passing.

When a loved one passes away, families are often presented with several official documents and unfamiliar terminology.

Understanding the difference between a **Death Declaration**, a **Notice of Death (DHA-1663A)**, and a **Death Certificate (DHA-5)** can help ease uncertainty during an already difficult time.

The first document issued is typically the **Death Declaration** at the place of passing. This is completed by the ambulance medical professionals called out, GP or professional nurse who examines the deceased and confirms that death has occurred. This declaration allows the funeral director to lawfully remove the deceased from place of passing and commence with registration and funeral arrangements.

The second document is the **Notice of Death (DHA-1663A)**. This statutory Department of Home Affairs form records the personal details of the deceased and the medical cause of death. Various sections are completed by the medical practitioner, the informant (usually a family member), the funeral undertaker, and, where applicable, a forensic pathologist. The completed form is submitted to the Department of Home Affairs to officially register the death. No death certificate can be issued until this process has been completed.

The final document is the **Death Certificate (DHA-5)**. Once Home Affairs has registered the death, it issues the official Death Certificate. This document serves as the legal proof of death and is required for estate administration, life insurance claims, pension benefits, bank accounts, and other legal matters.

In simple terms: The **Death Declaration** confirms that death has occurred, the **Notice of Death (DHA-1663A)** registers the death, and the **DHA-5 Death Certificate** legally certifies it.

Quick Reference Table:

Document - Issued by - When Issued - Purpose

- **Death Declaration** - Doctor, Professional Nurse, or Forensic Pathologist - Immediately after death is confirmed - Medical confirmation that death has occurred.
- **Notice of Death (DHA-1663A)** - Medical practitioner - Before registration at Home Affairs – Official registration of the death with Home Affairs to issue Death Certificate.
- **Death Certificate (DHA-5)** Department of Home Affairs - After registration of death - Legal proof of death for estates, insurance, banking, and other legal processes.

South African law requires that every death be reported and registered through the Department of Home Affairs before a death certificate can be issued. We as your Funeral Directors guide you through this entire process, ensuring that all documentation is correctly completed and provided.

Always at your service.

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