

Accessing Outlook.com, OneDrive and other Microsoft services when someone has died

Outlook.com OneDrive (home or personal) OneDrive for Mac

We understand that these might be difficult times for those seeking access to their loved one's email or storage accounts, but for privacy and other legal reasons, we are unable to provide any information about any accounts in question. We take our customers' privacy concerns and our legal obligations very seriously. Read more about [Privacy at Microsoft](#).

What to do when someone has died or has become incapacitated

You don't need to contact us to let us know that someone has died or has become incapacitated.

If you know the account credentials, you can close the account yourself. If you don't know the account credentials, it will be closed automatically after two (2) years of inactivity.

If you have access to the account

Read <https://support.microsoft.com/help/12412/> and follow the steps to **Close the account**. After you close your Microsoft account, you can reopen it within 60 days by signing in again. We hold on to your data for this period so you won't lose anything if you change your mind. However, after those 60 days have passed, we permanently delete the account and its data.

If you do not have access to the account

Ensure that any subscriptions to Microsoft are cancelled. You may stop any subscriptions to Microsoft by closing the customer's bank account or credit card, revoke authorizations or informing the bank. Outlook.com and OneDrive accounts will be frozen after 1 year and any email messages

and files stored on OneDrive will be deleted shortly after. Microsoft accounts expire after two (2) years of inactivity. For more information, read section 4 of the [Microsoft Services Agreement](#).

If you need access to the account, seek legal guidance

Microsoft must first be formally served with a valid subpoena or court order to consider whether it is able to lawfully release a deceased or incapacitated user's information regarding a personal email account (this includes email accounts with addresses that end in Outlook.com, Live.com, Hotmail.com, and MSN.com), OneDrive storage, or any other aspect of their Microsoft account. Microsoft will only respond to non-criminal subpoenas and court orders served on Microsoft's registered agent in the requesting party's state or region and is unable to respond to faxed or emailed requests for such matters.

Any decision to provide the contents of a personal email or cloud storage account will be made only after careful review and consideration of applicable laws. Please understand that Microsoft may be unable to provide the account content, and sending a request or providing a subpoena or court order does not guarantee that we will be able to assist you.

Regional variations:

- For customers in Europe, Microsoft will respond to non-criminal subpoenas and court orders served on Microsoft Ireland Operations Ltd's registered address at 70 Sir John Rogerson's Quay, Dublin 2, Ireland.
- Customers in Germany may contact Microsoft customer support in order to be granted access to the account. Customers must provide proof of legal successorship and the following documentation:
 - A copy of the death certificate
 - A copy of the deceased person's ID or passport
 - A copy of certificate of inheritance (Erbschein) or other documentation from a court that proves sole heirship, or names and addresses of all heirs and consent that you are entitled to act on their behalf
 - A copy of the requestor's ID or passport, or a signed power of attorney.