



NYLK
DIGITAL ESTATE MANAGEMENT

FREE RESOURCE · NO. 03

The Executor's First 14 Days

A calm, practical guide to a loved one's digital life — what to protect immediately, what to find, and what can safely wait.

You don't have to get everything right today. Just the few things that can't wait.

NYLK · nylk.com.au
Version 1.0 · July 2026 · Australia



First: we're sorry you're reading this.

If this guide is in your hands, you've likely just lost someone, and someone — a will, a solicitor, or the family — has asked you to take care of things. The digital side of an estate feels enormous. It isn't, once it's ordered. In the first fortnight only a handful of things are genuinely urgent; this guide separates them from everything that can wait.

BEFORE YOU TOUCH ANYTHING

In Australia, your formal authority as executor comes from the will and, for many institutions, a Grant of Probate. Digital platforms are a special case: with no Australian law compelling access, each platform follows its own policy, and acting on an account before you understand that policy can close doors permanently. The golden rule of the first fortnight is **preserve first, act second**. You lose nothing by keeping things running for two weeks. You can lose a great deal by deleting, cancelling or resetting too early.

In the first week, do

- Keep their phone charged, on, and safe — it is the single most important object in the estate
- Keep the phone plan active — texts to that number verify logins everywhere
- Order 5–10 certified copies of the death certificate when available
- Redirect their mail through Australia Post
- Start one list: every account, card and subscription you encounter
- Engage the estate's solicitor early — especially if a business is involved

Please don't

- Guess passwords — repeated failures trigger lockouts that can become permanent
- Factory-reset, update or sell any device — resets destroy access and evidence
- Cancel their phone or email plans "to save money" — that severs two-factor codes for everything
- Delete social media accounts in grief — memorialisation is reversible thinking time; deletion isn't
- Log in and move money — banks have deceased-estate processes; using their login can create real problems for you

About this guide

This is general information for Australian executors, not legal advice, and it doesn't replace your solicitor. Where a Digital Directive or similar plan exists, follow it — it outranks the generic steps here. Days are a guide, not a deadline; grief doesn't run to schedule, and neither must you.

Days 1-3 Secure and preserve

Nothing needs to be accessed yet. These first steps simply stop anything being lost or exploited while the family gathers itself.

1 Gather and secure the devices

Phone, laptop, tablets, hardware wallets, USB drives. Charge them, note where each was found, and store them somewhere safe. Do not reset, update or unlock-guess anything.

2 Keep the phone number alive

Pay the next bill if needed. That number receives the verification codes that make almost every later step possible. Put it on a "do not cancel for 90 days" list along with their email and internet plans.

3 Ask about the passcode — once, properly

A partner or family member often knows the phone passcode. Record it securely if so. If not, don't attempt guesses; note it as unknown and move on — there are formal paths later.

4 Secure the paper

Wallet, filing cabinet, safe, desk drawer: collect statements, bills, insurance letters, and any notebook that looks like a password list. Paper is your discovery map for week two.

5 Watch for the clocks already ticking

Two deadlines exist from day one: platforms delete inactive accounts on their own schedules, and criminals monitor death notices to work unattended accounts — deceased profiles are far less monitored than living ones. Preservation now defeats both.

6 Delegate one thing: the funeral is not yours to run

If you're the executor, your lane is the estate. Let others carry what can be carried; this fortnight asks enough of you.

If a NYLK Digital Directive exists

Contact NYLK before doing anything else — hello@nylk.com.au. Verification starts immediately, and once your authority is confirmed you'll receive the full inventory, per-asset instructions and access pathways. Most of this guide then becomes unnecessary: the map has already been drawn for you.



Days 4–7 Discover and document

Now you build the picture. You're not accessing accounts yet — you're finding out what exists, so nothing is missed when formal processes begin.

1 Order death certificates in bulk

Five to ten certified copies. Nearly every platform and institution wants its own; ordering once saves weeks of waiting later.

2 Follow the money trail

Bank and card statements are the best account-discovery tool that exists: every subscription, every renewal, every exchange deposit leaves a line item. Highlight every recurring charge — each one is an account to deal with.

3 Map the email situation

Identify their primary address and any older ones. Check whether Google's Inactive Account Manager or an Apple Legacy Contact was ever configured — if yes, those are your legitimate front doors and the process is dramatically easier.

4 Build the master inventory

One spreadsheet or notebook: account · platform · what it holds · status · next action. Update it as things surface. This document is the estate's single source of truth from here on.

5 Note the platform rules before you apply to any of them

Each platform has a different door, and using the wrong one can lock the right one:

PLATFORM	WHAT'S POSSIBLE	WHAT THEY'LL ASK FOR
Google	Data release if Inactive Account Manager was set; otherwise a discretionary request process	Death certificate, proof of relationship, patience
Apple	Access via Legacy Contact if configured; otherwise a court order is required	Legacy key, or Supreme Court application
Meta (Facebook / Instagram)	Memorialise or delete; legacy contact manages a memorial profile but can't read messages	Proof of death; proof of authority for deletion
Microsoft	One copy of data posted to next of kin, then account deletion	Death certificate, proof of kinship
Banks & super	Established deceased-estate teams; the one category with a legislated process	Death certificate, will / probate



Days 8–14 Notify and act — carefully

With the picture built, formal notifications begin. Institutions first, sentiment later, deletion last of all.

1 Notify banks and the super fund

Their deceased-estate teams freeze what must be frozen and guide the paperwork. Ask the super fund about the binding death benefit nomination — super sits outside the will, and the nomination usually decides who receives it.

2 Notify government services

Services Australia and the ATO; myGov links Centrelink, Medicare and tax in one place. Your solicitor or accountant can carry much of this.

3 Stop the subscription bleed

Work your highlighted statement lines. The average Australian carries 12+ subscriptions and estates leak roughly \$2,400 a year through unmanaged renewals. Cancel what's clearly personal; pause rather than cancel anything tied to a business or shared family use.

4 Decide memorialise vs delete — without rushing

Memorialising Facebook or Instagram preserves photos and freezes the account against misuse; deletion is forever. If the family is unsure, memorialise now — it keeps every option open and protects the account meanwhile.

5 Export what platforms will give you

Where legitimate access exists, take full exports early — photo libraries especially. Platform shutdowns and inactivity deletions don't wait for probate (this year alone has seen major services switch off with weeks of notice).

6 File what waits

Domain renewals, crypto, monetised channels, the deceased's business systems: note them in the inventory with renewal dates, and take them to the solicitor rather than solving them solo. Nothing on this list benefits from speed; all of it benefits from advice.

And look after yourself

Executor work is grief with homework. Two weeks of steady, small steps beats two days of frantic ones — and if it becomes too much, handing the digital side to a professional service is a legitimate choice, not a failure.



"We've been expecting your call."

Everything in this guide is what an executor faces when no plan exists. When the person had a NYLK Digital Directive, the first fortnight sounds different: you call, we verify your authority, and you receive a complete, current inventory — every account, what it holds, how access works, and exactly what they wanted done with each one. The fourteen days of detective work in this guide collapse into one conversation.

THE SAME FORTNIGHT, SIDE BY SIDE

TASK	WITHOUT A PLAN	WITH A DIGITAL DIRECTIVE
Finding the accounts	Weeks of statements, inboxes and guesswork — and you'll still miss some	Already inventoried, current to the last annual review
Getting access	Platform-by-platform applications, each with its own proof and timeline	Access pathways pre-mapped per platform; released on verified authority
Knowing their wishes	Family debates about what they "would have wanted"	Keep, close, transfer or memorialise — recorded per asset, in their words
Security risk	Unmonitored accounts exposed while you work through the list	First-week protection protocol, with known-compromised accounts flagged
Your load	Grief with homework	Grief with a guide

If you're the executor right now

Keep this guide, take it slowly, and lean on the estate's solicitor. If the digital side becomes overwhelming, NYLK's post-loss services can take over the inventory and recovery work — hello@nylk.com.au.

If you're reading this in better times

The kindest inheritance is order. A Digital Directive means the person you name never has to live this guide — because the map will already exist. That's the gold standard, and it's built while life is ordinary.

Don't leave your family the hard version

Free resources, and the service that makes them unnecessary — nylk.com.au

[NYLK.COM.AU](https://nylk.com.au)

Platform processes per Google, Apple, Meta and Microsoft policy documentation, current July 2026 — policies change; check before applying. Subscription figures: NYLK research library, 2026. This guide is general information for Australian executors and is not legal advice; consult the estate's solicitor for your circumstances.

Your Legacy. Poured Forward.