



REBUILDING YOUR LIFE AFTER SOMEONE YOU LOVE HAS DIED

Bereavement can be about loss, but it is also often about change. Losing someone we love can be a life altering experience for a variety of reasons.

During this time of upheaval and disorganization I encourage bereaved persons and those who love them to take advantage of community resources for support. Communities usually have a wide variety of organizations and services that may provide temporary assistance during life transitions and beyond. However, for those who are grieving, the idea of seeking out these resources can be overwhelming and many people simply have no idea where to begin.

Perhaps you find that with your spouse gone you must now find alternate transportation. Maybe you are now caring for a widowed parent and facing the myriad of decisions around healthcare, assisted living or disability services. What follows is a listing of resources and information that provides an excellent starting place to get help with a variety of concerns.

ASSISTED LIVING

Dealing with the process of transitioning to assisted living is stressful under the best of circumstances. When you are grieving and facing the loss of your home and independence, it is even harder to wade through the paperwork and bureaucracy of the process. The State of Oregon has a service called the Office of Long Term Care Ombudsman. This organization can assist you with the process of choosing a long term care facility or filing a complaint. It provides information on many facilities including licensing surveys, protective services investigations and sanctions that may have been placed against a facility. They can be reached at **800.522.2602**.

FINANCIAL ISSUES

There are a variety of organizations that assist with everything from taxes to cleaning up financial records. A great place to start is your local Senior Center. Most Senior Centers have professionals available by appointment to

review finances or to assist with taxes, questions about financial planning, and information on financial assistance programs.

LEGAL ISSUES

Senior Centers also usually have Legal assistance available by appointment. Another resource is your local Legal Aid office. The Oregon State Bar also has a lawyer referral program available at **800.452.7636**. Although there can be a bit of a wait, these organizations usually offer low or no cost services to seniors.





SIGNATURE healthcare
at home

care where you are

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If in reviewing this information you feel overwhelmed, ask a friend or family member to look at this with you. We can help you access these resources, or meet with you or your family to talk about some of the needs you may have. You may have to make changes but you don't have to make them alone!

DISABILITY AND SENIOR SERVICES

The best place to begin looking for senior disability services is your local Area Agency on Aging. The AAA provides a central location for a wide variety of senior and disabled resources including home health care, transportation, independent living resources, meals on wheels and other services. An excellent resource is the website: networkofcare.org. This is a great website that breaks down available services by state and county. If you are not comfortable with the internet, ask a friend or family member to look for you.

DEALING WITH GOVERNMENTAL RED TAPE

can be overwhelming. Below are some useful suggestions for dealing with large bureaucratic organizations.

- At Veterans Affairs, an excellent starting place is the Advocacy office. Usually you can find this by calling the main number and requesting the Advocates Office. For Social Security, it may be beneficial to try and reach your local office, and then work with the same person every time you call.
- Accept that you will probably have to do the footwork of communicating between agency offices. Keep a record of all phone calls including the number called, the date and time of the call, the person you spoke with, and the content of the conversation.

- Take advantage of online services as much as possible. If you are not comfortable with the internet, get a friend or family member to help you.
- Be prepared to present multiple copies of important documents. In some cases such as death, birth and marriage certificates, you are often required to present original or certified copies. Send important items by certified mail.
- Contact information for all of these resources is readily available either online or through your local phone book.

Portland/Salem and Surrounding Areas:

P 800.936.4756 (Toll Free)

Eugene:

P 866.306.4279 (Toll Free)

info@4signatureservice.com

Patient services are provided without regard to race, color, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability (mental or physical), communicable disease, place of national origin or military status. For more information, please contact Signature at 800.936.4756