

## Monitoring if a Defendant / Judgment Debtor Has Died

Hello all,

Do folks have a service / tips on how to check if someone has passed away?

I have a judgment against them and looking to open up a probate matter when and if it happens.

State is Texas.

(I am sorry for the morbid nature of the post.)

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I'm assuming this person doesn't have a lawyer.

First, I'd check the obits. Next assuming they had someone close enough to make a Social Security claim you could check the Social Security death index. Or you can hire Ari Morse.

John Davidson, Pennsylvania

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In Pennsylvania, you can file what's called a caveat with the register of wills office in the county where the person resides. If a will is filed or other probate is open, you would receive notice. This isn't exactly Notification of death, but it is notification of an estate being opened and gives you an opportunity to assert your claim against the estate.

You can also check death notices in the local newspaper. In the old days they used to be newspaper clipping services. There are probably digital analogues.

Miriam Jacobson, Pennsylvania

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The Social Security death index (SSDI), which used to be available online, no longer is. It's available through ancestry.com or one of the other similar sites. It is not very current, probably a couple years out of date, so it's not a very reliable source for that sort of information.

Miriam Jacobson

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If the name is unusual enough, set a Google alert on it. I am keeping tabs on a few judgment debtors, that way -- you know, just in case they win the lottery, or something.

Timothy A. Gutknecht, Illinois

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Good suggestion. I'm into belt and suspenders, so I also have Talkwalker alerts, <https://www.talkwalker.com/free-social-media-monitoring-analytics-tools> Like Google alerts they're free. A lot of what the two pick up is the same, but sometimes, one will pick up something that the other misses.

James S. Tyre, California