

- Be careful with sensitive information. Shred any important documents that need to be recycled, keep phone conversations private, don't give sensitive information out in e-mail (no legitimate company will ask for sensitive information via e-mail), don't leave important documents in the open, and be cautious about who has the Deceased's information.
- Include minimal information in the obituary. Giving out too much information, including birth date, can make it easier for thieves to impersonate the Deceased.
- Notify the Social Security Administration, creditors and credit bureaus of the death.
- Be careful online. Don't fall for classic schemes in e-mails or in advertisements on some web pages. Don't open e-mail attachments unless you know what it is, and try to restrict how much of the Deceased's information you give online.
- Keep mail safe. If the Deceased's residence is unoccupied, have their mail held at the post office or make sure to retrieve it each day. Credit card offers, pre-approved loan offers, and other mail could be used to steal the Deceased's identity if left unattended.
- Check the Deceased's credit report. This will help catch any unauthorized activity.
- Destroy identification and unnecessary documents. If you choose to dispose of the Deceased's identification and other sensitive materials, make sure to destroy them, not just throw them out or recycle them. It's common for families to leave documents in the recycling bin when going through belongings; make sure they are shredded. If you plan to keep them, store them safely.
- Properly dispose of the Deceased's computer. If you plan to get rid of the Deceased's computer, make sure to destroy the hard drive first because hard drives are never fully erased. If you're gifting the computer, it's better to destroy the current hard drive and replace it with a new one.