Losing a Loved One

Closing your loved one's accounts at Heritage Bank

Heritage Bank
People first.

Effective: June 2026

We're here to help

If you've recently lost a family member or friend, we understand that this can be an emotional time. That's why we want to make it as easy as possible for you to go through the process of finalising their accounts.

This brochure will provide some guidance and support you through the steps that need to be taken to finalise your loved one's accounts.

The information contained in this brochure is a guide only. Requirements may vary depending on the individual circumstances of the estate and the type of accounts that your loved one held with us.

If you would like someone to talk through the process with you, or if you have any questions, feel free to call us on 13 14 22.

What you need to do

Step 1 – Notify us

You can notify us and other organisations that your loved one has passed, by using the Australian Government's Australian Death Notification Service. For more information visit deathnotification.gov.au

Alternatively, you can notify us directly via phone call, face-to-face or email as soon as possible. You don't need to provide anything at this time, and our staff can assist with information on what you may need to provide at a later date.

Once we have this information, the deceased's accounts will be frozen. We can however attend to the payment of funeral expenses if there is a sufficient balance. Refer to the Related Matters section on page 2 for more information about funeral expenses.

Step 2 – Provide the necessary documents and information to us

Once you have notified us that a loved one has passed away, the next step is to collect a range of information and documents that we need to finalise their accounts. We have outlined the documents we need to receive in the Document Checklist on page 2 of this brochure.

You will also be required to provide the original or certified copy* of the death certificate, if you haven't done so already.

A list of our required estate documentation is available in Heritage Bank branches, or at heritage.com.au/deceasedestates

When you are sending us these documents, please also provide any other details about the estate that may be helpful. For example, Heritage Bank account numbers you believe the deceased person held.

Carefully check the contents of what you send us. If documents are missing or not fully completed,this can delay the processing of the estate.

** See the glossary of terms on page 3 for more information about what this term means.*

Step 3 – Heritage Bank reviews the estate

Once we receive all the documentation, our Deceased Estates team will review the accounts your loved one held at Heritage Bank when they passed away.

The documents provided enable us to make an informed decision about each individual estate. In some cases, we may require additional information or documentation before we can release the funds and settle the accounts.

Step 4 – Complete any additional requirements

If we determine that there are additional requirements or documentation needed to finalise the estate, we will let you know in writing.

If the total value of the estate is greater than $50,000, we will require a Grant of Probate* or Letters of Administration* to release funds. If the value of the estate is less than $50,000, we may be able to release funds without it. However, even when the value is less than $50,000, there are some circumstances in which we will still require a Grant of Probate or Letters of Administration.

** See the glossary of terms on page 3 for more information about what this term means.*

Step 5 – Release the funds

Once all the requirements for the estate have been met, we can release funds held in the Heritage Bank accounts.

We will also send a final letter advising that this has been completed, together with a final statement of the accounts for tax purposes.

If you are presenting documents such as a will or death certificate, to us in a branch, you can provide originals and our staff will take a copy and certify them on the spot.

If you are posting in photocopies of documents to us, you will need to have them certified prior to posting them.

Document Checklist

Essential documents that MUST be completed/supplied:

- ☐ **Death Certificate** - Original or certified copy*.
- ☐ **Will** - Original or certified copy if a will exists. Please do not mark or fold the original will as this may affect its validity.
- ☐ **Deceased Estate Payment Instructions and Authority form**

If you are NOT applying for Grant of Probate or Letters of Administration, you will also need to complete the:

- ☐ **Deceased Estate Claim for Assets – Declaration and Indemnity form**

Documents that may also need to be completed/supplied:

- ☐ **Addition of Party Form** - Only needs to be completed by you and/or the executor/ administrators if Heritage Bank has not previously identified you and/or the executor/ administrators on this account. This will need to be accompanied with current original or certified identification.
- ☐ **Letters of Administration** - May be required if there is no valid will. Once we review the estate we will advise if this is required.
- ☐ **Grant of Probate** - May be required depending on the assets of the estate. Once we review the estate, we will advise if this is required.

All forms are available in Heritage Bank branches or at heritage.com.au/deceasedestates. These requirements are a guide only and may change depending on the estate.

Related Matters

You also need to consider a number of other issues in finalising the affairs of your loved one. Please find below information about a number of these common matters.

Funeral expenses

We can release funds from the deceased person's accounts to pay for funeral expenses if there is a sufficient balance. You can arrange this in two ways:

- If you have not paid the funeral expenses, provide an original or certified copy* of the funeral invoice and we will pay the funeral director.
- If you have already paid the funeral expenses, provide a receipt of the payment (an original or certified copy) together with the invoice (an original or certified copy) and we will reimburse you for these expenses.

You can provide these documents to your local branch, or post them to the address outlined in this brochure.

** See the glossary of terms on page 3 for more information about what this term means.*

Providing identification

Heritage Bank requires you and all executors or administrators of an estate to be identified. We need them to provide sufficient identification to satisfy legislative requirements.

They can do this at a Heritage Bank branch by providing identification in person or by returning certified identification.

To confirm what identification will be required, review our Membership Opening ID Requirements available at heritage.com.au/ID or call us on 13 14 22.

Account freeze

Individual accounts

Once we have been notified that an account holder has passed away, we will place a freeze on any accounts held solely in their name and not allow any further transactions after that date with the exception of direct credit payments. Regular bill payments will be cancelled. Other deposits can only be accepted on a case-by-case basis.

We will also cancel any authorities that allowed a third party's access to the account and no withdrawals can be made, except to pay funeral expenses.

Joint accounts

If the deceased person is an account holder of a joint savings or transaction account, the funds in the account generally will not form part of the deceased's estate and can continue to be operated by the other party. Where two signatures are required to operate the account, the account will revert to only requiring one signature.

Home loans and other lending

If the deceased person had a mortgage loan, personal loan, credit card or other lending with Heritage Bank, please phone our Customer Assist team who will assist you through the process. The team can be contacted during business hours on the details below.

Email: memberassist@heritage.com.au

Telephone: 1800 222 030

Heritage Bank Investment Bonds

If the deceased held any Heritage Bank Investment Bonds, please address those enquiries to Generation Life Limited.

Email: enquiry@genlife.com.au

Telephone: 1800 806 362

Frequently Asked Questions

We understand you may have many questions about this process. We have answered some of the most commonly asked questions below.

What if the deceased did not leave a will?
If your loved one did not leave a will, the next of kin or closest living relative normally has to complete the documentation needed to finalise the deceased's accounts with us.

Can the deceased's accounts be used before the release of funds?
Once we have received official notice that a customer has passed away, we place a freeze on all the accounts in their sole name (or on 'all to sign' joint accounts).

After that, no withdrawals can be made, except to pay funeral expenses. Deposits via direct credit payments into the account will continue to be accepted until the account is closed. Other deposits can only be accepted on a case-by-case basis.

What if I have Power of Attorney or am an authorised signatory on the accounts?
From the date we are notified of the account holder's death, all appointments of attorneys for the deceased, and authorities that allowed a third party's access to the deceased's accounts, will cease.

Does interest continue to accrue on the deceased's accounts until the release of funds?
Yes. Accounts that are interest-bearing will continue to accrue interest until the release of funds.

How long will it take to release any of the Estate's funds?
As each customer's circumstances are different, the time it takes to settle an Estate will vary.

Can the requirement for a Grant of Probate/ Letters of Administration be waived?

To protect the financial affairs of the deceased person and the beneficiaries of the estate, we do not have to release funds in the estate without a Grant of Probate/Letters of Administration being provided, regardless of the value of the estate.

We carefully review each individual estate. In some cases, we will require a Grant of Probate or Letters of Administration. If this is required, we are not able to waive this need under any circumstances.

Further Information

If you have any questions or require anything further, please feel free to call us on 13 14 22.

Any documents can be forwarded to:

Heritage Bank
Deceased Estates
PO Box 190
Toowoomba Qld 4350

LifeLine website call 13 11 14 OR Kids Helpline 1800 55 1800

Australian Centre for Grief and Bereavement call 1800 642 066

National Debt Helpline website or call 1800 007 007

More information held on our website.

Glossary of Terms

We understand that there are many terms and definitions that may be unfamiliar to you. Listed below are a few of the most common terms used when managing the affairs of a deceased person.

Administrator
An administrator is the party appointed by the Supreme Court as responsible for administering the deceased's estate in accordance with the will.

Beneficiary
A beneficiary is the person or entity entitled to receive benefits from a deceased person's estate.

Certified copy
A certified copy is a copy of an original document that has been certified by a prescribed person, based on State requirements, such as a Justice of the Peace, Commissioner for Declarations, a solicitor or a Heritage Bank officer.

Death Certificate
A certificate issued by the Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages, giving the date, place and cause of death along with other relevant information about the deceased person.

Deceased estate
A deceased estate consists of the property and assets of a person who has died. When a person has passed away, an appointed executor or administrator holds their estate in trust until the property and assets are transferred to the beneficiaries.

'Estate of' account
An 'Estate of' account is opened by the executor or administrator to receive funds owing to a deceased person's estate, after their death (e.g. a nursing home bond).

Executor
An executor is a person appointed in the will who holds the estate in trust. They are responsible for administering the deceased's estate in accordance with the will.

Grant of Probate
A Grant of Probate is a legal document issued by the Supreme Court which confirms the validity of the deceased's will. It grants the appointed executor the authority to act on behalf of the estate.

Intestate
Intestate means an individual has passed away without leaving a valid will.

Letters of Administration
Letters of Administration are granted in cases where the deceased person does not leave a valid will. Letters of Administration are evidence that the Supreme Court has granted authority to a person (called an administrator) to collect the deceased's assets and to administer the estate. Administration is usually granted to the next of kin.

Next of kin
Next of kin is usually the closest living relative of the deceased.

Will
A will is a legal document outlining the deceased's instructions for the distribution of their estate and appointing a party to carry out those wishes.

Find out more

- Drop into your nearest Heritage Bank branch
- Visit heritage.com.au
- Call 13 14 22
- Connect with us
  Facebook: facebook.com/heritage
  YouTube: youtube.com/HeritagePeopleFirst

Talk to us today.

Heritage Bank
People first.