



My Loved One Passed Away, How Can I Find Out If They Had Life Insurance?

When someone covered by life insurance dies, their beneficiary receives a death benefit from the insurance company. If you're the beneficiary of a policy, you should file a claim with the insurance company as soon as possible so that you may collect the benefit.

But if the insured dies before telling you where to find information about their life insurance, you may not know how to start a life insurance claim. Here are some helpful tips to find out if your loved one may have had a life insurance policy.

Most life insurance companies are legally required to search for beneficiaries once they become aware that a policy holder is deceased, but payouts are usually not issued automatically. In cases when the insurance company knows the insured has passed away but they are unable to identify or locate the beneficiaries, the company turns the death benefit over to the state as "unclaimed property."

Even if you're not able to verify whether your loved one had a policy, you can still use the life insurance policy search options listed here.

Life Insurance Search Tools

The National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC) and some state insurance departments offer free tools to help anyone search for unclaimed life insurance policies.

- **[Life Insurance Policy Locator Service](https://eapps.naic.org/life-policy-locator/#/welcome)** (<https://eapps.naic.org/life-policy-locator/#/welcome>): This search tool finds life insurance policies and annuities using information like your address, relationship to the deceased, and the deceased's Social Security number, then asks insurers nationwide to search their records for matching policies.
- **[MissingMoney.com](https://www.missingmoney.com/)** (<https://www.missingmoney.com/>): This site is endorsed by the National Association of Unclaimed Property Administrators (NAUPA) and allows you to search for unclaimed money by state using the search tool at [NAUPA](https://unclaimed.org/search/) (<https://unclaimed.org/search/>).

NAIC notes that it could take up to 90 business days for insurers to respond to a request. You will be contacted directly by the insurance company if you are a beneficiary or otherwise authorized to receive information about the missing policy.

Review Bank Statements

A bank statement is a good resource to see if any regular payments were being made to an insurance company that may offer life insurance. Review several monthly statements to identify any premium or dividend notices that were being directed automatically to a bank account.

Search Electronic Storage

Search computers, digital storage, or other external hard drives, to look for information about life policies the insured may have had.

The Death Master File

In some cases, an insurance company may let you know that you are a beneficiary of a life insurance policy. WEA Trust and many life insurance companies regularly compare records against Social Security Administration's records, to find deaths of policy holders.

If a life insurance company finds a life policy that's unclaimed it will contact any beneficiaries. However, it can take some time for insurers to complete this process, so it's always better to initiate a claim yourself.

Other Important Resources to Contact

If you're unsure whether your loved one had an existing life insurance policy, there are a few additional resources that you can contact or look for information.

- Financial advisors (accountant, attorney, financial planner, banker, etc.).
- Check safes, safety deposit boxes, or other personal files. If the policyholder stored documents in a safe deposit box at a bank, you may need to get a court order to prove that the insured has died and you have the right to access the safe deposit box, or you may need to present a death certificate to the bank. The executor of the deceased's estate may also be able to access the safe deposit box.
- Call former employers to see if the deceased had group life insurance coverage. Even if the deceased was retired it may be still be worth checking as some group life insurance plans can be continued beyond employment.

Check with former unions, veterans' groups, or other organizations, the deceased may have had memberships with.

Keep important insurance and financial information all together in one folder. This will help your loved ones in the event of your untimely death. This may include important documents like insurance policies, bank accounts, investments, wills, Powers of Attorney, living wills, trusts, and guardianship documents. Don't forget to regularly update the information and provide online accounts and passwords to your next of kin so they can easily access your information.

NOTES

Lined area for taking notes, consisting of multiple horizontal lines.



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