2025 · WHAT ISSUES SHOULD I CONSIDER IF MY PARENT PASSED AWAY?



CASH FLOW ISSUES	YES	NO
 Was your parent married when they passed away? If so, consider the following: If your parent was receiving Social Security benefits, their surviving spouse may be eligible for survivor benefits. If the surviving spouse is receiving a government pension based on earnings that were never subjected to Social Security taxes, they may be subject to the Government Pension Offset. 		
Did your parent reach their Required Beginning Date, or were they taking an RMD (from an inherited IRA) at the time of their death? If so, the beneficiary(ies) must satisfy any remaining RMD amount on behalf of your parent before the end of the year.		
Was your parent receiving a pension? If so, payments may stop or, if your parent was married, be adjusted for survivor benefits.		
ESTATE SETTLEMENT ISSUES	YES	NO
Do any accounts or other assets require ownership to be updated?		

ESTATE SETTLEMENT ISSUES (CONTINUED)	YES	NO
If your parent was married, to maintain portability of unused exemption, the estate must file IRS Form 706 (even if a 706 is not otherwise required). If a 706 is filed only to elect portability, it is due within five years of the date of death.		
If there is an estate tax liability, was the total value of the estate on the date of death greater than the value at six months after the date of death? If so, you may elect on Form 706 to use the alternate valuation date to reduce estate taxes, valuing all assets as of six months after the date of death (unless sold within that period).		
 Could there be property and assets not yet identified? If so, consider the following: Look at the "points" feature on credit cards and "miles" with airlines to see if they are transferable. Check for safe deposit boxes but be sure to follow probate rules before opening. 		
 Search state agencies and unclaimed property sites that are run by many state treasurers. 		
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by many state treasurers. Do you expect to inherit any assets from your parent or was your parent included in your own estate plan? If so, consider updating your own estate plan. Are there digital assets that should be preserved?		

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INSURANCE ISSUES (CONTINUED)	YES	NO
Some life insurance policies have an "accidental death" provision for higher benefits.		
Was your parent a veteran? If so, there may be death and burial benefits, a survivor pension, and/or other benefits.		
Did your parent have a child under age 18 or a child permanently disabled? If so, your parent's spouse and/or the child may be eligible for Social Security benefits.		
Could there be any life insurance owned by your parent or insuring the life of your parent that has not been identified or claimed?		
TAVICCUE	VEC	NO
TAX ISSUES	YES	NO
Did your parent own a home and were they survived by a spouse? If so, the surviving spouse may still qualify for the \$500,000 capital gains housing exclusion if the home is sold within two years of your parent's death, and other conditions are met.		
Did your parent own other property jointly, such as an investment account? If so, the joint owner may receive a step-up in basis for assets passing from your parent. Reference "Will I Receive A Step-Up In Basis For The Appreciated Property I Inherited?" flowchart.		
Do you need to confirm that all of your parent's prior income taxes have been paid? If so, contact the IRS and the state taxing authorities to check if any back taxes are due and make any necessary payments.		
Did your parent file as Married Filing Jointly? If so, the surviving spouse can continue to file as MFJ in the year your parent passed away.		
Was your parent married and did they have a dependent child? If so, your parent's spouse may be able to use the Qualifying Widow(er) tax filing status for the two tax years following the year your parent passed away.		

INVESTMENT & ASSET ISSUES	YES	NO
 Did your parent have stock options, grants, or restricted stock units? If so, consider the following: Check employer plan documents to understand how these assets are treated after your parent's death. Beneficiaries should be aware of potential tax ramifications of accelerated stock vesting. 		
Has the change in circumstances altered investment objectives or risk tolerance for family members inheriting assets?		
Was your parent married and did they have carryforward investment losses? If so, consider having the surviving spouse realize investment gains in the year of death. Your parent's carryforwards can be used on their final tax return, but will be lost thereafter.		
 Did your parent own an annuity? If so, consider the following: Your parent's spouse (if applicable) may be able to inherit a non-qualified annuity as their own if they were listed as beneficiary on the policy. A non-spouse beneficiary will have to take required distributions from a non-qualified annuity. Non-qualified annuities do not receive a step-up in basis, so be aware of potential tax ramifications with distributions. 		
OTHER ISSUES	YES	NO
> Do you need to reduce the threat of identity theft? If so, cancel your parent's email accounts, social media accounts, and driver's license, and notify credit bureaus, the election board, etc.		
Are there any state-specific issues that should be considered (including out-of-state property or estate tax liability)?		



Please note that the tax planning services provided by Caveness Investment Advisory, LLC are intended to offer general information on tax strategies and savings opportunities. The information provided should not be considered as personalized tax or legal advice, nor as a recommendation for any specific action.

Tax laws and regulations are complex and subject to change. Caveness Investment Advisory, LLC does not provide tax advice. We strongly advise clients to consult with a certified public accountant (CPA), tax attorney, or qualified tax advisor before making any tax-related decisions.

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