



# Guide to How Social Media and Tech Companies Handle Accounts of Deceased Users

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***Prepared by the Senior Law Project, Volunteers of Legal Service. This guide outlines the policies and procedures of major social media and technology platforms regarding the accounts of users who have passed away. Each section outlines memorialization options, deletion procedures, required documentation, and available support links.***



## **Facebook (Meta)**

**Memorialization:** A “Remembering” tag is added to the deceased user’s profile. Friends and family can post tributes and the user’s existing privacy settings remain in place.

**Legacy Contact:** The user can designate someone to manage their account upon death.

**Deletion:** The account can be deleted upon request by a legal or family representative. This requires a death certificate and proof of authority.

**More Info:** [Facebook Help](#)



## **Instagram (Meta)**

Memorialization: A “Remembering” tag is added next to the persons name on their profile. All posts that the deceased person shared remain visible to the audience they were shared with.

No one is able to log into a memorialized account on Instagram. Therefore, no changes can be made to the existing photos/videos, comments, privacy settings, or profile photo.

Both friends and family can contact Instagram Support to memorialize an account.

Deletion: In order to request deletion of a deceased users account, a verified immediate family member or executor must contact Instagram and provide proof of death (death certificate) and their relationship to the deceased.

**More Info and Request Form: [Instagram Report a Deceased Persons Account](#)**



## **TikTok**

Memorialization: Currently does not support profile memorialization. Profile either remains online or can be deleted.

Deletion: The account can be deleted upon request to TikTok Privacy Support by verified family or a legal representative of the deceased. A death certificate and proof of relationship or authority must be submitted along with the request.

**More Info: [TikTok Privacy Support](#)**



## **X (formerly Twitter)**

**Memorialization:** Currently does not support profile memorialization. Account remains active unless a request for deletion is submitted.

**Deletion:** A request must be submitted to the X Help Center by an immediate family member or legally authorized representative. Basic information must be provided about the deceased's account including their X username.

A copy of the deceased's Death Certificate must then be submitted upon request by an X support representative.

The requestor must provide evidence of their own identification by providing a copy of their ID. Depending on the requestor, additional information may be required. An immediate family member requesting deletion of the account will need to provide proof of their relationship to the deceased. A legal representative such as an executor will need to provide documentation that gives them the legal authority to deactivate the account.

**More Info:** [X Help Center](#)



## **Google Suite (Gmail, YouTube, Drive, etc)**

**Memorialization:** Inactive Account Manager allows users to designate what happens to their account after they pass away. Up to 10 contacts can be permitted to access Google account information.

**Accessing Content:** Google may provide content from a deceased user's account to family members or legal representatives, but this is limited to specific information, and they will not receive login credentials. Access is not guaranteed, especially to Gmail or YouTube without a court order

Deletion: Accounts can be setup to automatically delete data after a set period of inactivity. Family members or legal representatives can submit a request to access or delete the deceased users account upon providing a copy of the death certificate and documentation proving legal authority if applicable.

**More Info:** [Submit a Request Deceased User's Account](#)



**Whatsapp**

Memorialization: Currently not supported.

Deletion: Account automatically deletes after 120 days of inactivity, or by request to Whatsapp Support upon providing a copy of death certificate.

**More Info:** [WhatsApp Contact](#)



**Snapchat**

Memorialization: Currently not supported.

Deletion: Family must request account deletion via Snapchat Support. Upon receiving a copy of the death certificate, requestor's contact details, and relationship to the deceased, Snapchat Support will delete the account.

**More Info:** [Snapchat Help](#)



Accessing Content: Provides a process for authorized individuals to to access and manage the account. A support ticket must be created which includes the following information:

- The full name of the deceased person
- The email address associated with that person's Dropbox account
- Your name, mailing address, email address, and your relationship to the deceased person
- A photocopy of your government-issued ID
- A valid court order establishing that it was the deceased person's intent that you have access to the files in their account after the person passed away, and that Dropbox is compelled by law to provide the deceased person's files to you

Deletion: No automatic deletion upon death, but inactive accounts will be deleted after a period of inactivity, which will be prefaced by an email warned about impending deletion.

**More Info:** [Dropbox Support](#)

## Summary Chart:

Platform	Memorialization	Deletion	Documentation Required	Data Access by Executor or Immediate Family
Facebook	☑ Yes	☑ Yes	Death cert. + legal proof	☑ With legacy contact
Instagram	☑ Yes	☑ Yes	Death cert./obituary	✗ Not available
TikTok	✗ No	☑ Yes	Death cert. + ID	✗ Not available
X (Twitter)	✗ No	☑ Yes	Death cert. + authority	✗ Not available
Snapchat	✗ No	☑ Yes	Death cert. + proof	✗ Not available
Google	⚙ Inactive Mgr.	☑ Yes	Court docs + death cert.	☑ With approval
Dropbox	✗ No	☑ Yes	Executor docs + death cert.	⚠ Case by case
WhatsApp	✗ No	☑ Yes	Death certificate	✗ Not available

**\*\*\* This guide is for informational purposes only and does not constitute legal advice. This guide has been prepared by the Senior Law Project, VOLS, and is current as of May, 2025. \*\*\***