

Funeral Arrangement Checklist

A Step-By-Step Checklist For Christian, Catholic And Freethinker Families In Singapore

Arranging a funeral involves dozens of small decisions, often within the space of a day or two. This checklist lays them out in the order most families face them — from the first call through to the administrative tasks that follow weeks later — so nothing gets missed and your family always knows what comes next.

1. Contact Your Funeral Director First

The first call worth making, alongside registering the death, is to your funeral director. From this point on, we coordinate the venue, transport, documentation, and every vendor involved on your family's behalf, so the rest of this checklist becomes something we work through together rather than something your family has to manage alone.

All we need from you at this stage is a little information — your loved one's full name, age, where they passed, and their faith or preference. We take it from there.

2. Within The First 24 Hours

- Confirm where the certification of death will be issued — the attending hospital, doctor, or the Institute of Science and Health (formerly HSA) if the death occurred at home unexpectedly
- Contact your funeral director to arrange transfer of your loved one to the wake venue or a holding facility
- Inform your immediate family and closest relatives
- Begin deciding on a wake venue and rough timeline together with your funeral director

3. Documents And Information To Gather

- Your loved one's NRIC or passport
- The certificate of death, issued by the hospital or doctor
- Your own NRIC, as the next-of-kin registering the death
- Details of any pre-arranged funeral plan, insurance policy, or CPF nomination, if known
- Contact details for immediate family who should be informed of the arrangements

4. Choosing The Type Of Service

Whether your family is planning a Christian, Catholic, or freethinker service, the shape of the wake and funeral day will follow a different rhythm. Ask your funeral director for our dedicated planning guide for your family's specific service type — it covers the order of service, readings, and customs in full detail alongside this checklist.

5. Choosing A Wake Venue

- HDB void deck — affordable, with your funeral director handling the tentage permit and setup
- Funeral parlour — private and air-conditioned, suited to longer wakes or larger gatherings

- Church or parish hall — an option for families closely tied to a particular congregation
- At home — possible for landed properties

6. Confirming The Order Of Service

- Decide whether a pastor, priest, or celebrant will lead the service, and confirm their availability
- Choose readings, hymns, or music for the service
- Decide who will deliver the eulogy, and let them know early so they have time to prepare
- Confirm whether a printed order of service booklet is needed, and how many copies

7. Wake Day-By-Day Checklist

Day	What Typically Happens
1	Wake venue set up: casket placed, photo or altar arranged, floral tributes positioned
2	Visitation begins — family receives guests and condolences
3	Eulogies and tributes shared, whether on a specific evening or the final day
4	Funeral day service held, followed by the procession to the crematorium or cemetery

8. Funeral Day Checklist

- Confirm the service start time with your officiant or celebrant the day before
- Arrange transport for close family travelling with the procession
- Bring any personal items your family wishes to place with your loved one, if not already arranged
- Confirm who will give final remarks or close the service
- Confirm collection arrangements for ashes, if cremation was chosen

9. After The Funeral: Administrative Tasks

Once the funeral itself is complete, a number of practical matters usually follow in the weeks after — there's no need to rush through these, but it helps to have them in view:

- Notify banks, and arrange for joint or individual accounts to be updated or closed
- Submit any life or funeral insurance claims, with the certificate of death as supporting documentation
- Check with CPF Board on any nomination payouts due to beneficiaries
- Cancel or transfer utilities, phone lines, and subscriptions in your loved one's name
- Inform the employer or relevant government agencies if your loved one was still working
- Consider whether probate or Letters of Administration will be needed to settle the estate

10. Who Else To Inform

- Extended family and close friends outside the immediate household

- Your loved one's workplace or employer, if they were still working
- Any community groups, clubs, or congregations they were part of, who may wish to pay respects
- Consider a short obituary notice in the newspaper or online, if your family would like one — your funeral director can advise on placing this

11. Common Questions Families Ask

How soon after passing must the funeral take place?

There's no fixed legal timeframe in Singapore, but wakes are typically held within a few days for practical reasons. If relatives need time to travel from overseas, your funeral director can arrange for your loved one to be kept at a holding facility while the family finalises the timeline.

What if we haven't decided between cremation and burial yet?

This decision doesn't need to be made in the first conversation. Your funeral director can advise on when it needs to be finalised so the rest of the arrangements can proceed in the meantime.

Can the wake be extended if family are still travelling?

In most cases, yes, with enough notice to the venue. Let your funeral director know as early as possible so the extension can be arranged smoothly.

12. A Complete Checklist At A Glance

- Contact your funeral director — they will coordinate the rest on your behalf
- Confirm where the certificate of death will be issued
- Gather NRIC, death certificate, and any insurance or CPF details
- Choose the type of service and ask for the matching planning guide
- Choose a wake venue and confirm dates
- Confirm the officiant or celebrant, readings, music, and who will deliver the eulogy
- Walk through the wake and funeral day schedule with your funeral director
- Set aside time in the weeks after for the administrative tasks above

One director will walk alongside your family through every item on this checklist, so you never have to wonder what comes next.

Call us any time: [+65 9169 1859](tel:+6591691859)