

If you have lost a family member

Amid the grief following the death of a loved one, there is a great deal for those left behind to consider and decide about. Therefore we've compiled this information as a guide.

What an estate is

An estate arises automatically when a person has died; it is categorised as a separate legal entity. The estate consists of the deceased person's assets and debts.

What happens automatically with our services in the event of a death

As soon as we are made aware of the death via the Swedish Tax Agency, the following takes place:

- Charge and credit cards, as well as BankID, are blocked.
- All self-service banking functions are closed.
- The e-invoice service is closed, and all future invoices are instead sent in paper format to the estate's address.
- Privatgiro is closed. If an account is held by two account holders, and one of them dies, the other account holder can continue to use privatgiro forms until the division of property and estate distribution take place
- Powers of attorney cease to apply.
- The authorisation for a trustee, administrator, or person with withdrawal rights to use the account is revoked..

Autogiros (direct debits)

The deceased person's autogiros (direct debits) are not automatically cancelled. The easiest way of closing autogiros is to contact each beneficiary. If necessary, you can contact one of our branches to get a list of active autogiro mandates, as well as assistance in closing autogiros.

Balance and interest statement

In order for an estate inventory to be drawn up, information regarding the deceased persons assets and debts with the Bank as at the date of death is required. We will send a balance and interest statement to the address of the estate. If there is a surviving spouse, they must also have a balance and interest statement for their own assets and debts with the Bank as at the date of their spouse's death. If the surviving spouse is a Handelsbanken customer, they will need to contact us to order this statement.

Safe deposit box

Prior to an estate inventory being drawn up, an inventory of the contents of safe deposit boxes must be carried out. Contact the branch where the safe deposit box is located to book an appointment for an inventory. If there are safe deposit box holders other than the deceased person, these persons' access to the safe deposit box will not be affected if there are individual rights of disposal for the safe deposit box.

Payment of the estate's invoices

Before there is an authorised representative for the estate, the Bank will only approve withdrawals being made from the deceased person's account for essential payment of invoices. Payment of the estate's invoices can be carried out free of charge for up to 12 months after the date of death. The invoices must be made out in the deceased person's name and be paid by completing the Bank's Payment orders for estate form (which can be printed out from the Bank's website) and sending it to the estate's bank branch.

Change of address

It may be a good idea if the Bank's notices are sent to one of the parties to the estate, instead of to the deceased person's address. If the Bank is to be able to carry out a change of address for the estate, in the Bank's systems, the registered estate inventory together with a written order from all parties to the estate must be presented in a meeting at the bank. If one or more parties to the estate are unable to attend, the party visiting the bank must present original powers of attorney from the other parties.

Authorised representatives of the estate

An estate is administered jointly by the parties to the estate until it is wound up. The representatives of the estate must always be able to verify their authorisation to the Bank. In contact with the Bank, the estate can be represented by the following persons:

- All parties to the estate, according to the registered estate inventory or estate registration of the deceased person.
- A proxy, who has a written power of attorney from the other parties to the estate.
- The estate administrator, who is appointed by the District Court.
- The executor of the will of the deceased person, if this has become legally binding.

The documents verifying authorisation in accordance with the above must be presented in the original.

Estate inventory, estate registration and distribution of estate

The basic principle is that when a person dies, an estate inventory is submitted to the Swedish Tax Agency within four months of the date of death. The estate inventory sets out who the party/parties to the estate is/are, as well as the assets and debts of the deceased person as at the date of death.

Note that if the deceased person's assets are not sufficient to pay the funeral costs and other death-related expenses, the estate may contact the social welfare board in the deceased person's home municipality to obtain assistance in drawing up a simplified estate inventory – an 'estate registration'.

After the estate inventory has been registered with the Tax Agency, there must be, in some cases, a division of property, after which the inheritance is to be apportioned between the parties to the estate in an estate distribution. For both the division of property and the distribution of the estate, a written document must be drawn up and signed by all parties to the estate (the division of property agreement and estate distribution document – sometimes combined as a deed of estate distribution). Please note that the bank does not accept digital signatures on this document.

If there is only one party to the estate, an estate distribution document will not need to be drawn up.

The estate is wound up and is closed for tax purposes when:

- All the assets of the estate have been distributed.
- The final income tax return has been submitted.
- Surpluses and deficits on the tax account have been settled, i.e. when the estate has received back or paid in the final tax.

If you have a joint account with the deceased

To be able to wind up an estate, all commitments must be closed, and this also applies to accounts that are held jointly with the estate.

The surviving account holder has the option of opening a new account, and if so, it's important to remember the following:

- Apply for a new account via Online Banking under the heading 'Accounts and cards', or contact your local branch to open the account.
- Contact your employer and other parties that make in-payments to inform them of your new account number.
- Notify the Bank that you wish to transfer the existing autogiros (direct debits).
- Change the account that you have registered with the Swedish Tax Agency, the Swedish Social Insurance Administration (Försäkringskassan) and the National Board of Student Aid (CSN).
- If you pay bills using the e-invoice service, you must register these beneficiaries again from your new account.
- The account history for the joint account will remain available for 13 months in Online Banking. The account history for a closed account can be found under 'Show closed account'.

You're welcome to contact us – we're here for you

If you have any questions or wish to book an appointment to carry out an estate distribution, don't hesitate to contact one of our branches.

Further information

For more information, see the Bank's website, as well as www.efterlevandeguiden.se/eng-lish/start.html and www.skatteverket.se