



Thinking of you . . .

Keep these things in mind

Your recent loss is, of course, a very personal family matter. However, CalRTA understands there are still important matters with which you must deal. We hope these suggestions may help.

Contact CalSTRS promptly!

Notify the California State Teachers' Retirement System (CalSTRS) as soon as possible to report a member's death. *Failure to do this could result in serious financial complications.*

They will need the following:

- The deceased person's name and social security number.
- The date of death.
- The person's status just preceding death: retired, teaching, disabled option beneficiary, or other payee.
- A certified copy of the death certificate*.
- Name, address, and phone number of the contact person.

A Beneficiary Application Packet will be sent to the contact person within five days of CalSTRS getting notification of death.

The CalSTRS form should be returned as soon as possible *along with any checks issued to the person after the date of death.*

A standard of 45 day's processing is required, although some applications take longer. Recent law mandates that payment be made within six months.

Contact CalSTRS at:

P.O. Box 15275-C
Sacramento CA 95951
Phone: (916) 229-3870
or toll-free (800) 228-5453.
Online: calstrs.com/reporting-a-death



* CalSTRS will not take photocopies of death certificates. Please send an original or certified copy.

Survivor's Checklist Suggestions

Every survivor must begin the healing process eventually. This brief checklist can aid that process by dealing with duties over a suggested time frame.

Immediately

- ◆ Notify relatives and friends.
Send obituary notice to newspaper (most charge for obituaries these days), and other sources.

Death Benefit Payment

The +/- \$6,900+ CalSTRS benefit payment, payable to the family upon the death of a retiree **IS NOT AUTOMATIC.**

It must be requested by the beneficiary or executor, who should notify CalSTRS immediately by letter or phone, and request that the proper form be sent.

This benefit may be taxable in some states!

- ◆ Determine the type of service preferred by the deceased. Make arrangements. Is there burial insurance or a pre-paid policy?
- ◆ Certified death certificates are needed – get 20.
- ◆ Call CalSTRS to report death. (See related item elsewhere.) Stop any other income such as Social Security. This is important to avoid possible penalties.
- ◆ Inventory safety deposit box, personal records, and papers of deceased.

Within 30 Days

- ◆ Change joint tenancy accounts to your name.
- ◆ Locate documents: wills, insurance, real estate deeds, letters of instruction, etc.
- ◆ Notify the deceased's state's inheritance tax office to get their release of insurance and benefits. *NOTE: CALIF HAS NONE.*
- ◆ File claims with: insurance, IRS's 403B (tsa's), investment companies, etc.
- ◆ Select an attorney and/or tax advisor to review the will. Discuss taxes owed to state and IRS.

Within 60 Days

- ◆ Inventory personal effects and arrange for disposal with family, friends, charity . . . maybe an estate sale?
- ◆ Transfer title on jointly held: autos, credit cards, real estate, joint bank accounts, etc.
- ◆ Return disabled license plate and/or placard to DMV.
- ◆ Change name on listings: utilities, phone, etc.

Within Six Months

- ◆ Monitor the executor and probate process. If you are the trustee, make an inventory checklist. You may also want an attorney.
- ◆ Examine your personal finances: income, budget, savings, credit, investments, and all insurance. Select a financial advisor, if needed.
- ◆ Update your will.
- ◆ File this sheet with other important papers.