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How do I receive the Lump Sum Death Payment after a relative dies?

Question

How do I receive the Lump Sum Death Payment after a relative dies?

Answer

A lump-sum death benefit of \$255 may be paid upon the death of a person who has worked long enough to be insured under the Social Security program. The lump-sum death benefit can be paid upon the death of the insured person even if they were not receiving retirement or disability benefits at the time of death.

A one-time payment of \$255 is payable to the surviving spouse if he or she was living with the beneficiary at the time of death, OR if living apart, was eligible for Social Security benefits on the beneficiary's earnings record for the month of death.

If there is no surviving spouse, the payment is made to a child who was eligible for benefits on the beneficiary's earnings record in the month of death.

If no spouse or child meeting these requirements exists, then the lump sum death payment will not be paid. The lump sum death payment cannot be paid to funeral homes for funeral expenses.

To file for the benefit, call 1-800-772-1213 and request an appointment for your local office. You must file the application for the lump-sum death payment within the two-year period ending with the second anniversary of the insured person's death.

To report a death of a beneficiary to Social Security, see the instructions at [What To Do When A Beneficiary Dies](#).