



Wespath

BENEFITS | INVESTMENTS

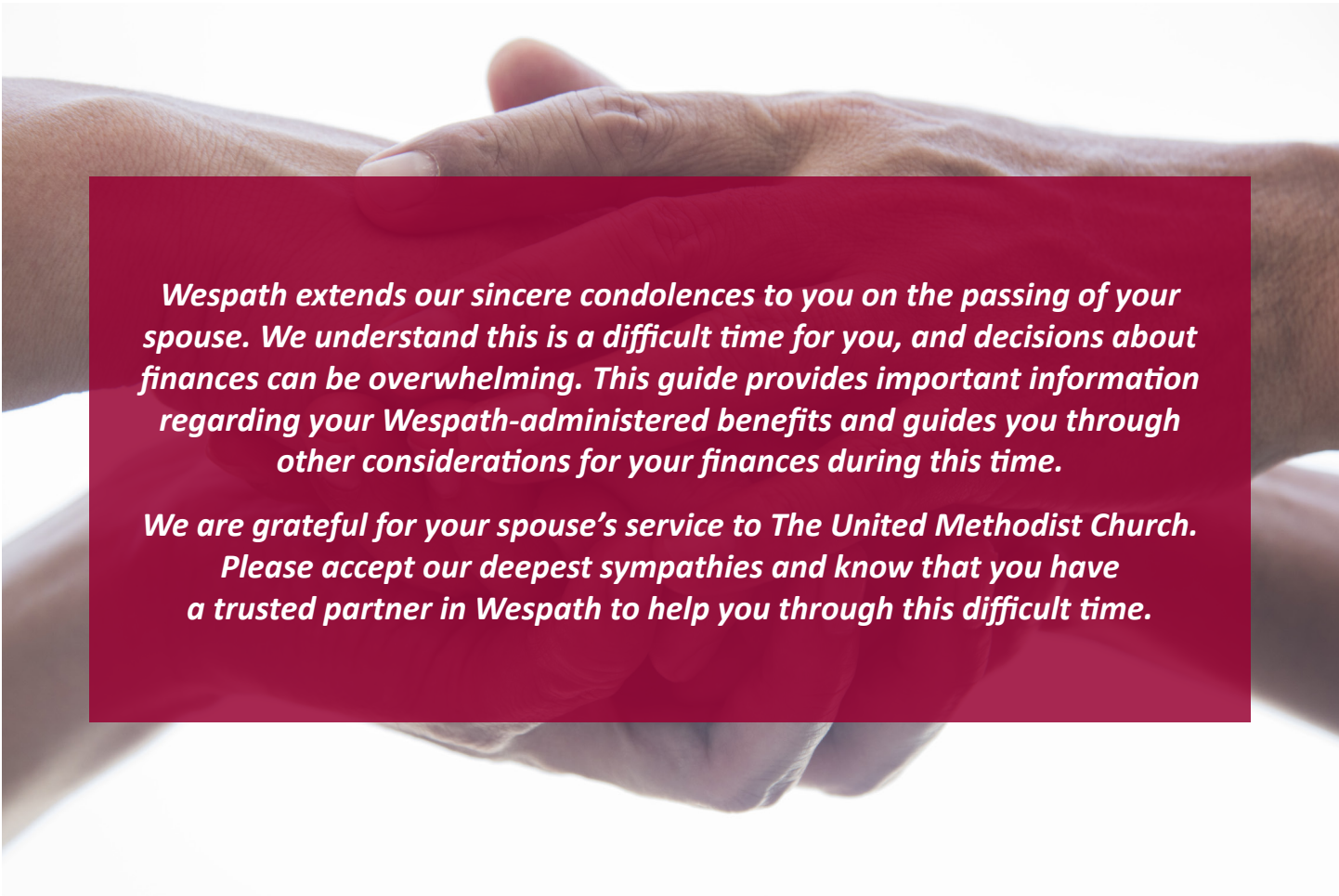
A Guide for Surviving Spouses





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Wespath extends our sincere condolences to you on the passing of your spouse. We understand this is a difficult time for you, and decisions about finances can be overwhelming. This guide provides important information regarding your Wespath-administered benefits and guides you through other considerations for your finances during this time.

We are grateful for your spouse's service to The United Methodist Church. Please accept our deepest sympathies and know that you have a trusted partner in Wespath to help you through this difficult time.

"I can do all this through him who gives me strength."

– Philippians 4:13

Resources and Contact Information

Wespath Customer Service: 1-800-851-2201

Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Central time

For questions about Wespath-administered benefits, please contact Customer Service. Specialized inquiries may be referred to our Survivor Benefits team which specializes in the payment of your Wespath survivor benefits. A member of this team may contact you regarding payment of benefits.

Wespath Health and Wellness Team: 1-800-851-2201,

Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Central time

Please call Wespath's Health and Wellness team if you have questions about your spouse's coverage in Wespath's HealthFlex medical, vision and dental plans.

EY Financial Planning Services: 1-800-360-2539

Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., Central time

Website: wespath.eynavigate.com

EY Financial Planning Services are available to eligible surviving spouses at no direct cost.* EY can help with personal finance topics such as:

- Managing debt
- Estate planning
- Investments
- Taxes
- Home purchase

Please have your Wespath participant number when you call EY or register on their website. If you do not know your participant number, please contact Wespath.

**Costs are included in Wespath's operating expenses that are paid for by the funds. Financial planning services are available to all active participants and surviving spouses with an account balance in Wespath-administered plans, as well as to terminated and retired participants with an account balance of at least \$10,000.*

Optum Employee Assistance Program (EAP): 1-866-881-6800

If you are covered through HealthFlex, you receive eight, no-cost counseling sessions to support you in your journey with grief. Optum offers support in other areas, including:

- settling into a new community and other local resources;
- stress, anxiety or depression; and
- legal matters, such as wills and adoption (one 30-minute attorney consultation over the phone or in person at no cost; 25% discount for additional consultations with the same attorney).



Power of Attorney

It can be difficult to navigate the next steps and make decisions during this emotional time. A family member or close friend can help ease this burden. If anyone is authorized to act on your behalf, such as under a power of attorney, the legal documents can be emailed to poa@wespath.org. Once approved, the power of attorney can contact Wespath to take actions authorized under the power of attorney. If there is not a legal arrangement for power of attorney, you can still have a third party participate in your conversations with Wespath.

If you wish to authorize Wespath to provide information to a third party on your behalf, please contact Wespath for an *Information Release Form*. Once submitted, Wespath may provide information about your benefits to the individual listed on the form; however, this individual cannot request transactions, update your information, or perform other actions on your behalf.

Wespath-administered Benefits

You may be eligible for survivor benefits under Wespath's Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP) and/or Wespath-administered retirement or health and wellness plans. When Wespath receives notification of a death, eligibility will be determined and beneficiaries will be notified.

Welfare Death Benefits

CPP pays a lump-sum death benefit to eligible surviving spouses. Once Wespath confirms your eligibility, the benefit will be paid by either check or direct deposit through Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT). If applicable, the conference may confirm that we can send the benefit to the same account used for your spouse's retirement benefits. Otherwise, we will attempt to contact you for bank information so you can receive the benefit as quickly as possible.

CPP also pays a benefit to eligible surviving children up to age 25. A monthly benefit is automatically paid to an eligible child until age 18. Once a child reaches age 18, additional documentation showing full-time college enrollment and passing grades is needed to pay the benefit. To avoid delays in payments after a child reaches 18, please contact Wespath for the *School Certificate for Benefits*.

Retirement Benefits

Eligible clergy may have benefits from the following plans that also provide survivor benefits to eligible surviving spouses:

- Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP) — provides monthly benefits for service from 2007 to the present
- Ministerial Pension Plan (MPP) — provides monthly benefits for service from 1982-2006
- Pre-1982 Plan — provides monthly benefits for service prior to 1982
- United Methodist Personal Investment Plan (UMPIP) — account balance based on personal and plan sponsor contributions

If your spouse was receiving monthly retirement benefits from Wespath, any survivor amount of the monthly benefits payable to you will be transferred within 15-25 business days after Wespath is notified of the death. We will contact you to confirm your bank account information or other method of payment. This process may take longer if there is missing information or if we determine a need to recover overpayment. For example, if your spouse was receiving a monthly retirement benefit that continued to be paid after his or her death, Wespath will need to recover the amount that was overpaid before additional benefits may be paid. We will attempt to recover the funds from the bank or contact you to provide the options available to resolve the overpayment (e.g., offset benefits payable to you). If you have questions about your spouse's retirement benefits, please call Wespath Customer Service.



If your spouse was not yet receiving monthly retirement benefits, you may still be eligible for a monthly benefit. You may be required to make elections to initiate these benefits by contacting Wespath for an application for benefits.

If you are the beneficiary of any account balances, they will be transferred to your name. You can then elect to take a distribution by contacting Wespath for an application for benefits.

Once your survivor retirement benefits have been determined, a member of the Survivor Benefits team will contact you to review the benefits, determine what is payable right away or work with you to submit an application for benefits. Once all eligible benefits have been established, Wespath will send you a written summary of those benefits.

Health and Wellness Benefits

Health Coverage

If you or your spouse were covered under a HealthFlex medical plan administered by Wespath, you are eligible for 18 months of continued coverage through HealthFlex. *Check with your spouse's conference regarding eligibility and cost of continuing your benefits beyond the initial 18 months.

If you are not covered under HealthFlex, please contact the conference office for information on possible healthcare coverage.



Health Accounts under HealthFlex

Depending on your spouse's coverage, the following rules apply on accumulated account balances:

- If you continue coverage in HealthFlex, you can use any existing funds from Health Reimbursement Accounts (HRAs). If you were not covered in HealthFlex at the time of your spouse's death, the HRA balance is forfeited. However, the HRA can be used to pay your spouse's outstanding medical bills. If you are with Via Benefits and you had a joint HRA with your spouse, you can continue to use the funds.
- Health Savings Account (HSA) funds are transferred to a beneficiary(ies) after a death certificate is provided to HealthEquity (the HSA administrator). Health Equity can be contacted at 844-341-6998.
- Any accumulated Personify Health® Rewards Cash for the deceased is forfeited.

More Information

For more information visit wespath.org or contact Wespath Customer Service for Summary Plan Descriptions for the following plans, which include eligibility rules and benefits that may be payable to an eligible surviving spouse:

- Comprehensive Protection Plan
- Clergy Retirement Security Program (which includes sections for MPP and the Pre-1982 Plan)
- United Methodist Personal Investment Plan
- HealthFlex

**If you were a dependent on your spouse's HealthFlex coverage and move to individual coverage, only the amount you accumulated towards the deductible or out of pocket maximum would be applied for the balance of the plan year (calendar year).*



What Do To Next

Within the First 1–2 Months

Collect important papers

Here are some of the documents you may need:

- **Copies of the death certificate**—Generally, you need a copy of the death certificate to apply for benefits or retitle assets in your spouse's name. If your spouse's conference notified Wespeth of your spouse's passing, a death certificate is not required for Wespeth-administered benefits. Your funeral director or the county health department can usually provide certified copies of the death certificate.
- **Insurance policies**—Your spouse's life insurance agent or insurance company can provide copies if you cannot locate them.
- **Marriage license**—You can obtain copies from the county clerk where your marriage license was issued.
- **Dependent children's birth certificates**—If your spouse had any dependent children, you'll need their birth certificates to establish claims for certain Social Security benefits. Copies can be requested at the public health office of the state or county where the child was born.
- **Trusts or wills**—You'll need to locate the original document, which may be held by your spouse's attorney. Your spouse's power of attorney is no longer in effect at the time of death. Instead, the trust or will identifies the person responsible for finalizing the estate (typically called an executor or administrator). In order for Wespeth to work with someone as the executor/administrator, they should submit a court order naming them as the executor. Upon approval, Wespeth will work with the executor on matters involving the estate. The trust or will also stipulates how any assets in the estate will be distributed. Trusts or wills do not determine beneficiaries for Wespeth-administered plans.
- **Power of Attorney**—If anyone is authorized to act on your behalf under a power of attorney, the legal documents can be emailed to poa@wespeth.org. Once approved, the power of attorney can contact Wespeth directly to take the specific actions authorized under the power of attorney.
- **Social Security Numbers**—Past tax returns, employment records or other personal papers can be a good source for this information.
- **Bank records**—Review for any regular deposits received to determine if any organizations need to be informed of your spouse's death.



Review the will

A will provides direction on distribution of assets that pass through probate (the legal process of validating a will before assets of an estate can be distributed). Not all assets pass through probate, so it may be possible that there are no assets requiring the probate process. For example, property titled in both your spouse's name and another person as joint tenants with right of survivorship automatically passes to the co-owner. Life insurance and retirement benefits and Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs) are paid directly to beneficiaries. Assets held within a revocable trust can also be excluded from the probate process; they are distributed to beneficiaries under the terms of the trust.

If there is a will, and probate is required, you or your attorney will file a petition with a probate court. The court will appoint an executor or personal representative of the estate, who will manage distribution of the estate's assets.

If your spouse does not have a will but there are assets subject to the probate process, the estate will be distributed pursuant to state law. You, or your attorney, will need to file a petition with the probate court to request appointment as the decedent's administrator, who has duties similar to an executor. Many states have laws regarding small estates where a simplified process can be followed to distribute assets instead of completing the traditional probate process. If the estate qualifies, the simplified process for small estates can save time and the expense of administering an estate.

Apply for benefits

In addition to Wespath-administered benefits, you may be eligible to claim certain survivor benefits such as pension benefits, Social Security or other employee benefits.

- **Social Security**—Call Social Security at 800-772-1213 to find out if your spouse was covered and to discuss possible benefits. If your spouse was already collecting benefits, it's important to notify the Social Security Administration that he or she has died.
- **Life Insurance**—Contact the customer service department of the life insurance company, or your local insurance agent.
- **Other employee benefits**—You may want to contact previous employers to check if you're entitled to any benefits.

Change title or ownership

After a death, you may need to transfer ownership or change the title on property or modify documents, including:

- **Your house**—If there is an outstanding mortgage, inquire whether any credit life insurance is in effect that would pay the balance.
- **Insurance policies**—If the decedent had life insurance, the death benefit will pass to the named beneficiary. If there is no named beneficiary, the death benefit will generally pass to your spouse's estate. Check your own insurance policies to see if your beneficiary designations should be updated. Evaluate your own life and automobile coverage to determine if changes are needed.
- **Automobiles**—Your state's department of motor vehicles can tell you what needs to be done to change a title in the name of your spouse.
- **Your will**—Review your will to determine if changes are needed, especially if you designated assets to be paid to your spouse.
- **Credit cards**—Cancel credit cards held exclusively in the name of the decedent. If there is an outstanding balance, determine who is responsible for paying the balance based on whether the balance was insured, other individuals are on the account or community property laws.

If you have credit cards in both your names, you should notify the credit card companies that your spouse has died so the account is changed to your name only.

- **Retirement plan assets**—Retirement plan assets pass to the named beneficiaries. If you inherit any retirement accounts, contact the financial institution to name new beneficiaries.



- **Bank accounts**—If you and the decedent had a joint bank account that was owned as joint tenants with rights of survivorship, it will usually pass to you automatically. Contact your bank to change the title and signature card on the account. In some states, joint accounts are frozen upon notification of a death. Check with the bank to learn how to have your funds released. If you plan to close any accounts, consider waiting until all expected deposits have been posted to the account to avoid deposits being returned to sender and delaying receipt of funds. Bank accounts that were solely in the name of the decedent will have to go through probate.
- **Stocks, bonds and other investments**—If you shared investments with the decedent and ownership passes directly to you, check with your stockbroker to change the title. If the decedent owned the investment account(s) in his or her name only, title will be changed to the beneficiary.
- **Safe deposit box**—You'll generally need a court order to open any safe deposit box rented only in the name of the decedent.
- **Utilities**—If needed, contact your utility companies, such as water and power, to change accounts to your name.

Update Contact Information

If your address will be changing, notify impacted organizations of this change. This can be requested at the same time you are contacting anyone regarding benefit applications or changing title/ownership.

In months 3–6

Consider hiring an accountant

There may be multiple tax returns that need to be filed, such as your spouse's federal and state income tax return for income received in year of death. You can still file a joint return for the year of death, as long as you have not remarried.

Federal estate tax returns are due within nine months of the date of death but are only required for large estates. State estate tax returns may have different filing requirements.

Your attorney or accountant can guide you in preparing income or estate tax forms and give you valuable information on your state's estate tax, inheritance tax or gift tax, and fiduciary income tax, if applicable.

It is also important to consider any changes to your individual tax situation. For example, your spouse may have been eligible to exclude a portion of income from taxation based on housing allowance exclusion rules. Surviving spouses are not eligible to exclude income based on these rules and may need to change withholding elections as a result.

Review your finances and consider hiring a qualified financial planner

A financial advisor can be very helpful since your financial situation may now have significantly changed. The planner's investment oversight and review can help with investment decisions such as changing your risk tolerance or rebalancing your assets. In addition, planners are trained to help you make decisions due to market fluctuations, changes in tax laws, or changes in your personal life.

EY Financial Planning Services are available to surviving spouses with a retirement account balances at no direct cost to you.* They can help guide you with personal finance topics such as:

- Retirement planning
- Managing debt
- Estate planning
- Investing
- Tax matters
- Buying home

To contact EY, visit wspath.eynavigate.com or call **1-800-360-3539**, Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., Central time.

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By month 9

Complete estate settlement, if applicable

At this point there are usually just a few outstanding details to finalize. Federal estate tax returns, if required, are due nine months after the decedent's death. Assets usually are distributed to the beneficiaries upon closing the estate.

When you're experiencing grief, it's natural to feel overwhelmed by practical matters that need your attention. We hope this brochure has helped you. While we've tried to address most of what needs to be done after a loved one passes away, many situations will be unique. For more detailed guidance on what to do after a death, you may want to seek legal or other professional advice.

Check List: <i>Within the First 1–2 Months</i>	Complete	N/A
1. Collect important papers		
a. Death certificate		
b. Marriage certificate		
c. Birth certificate		
d. Insurance policies		
e. The will		
f. Social Security numbers		
g. Most recent tax returns		
h. Review bank records		
2. Forward decedent's mail		
3. Contact an attorney if needed		
4. File for probate of will if needed		
5. Apply for Benefits		
a. Life insurance proceeds		
b. Retirement plan benefits		
c. Social Security benefits		
d. Other employee benefits		
6. Change titles and ownership		
a. Home		
b. Insurance policies		
c. Automobiles		
d. Your will		
e. Credit cards		
f. Bank accounts		
g. Stocks, bonds, other investments		
h. Safe deposit boxes		
i. Utilities		
Check List: <i>In months 3–6</i>	Done	N/A
7. Hire an accountant		
8. Review finances		
Check List: <i>By month 9</i>	Done	N/A
9. File and pay taxes		

Notes



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Caring For Those Who Serve

1901 Chestnut Ave.
Glenview, IL 60025-1604
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