

Journey Through Life's Last Stages

*a reference guide for you and your loved one
living with serious illness and facing end-of-life*







PIH Health presents the topics and suggestions in this booklet to help patients, their loved ones, and our care teams discuss important matters, questions, and address feelings that arise when facing serious illness and/or imminent death.

When facing serious illness, thinking about symptom management, considering end of life, navigating next steps after a death (anticipated or sudden), and living with loss and grief, our care teams are here to support you.

As a patient, serious illness can bring about turmoil in life. You may no longer feel well and might be dealing with the negative side effects of your disease or your treatments. The stress of your circumstances can weigh heavy on you and your loved ones. Facing these moments is difficult.

PIH Health is here to provide support, education, and guidance on how to cope with these challenging times.

We invite you to talk further with any member of our team about any of the topics in this booklet – we work together as a team for your wellbeing.

Thank you for choosing PIH Health.

Digital copy of this booklet can be found and downloaded from online at:

PIHHealth.org/FacingLastStages

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Palliative Care – Living With a Serious Illness

Palliative Care is holistic care from a team of experts for people with a serious illness. This type of care is focused on providing relief from symptoms like pain, discomfort, mental, spiritual and emotional distress. The goal is to improve the quality of life for both the patients and their families. Palliative care is appropriate at any age and any stage of a serious illness, not just end-of-life. It is an ‘extra layer of support’ – treating the symptoms of an illness and supporting the entire family. Palliative Care does not replace your Primary Care Physician (PCP) nor other specialists. Instead, we work together. Patients can continue to receive curative and therapeutic care such as chemotherapy, radiation, dialysis, and surgery while receiving palliative care.¹

When should I consider palliative care?

- When newly diagnosed with a serious illness or disease progression
- Your symptoms worsen from your disease or treatment
- Seeking more coordination of care with your PCP, specialist(s) and outside agencies
- Considering end of life questions
- Experiencing frustrations with navigating the healthcare system
- Experiencing difficult feelings related to your illness
- Questioning your faith and spirituality

Palliative Care Team

- Physician
- Nurse Practitioner
- Clinical Social Worker
- Chaplain
- Patient Care Coordinator

Palliative Care Services

- Pain and symptom management
- Spiritual & emotional support
- Help navigating the medical system and understanding care options
- Education and assistance with discussing goals of care, end of life concerns, Advance Directive, Physician Order for Life Sustaining Treatment (POLST) and more

Email: PalliativeCareTeam@PIHHealth.org

Phone: 562.967.2273

Web: PIHHealth.org/PalliativeCare

Additional Resources

- National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization (CaringInfo.org)
- National Institute of Health-National Institute on Aging (nia.nih.gov/health/what-are-palliative-care-and-hospice-care/)

¹ PIH Health Palliative Care Fact Sheet and The National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization (NHPCO)-Caring Info, <https://www.caringinfo.org/types-of-care/palliative-care/>

Hospice Care – Support in Life’s Final Stages

For over 30 years, PIH Health has been providing hospice care for our community. Hospice care is a whole person, team approach to caring for a person who is nearing the end of their life and supporting their loved ones through this difficult time.

Death is a natural and inevitable part of life and can be difficult to face for you and your loved ones. The goal of hospice care is to enhance the quality of life for the patient by relieving pain and other symptoms. Hospice care neither prolongs life nor hastens death and is often paid for by Medicare most insurances. You might ask yourself, “Am I giving up if I choose hospice care?” We do not see it that way, though we recognize this is a normal question to ask. We encourage you to talk to a PIH Health provider to explore this question and the thoughts and feelings that surround it. In addition, we welcome you to contact us if you would like to learn more about hospice care.

When should I consider hospice care?

- Your curative treatments such as chemotherapy and radiation therapy are no longer effective.
- You are tired of hospitalizations, no longer want additional treatments, and desire to maximize quality of life until death, with a focus on being kept comfortable in your home.
- You would rather spend your time enjoying your loved ones and interests instead of going to medical appointments.
- You want to be surrounded, supported, and cared for by a compassionate and professional group of people who will care for you and your loved ones as you approach the end of your life.
- You are no longer eating and drinking.
- You are sleeping most of the day.
- You are having increasing trouble communicating
- You are experiencing more consistent pain and prefer not to be in such pain.
- You talk about being ready to die.

Hospice team

- Physician
- Nurse Practitioner, Registered Nurse Case Manager and Licensed Vocational Nurses
- Home Health Aide
- Social Worker
- Chaplain
- Patient Care Coordinator

Hospice Services

- Pain and symptom control
- Medical equipment
- Medications related to the terminal illness
- Location of services in the home or in a facility
- Education on the dying process
- Spiritual and emotional support
- 24/7 Registered Nurse availability via telephone
- Help planning for the time of death
- 13 months of bereavement (grief) support
- Volunteer services
- Respite

PIH Health provides additional support through its two hospice houses, which provide short term care for patients suffering from severe symptoms.

Please talk to your provider to find out if hospice is the right choice for you or your loved one. A hospice representative is available Monday to Sunday from 9 am to 5 pm to answer your questions.

Phone: 562.947.3668

Web: PIHHealth.org/Hospice

Additional Resources

- Hospice Foundation of America (HospiceFoundation.org)
- Medicare.gov (medicare.gov/coverage/hospice-care)
- NHPCO (CaringInfo.org)



Anticipatory Grief - A Natural Experience When Anticipating Death and Loss

Whether death is expected in a few hours or several months, being aware of your coping process can be helpful. Anticipatory grief is a normal process of beginning the grieving process even before you or your loved one has died. Although it may be uncomfortable, anticipatory grief is sometimes helpful and may result in fewer grief complications later.

For the caregiver

You might experience some of the following thoughts and feelings:

- Considering the death of your loved one will bring you and/or loved one relief and peace
- Loss of appetite
- Tension, irritability or anger
- Fatigue and insomnia
- Tearfulness
- Restlessness
- Indecision
- Guilt

During this time, consider taking some of the following actions:

- Collect and record beloved stories from your loved one
- Ask your loved one about what would be most meaningful to them during this time
- Make or facilitate reconciliation with your loved one
- Tell them you love them
- Discuss final arrangements
- Inform others of your loved one's condition and encourage them to visit or call them to say 'goodbye'
- Have important conversations with your loved one, especially about topics you have always wanted to discuss.
- Take care of yourself because caregiving is physically, emotionally, and spiritually tiring.
- Discuss end of life goals with your loved one and family members. Does your loved one want to be resuscitated or allow for a natural death? Do they want to be an organ or tissue donor?

For the patient

This may be a time of reflection on lifetime of events and circumstances, relationships, and previous losses. There may be a change in your ability to care for your daily needs such as bathing, dressing, and eating. This is often a time of increased dependence on other people and awareness that a transition to death is coming. During this time, you might experience:

- Asking, “When will God take me?”
- Being ready to “go home.”
- Anger or frustration with the loss of abilities
- Preoccupation with one or two issues in your life
- Making final arrangements
- Saying “goodbye” to family and friends
- Communicating your wishes

We encourage you to talk to a PIH Health provider if you are experiencing any of the above. We desire to support you through this time.



The Active Phase of Dying – Symptoms Signaling the Last Days and Hours

Each person's dying process is unique. As the body dies, whether over a few hours or a few days, there are changes that naturally occur. Not everybody will experience the same things, so it can be difficult to precisely predict the moment of physical death. Having some knowledge of what to watch for can be helpful.

Indicators of the active phase of dying

The following is not a complete list of indicators of impending death - these are some expected symptoms of the dying process. Our goal as a care team is to address them to provide a person a comfortable and peaceful death.

- Breathing
 - Breathing pattern changes such as apnea (non-breathing), intermittent breaths
 - Mouth breathing
 - Shallow breaths
 - Congested lung sounds
 - Difficulty managing oral secretions
- Level of alertness
 - A person becomes less or non-responsive
 - More hours of the day spent sleeping vs. being awake
 - Communicating with the deceased or with people who are not physically present
- Skin
 - Mottling: bluish or grey discoloration oftentimes found on the fingers and/or toes
 - New onset of skin breakdown
- Dehydration
 - Dry mouth
 - Dry cracked lips
 - Dry eyes
- Appetite
 - Requesting favorite foods but eats little to none
 - Decreased appetite
 - Decreased fluid intake
 - Difficulty with swallowing
 - Refusal to eat and/or drink
- Urine
 - Urine may be darker or less output
 - May become incontinent
- Restlessness
 - Involuntary movements like picking at clothing or sheets
 - Agitation
- Pain
 - Level may intensify with disease progression and/or movement

For the caregivers

You might feel helpless as you witness your loved one's health declining. These feelings are natural but difficult to experience. During this time, your presence and attention are comforting acts you can give to your loved one. Please consider the following:

- Visit with your loved one. They can hear all that you say and feel your presence, even if they appear to be asleep.
- If you are ready, give your loved one permission to die. Doing so can help them to die peacefully.
- Make peace. Ask for or offer forgiveness to your loved one.
- Think about and implement religious or spiritual practices that might bring comfort to your loved one.
- Play your loved one's favorite music for them.
- Talk to children and teenagers, in an age-appropriate manner, about your loved one's condition.
- Acknowledge the many feelings you might be experiencing. It is normal to feel sad, angry, relieved, and tired all at the same time.
- Find support from those whom you trust. Talk to a trusted friend, family, faith community member or professional. Accept help from others.
- Locate estate planning documents, such as a Will or Living Trust. If the deceased completed an Advance Healthcare Directive (AHCD), it may identify their healthcare agent and possible wishes for final care and arrangements.

We encourage you to speak with a PIH Health provider if you observe any of these indicators or if you have any questions about the dying process. We are with you on your journey through this difficult time.



When a Loved One Dies – Sudden or Unexpected Death

You may have just lost a family member or loved one suddenly or unexpectedly. Perhaps your loved one experienced a sudden change in their health, had a traumatic accident, or died while attempting to treat an illness in the emergency room or during a hospitalization.

Your feelings and reactions may be different than if you were expecting or preparing for someone to die.

It is important to know that your feelings are normal, and are part of the grieving process when making very quick and unexpected decisions after an unanticipated death.

Possible Feelings

You may experience any number of emotions, and it is helpful to be aware what they are in order to better manage them. For example, you may feel:

- Shock
- Disbelief
- Exhaustion
- Numbness
- Guilt
- Fear
- Anger
- Loneliness
- Extreme Sadness

During this difficult time of experiencing sudden grief, you may be asked to give information or make unexpected and unplanned decisions. Some of these decisions might include:

- Contacting family or providing contact information for other family members to staff; it is important to have support at this time.
- Coordinating visitors, which may include limiting the number of visitors and the time allotted for visits.
- Gathering your loved one's personal belongings so that nothing is lost or forgotten.
- Identifying or providing mortuary arrangements or coordinating with the hospital staff and coroner's office. You may need to sign forms for your loved one to be released to the appropriate mortuary.
- Notifying the mortuary of any special cultural and/or religious concerns regarding handling of your loved one's body and the timing of burial. The mortuary can help communicate this to the coroner's office.

PIH Health will provide you compassionate guidance during this time.

The bedside nurse will assist with coordinating appropriate staff to support you, including social work, chaplain, Charge Nurse, or other supportive care staff.

You will be provided information about what to expect.

It is helpful if you rely on another person to accompany you for support, take notes, or be delegated some of the immediate responsibilities.

The following pages have references and check lists of items that you may need to address in the upcoming days and going forward. They are provided to help guide you.

Other sections of this booklet contain information that may be helpful to you or someone else in your family that may be going through a declining health experience now or in the future.

Death – A Guide for Next Steps

You may feel overwhelmed by the death of a loved one. The following information can help guide you through this time with some practical next steps:

If in the hospital

1. If you have a religious affiliation, you may wish to call a minister from your tradition. If you prefer, the chaplains and social workers at PIH Health can be available to lend additional support at this sacred time.
2. Notify family and/or close friends you wish to have with you at the bedside. The hospital staff will provide you privacy and the opportunity to stay with your loved for some time after the death.
3. If you are aware of your loved one's preferences for organ/tissue donation, consider notifying the nurse of those preferences.
4. After the patient's death, your nurse will help you collect your loved one's personal belongings. Ask your nurse to check if valuable items are in the hospital safe.
5. Your nurse will then ask you to sign a document verifying that you collected your loved one's belongings.
6. Provide your nurse with the name of the mortuary you have selected. A list of local mortuaries can be provided if needed.
7. If you have not selected a mortuary by the time you leave the hospital, your loved one's body will be held in the hospital morgue until you have made that decision. Once you have chosen a mortuary, the mortuary can contact the appropriate office listed below to provide the necessary information. The mortuary will then transport your loved one from the hospital to the mortuary site. Note that the mortuary might request of you some form of visual identity for the patient – sometimes a simple picture is all that is needed.
 - For PIH Health Whittier Hospital, the mortuary can call the Nursing Administration Office at 562.698.0811 Ext. 12501.
 - For PIH Health Downey Hospital, the mortuary can call the Nursing Administration Office at 562.904.5272.
 - For PIH Health Good Samaritan Hospital, the mortuary can call the Nurse Staffing Office at 213.977.2085.

If on hospice care and your loved one is at home

- a) If it appears your loved one has died, call your hospice provider and they will immediately dispatch a nurse to confirm the time of death.
- b) A hospice team member will visit to confirm the death of your loved one and assist with notifying the mortuary

If on hospice care and your loved one is in a facility

- a) You will be immediately notified when your loved one has died.
- b) A hospice team member will visit to confirm the death of your loved one and assist with notifying the mortuary.
- c) You are not required to be physically present with your loved one who has died. If you wish to be present, we encourage you to check with the facility regarding their visitation guidelines.

Following a loved one's death, their healthcare agent , spouse, or the next of kin , or executor will have many things to tend to. Below are some items to consider. These don't need to be all addressed at the same time. It might be helpful to ask a family member or trusted friend to help prioritize these items:

- Determine if the deceased had prepaid final arrangements and indicated preferences for whole body burial or cremation, which may be documented in the AHCD.
- Choose a mortuary or funeral home. If applicable, provide a copy of the AHCD to assist in completing the decedent's final arrangements. In addition to mortuary lists that might be available from your PIH Health care providers, the following website might help with your search: Parting.com
- Appoint a responsible person to record all final expenses e.g. funeral, burial, death certificates, etc.
- Was the decedent a military veteran and did they desire military services e.g. burial, internment at a national cemetery, military honors, etc.? If so, locate your loved one's DD-214 (discharge paperwork) and coordinate veteran's burial benefits with your mortuary of choice. (For reference: <https://www.va.gov/burials-memorials/veterans-burial-allowance/>)
- Coordinate with the mortuary and request 5 to 12 copies of the death certificate because they will be needed to settle or close the decedent's legal and financial affairs such as life insurance claims, credit cards, bank accounts, auto insurance, DMV, home insurance, mortgage, loans, etc.
- Notify the USPS to forward mail.
- Secure property. Lock up the decedent's home and vehicle. Is the vehicle parked in a secure and legal area? Will the home be vacant? If so, consider notifying the local law enforcement agency (dial a non-emergency number). If renting, notify the landlord or property manager. Rent will need to be paid until the rental has been vacated and cleaned out.
- Notify Social Security. Typically, the funeral director will notify Social Security of the death of your loved one. If not, call 800.772.1213 or contact your local office. If your loved one was receiving benefits, they must be stopped because overpayments will require complicated repayment. Even a payment received for the month of the death may need to be returned. Also, Social Security provides a one-time financial benefit paid only to the surviving widow.
- Notify Medicare. If your loved one received Medicare, Social Security will inform the program of the death. If the deceased was enrolled in the Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage (Part D), Medicare Advantage plan or had a Medi-gap policy, contact these plans at the phone numbers provided on each plan membership card to cancel the insurance.
- Discontinue the decedent's health insurance. Notify the health insurance company and end coverage for the deceased.
- Notify life insurance companies. If your loved one had life insurance, appropriate claim forms will need to be filed. You will need to provide the policy numbers and a death certificate.
- Terminate other insurance policies by contacting the respective providers. That could include homeowner's, automobile, etc. Claim forms will require a copy of the death certificate.

- If there is no Will or Living Trust, familiarize yourself with the probate process and consider meeting with a probate attorney. Probate is a court case that deals with the decedent's estate. The probate process starts with an inventory of all assets (personal property, bank accounts, house, car, jewelry, etc.), which will need to be filed in the probate court. Asking for recommendations for probate attorneys from family or friends might be the best approach, but an online search can also be an efficient way to find an attorney.
- Make a list of important bills e.g. mortgage payments. Share the list with the executor or estate administrator so that bills can be paid promptly.
- Notify mortgage companies and banks. It helps if your loved one left a list of accounts, including online passwords. Otherwise, take a death certificate and notarized document naming the executor to the bank for assistance. Change ownership of joint bank accounts. Did the deceased have a safe deposit box? If a password or key is not available, the executor would most likely need a court order to open and inventory the safe deposit box. Most probate courts have administrative rules about steps to access the box of the decedent.
- Close credit card accounts. For each account, call the customer service phone number on the credit card, monthly statement or issuer's website. Inform an agent that you would like to close the account of the decedent. Upon request, submit a copy of the death certificate by fax or email. Otherwise, send the document by registered mail with return receipt requested. Once the company receives the certificate, it will close the account as of the date of death. If the representative does not offer to waive interest or fees after that date, be sure to ask. Keep records of the accounts you close and notify the executor of the estate about outstanding debts.
- Notify credit reporting agencies. To minimize the chance of identity theft, provide copies of the death certificate to the three major firms — Equifax, Experian and TransUnion — as soon as possible so the account is flagged. Four to six weeks later, check the deceased's credit history to ensure no fraudulent accounts have been opened or other suspicious activity has occurred.
- Close additional accounts such as: cell phone, utilities (if not needed at the home), etc. Check for auto-renewal/donations on bank accounts and cancel them.
- Cancel the deceased Driver's License. Clearing the Driver's License record will remove the deceased's name from the records of the department of motor vehicles and help prevent identity theft. Contact the state department of motor vehicle for exact instructions. You may have to visit a customer-service center or mail documentation. You will need to provide a copy of the death certificate.
- Contact a tax preparer for guidance on filing a final income tax return for the individual, as well as for the estate/trust, if necessary. Keep monthly bank statements on all individual and joint accounts that show the account balance on the day of death.
- Keep all receipts/confirmation numbers of all items, services, etc. paid out of the decedent's accounts.
- Notify any membership organizations and clubs (unions, Rotary, sorority/fraternity, masonic, school alumni associations, etc.) – they might have death benefits and can be otherwise helpful in notifying others of your loved one's death.
- Notify pensions/retirement accounts so payments can be transferred to a surviving spouse.
- Notify local and/or state voter registration offices.

Living with Loss and Grief

Death and loss are natural parts of life. Grief is the normal process we experience as we adjust to life without our loved one. It is unique and varies in its length of time for each person.

Experiencing the feelings of loss and grief can be healing. Over time, your pain will subside. Allowing yourself the opportunity to process your grief and the emotions related to grief and loss assists with the mourning process. In contrast, denying and attempting to bury such feelings can lengthen and complicate the grief process. Feelings will find a way to express themselves, sometimes in negative ways. Grief and bereavement practices can vary by culture and family. We encourage you to surround yourself with people who care about you and are available to listen and offer support you find most meaningful.

The following are some anticipated experiences associated with the grief process.

Emotional

- Sadness
- Relief
- Feeling guilty or angry over the events that happened in your relationship
- Loneliness
- Anger
- Depression

Cognitive

- Short term memory loss
- Experiencing an intense preoccupation with the life of the deceased; retelling and remembering things about the loved one.
- Disorientation
- Feeling lost about the future and loss of routine

Behavioral

- Crying at unexpected times
- Sighing
- Sleep disturbances
- Lack of appetite
- Social withdrawal
- Avoiding reminders of the deceased
- Searching for and calling out the name of the deceased
- Visiting places or carrying objects that remind one of the deceased

Physical

- Lack of energy
- Muscular weakness
- Hollowness of the stomach
- Tightness in the chest or throat
- Sensitivity to noise
- Shortness of breath
- Dry mouth

Some steps you can take to further your healing journey with grief:

- Be patient and kind to yourself. The journey of grief is unique to every individual.
- Find persons and/or groups that can offer you support and help.
- Gather with family and/or friends and reminisce about your loved one.
- Participate in spiritual and/or religious practices that bring you comfort.
- Use the arts like poetry, art, music, etc. to express your grief.
- Continue, change, and/or create new rituals for remembrance and honoring your loved one.
- Read literature on grief to help you understand where you are in your grief process.
- Grief can be complicated and sometimes debilitating. If you find grief interfering with your ability to work and enjoy time with friend and family, consider seeking help from a mental health specialist and/or participating in a grief support group.
- Allow yourself to cry. Tears release tension.

- Honor your need to slow down and rest – time might feel different when you’re grieving.
- Maintain routines that help nourish your body (healthy eating, exercise, and restful sleep).
- Be cautious in making big decisions or changes in haste (e.g., with finances, work, etc.).
- Do not rush to put away or give away your loved one’s belongings.
- Be mindful of doing nice things for others – helping others can remind us we’re not alone.
- Search the internet for resources - there are many grief and bereavement articles and books online – some offered for free.

Contact PIH Health if you are interested in additional support such as bereavement resources, grief support groups, and/or referrals to grief support organizations:

PIH Health Healing After Loss	562.947.3668
PIH Health Living With Loss	562.698.0811 Ext. 12500

Other grief support services:

Our House Grief Support Center	888.417.1444	OurHouse-Grief.Org
Grief Share support groups	800.395.5755	GriefShare.Org
Grief.com	818.762.7901	Grief.com
The Compassionate Friends <i>(support after a child dies)</i>	877.969.0010	CompassionateFriends.Org
Los Angeles County Coroner	mec.lacounty.gov/grief-bereavement-resources	



Giving Thanks and Honoring Your Loved One

Memorial gifts offer a meaningful way to remember a loved one. When you give in memory of a loved one, not only do you honor them, your gift also helps special causes and organizations that were important to your loved one and/or meaningful to you.

Honor a care provider: Would you like to honor a care provider who provided exceptional care to you and your loved one? With PIH Health's Honor Your Caregiver program, patients and their loved ones can visit PIHHealth.org/Honor to share a message of thanks and/or make a donation in recognition of any team members who helped shape your PIH Health experience.

A donation to PIH Health helps maintain the highest standard of care at PIH Health. Your donation to PIH Health Foundation can be used to support the area of greatest need or you can choose to support a specific PIH Health Hospital service or program that was instrumental in your loved one's care.

Ways to Give

Memorial Gifts: Gifts in memory of a loved one can be made via credit card online at PIHHealth.org/Support or you can contact PIH Health Foundation at 562.698.0811 Ext. 81520 to discuss donations by check and other options.

Spiritual Care Services Endowment: Gifts made to support PIH Health Foundation endowment provide long-term financial stability for PIH Health that has a daily impact on patients and our community. The James P. Fitzgerald MD Spiritual Care Services, one of the premier endowed funds at PIH Health Foundation, supports our Spiritual Care Program. It ensures that patients and their loved ones, during their most vulnerable moments, receive the nurturing and supportive care of our dedicated chaplains. Please contact PIH Health Foundation to discuss making a gift to support endowment.

Ask how you can make a difference with your contribution to PIH Health.

Contact:

Email: PIHHealth.Foundation@PIHHealth.org

Phone: 562.698.0811 Ext. 81520

Website: PIHHealth.Org

Tax ID# 95-3761274



Quick Reference Contact Information

PIH Health Whittier Hospital

Nursing Administration 562.698.0811 Ext. 12501
Case Management / Social Services 562.698.0811 Ext. 12955
Chaplains 562.698.0811 Ext. 12500

PIH Health Good Samaritan Hospital

Nursing Administration 213.977.2085
Case Management / Social Services 213.977.2960
Chaplains 213.482.2739

PIH Health Downey Hospital

Nursing Administration 562.904.5000 Ext. 25114
Case Management / Social Services 562.904.5000 Ext. 25313
Chaplains 562.904.5000 Ext. 25075

PIH Health Palliative Care

562.967.2273 PIHHealth.org/PalliativeCare

PIH Health Hospice Services

562.947.3668 PIHHealth.org/Hospice

PIH Health Advance Care Planning Education

562.698.0811 Ext. 13337

PIH Health Grief and Bereavement Support Groups (registration required)

Healing After Loss 562.947.3668
Living With Loss 562.698.0811 Ext. 12500

Mortuary / Funeral Home search help

publichealth.lacounty.gov/dca/dcafunerals.htm
www.parting.com/

California Department of Public Health (Vital Records)

www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHSI/Pages/Vital-Records.aspx

Los Angeles County Public Administrator

213.974-0460
ttc.lacounty.gov/public-administrator-general-information/

Los Angeles County Coroner

323.343.0512 mec.lacounty.gov/for-mortuaries/

Social Security Administration

800.772.1213 SSA.Gov

Veteran's Administration

800.827.1000 VA.gov

Internal Revenue Service

800.829.1040 IRS.Gov

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Cherry blossoms can represent the fragility and the beauty of life – both a reminder that life can be overwhelmingly beautiful and also that it can feel too brief. When in brilliant bloom for a short time each year, cherry blossoms serve as a visual reminder of how life can be both precarious and precious.

