



YOUR FRIEND FOR LIFE AND BEYOND

## The Claim Readiness Guide

Everything your family needs to know about filing claims, avoiding rejections, and recovering what is rightfully theirs.

**Rs.1.8T**

lies unclaimed across institutions

**26K Cr**

insurance claims rejected in FY24

**25+ yrs**

average inheritance dispute duration

**Someone who cares about you shared this guide with you.**

That small act of sharing says something big. It means someone in your life wants to make sure your family is never left scrambling to file a claim, never turned away for missing documents, and never loses what is rightfully theirs. We are grateful to them, and we hope this guide helps you as much as it helped them.

[www.myafterlife.in](http://www.myafterlife.in)

Free to read. Free to share. No sign-up required.

## WHY THIS GUIDE EXISTS

# Because families deserve answers, not paperwork.

When someone passes away, the last thing a grieving family should face is bureaucratic confusion. Yet that is exactly what happens to millions of Indian families every year. Insurance claims get rejected. Bank accounts get frozen. Mutual fund redemptions stall. Property transfers drag through courts for decades.

This guide exists to change that. It breaks down the claim process in plain language so your family knows exactly what to do, what documents to gather, and where to go for help. No jargon. No legal complexity. Just clarity when it matters most.

### What's inside this guide

**Section 1** - Why claims fail: The 6 reasons families lose what is theirs

**Section 2** - A 10-point Claim Readiness Checklist you can act on today

**Section 3** - 8 myths about claims that most people believe (and are wrong about)

**Section 4** - Tools and resources to check where you stand

Each section is designed to be useful on its own. Read what matters to you, skip what doesn't.

### Who is this guide for?

**If you have a bank account** - your family needs to know how to claim it.

**If you have insurance** - one missing document can delay a payout by months.

**If you have investments** - nominations alone are not enough to guarantee access.

**If someone depends on you financially** - their financial security depends on your preparation.

The question is not whether your family will need to file a claim someday. The question is whether they will be ready when that day comes.

*"The best time to prepare was yesterday. The second best time is right now."*

## SECTION 01

## 6 Reasons Claims Fail or Take Forever

These are not rare edge cases. These are the everyday realities that millions of Indian families face. Understanding them is the first step to making sure your family never does.

**REASON #1****No Knowledge of What Exists**

Most families don't know the full picture. Bank accounts in different cities, old LIC policies, forgotten PF accounts, dormant mutual funds. When a family member passes, the first challenge isn't filing a claim - it's knowing what to claim.

**REASON #2****Complex, Confusing Processes**

Every institution has different paperwork, different timelines, different rules. Banks need legal heir certificates. Insurance companies need specific forms. Mutual funds need KYC documents. One wrong step and the claim gets delayed by months.

**REASON #3****Family Is Already Grieving**

The emotional weight of loss combined with bureaucratic complexity creates an impossible situation. Families are expected to navigate legal processes, gather documents, visit offices, and negotiate with institutions - all while processing grief.

**SECTION 01 (CONTINUED)****REASON #4****Limited Resources and Time Pressure**

Many families can't afford to hire lawyers or financial advisors for every claim. Meanwhile, deadlines tick away. Insurance claims have time limits. Bank accounts can become inoperative. Every month of delay reduces the chance of recovery.

**REASON #5****The Cost of Delay**

Delayed claims mean delayed financial security. EMIs continue, medical bills pile up, school fees are due. The very money meant to protect a family becomes unreachable precisely when they need it most. Court disputes can stretch 25+ years.

**REASON #6****Institutional Friction**

Branches that won't cooperate. Officers who redirect you to another department. Toll-free numbers that keep you on hold. Forms that get 'lost.' The system isn't designed to make claiming easy - and families bear the cost.

**The common thread?**

Every single one of these problems is preventable. Not with more money or better lawyers, but with simple preparation done in advance. The next sections show you exactly how.

## SECTION 02

## Your Claim Readiness Checklist

Print this page. Go through each item honestly. Tick off what is done, and note what needs action. This single page can be the difference between a smooth claim and years of confusion.

### Knowledge & Documentation

- Your family members know how many bank accounts you have and where they are. **[Knowledge]**
- You have a centralised record of all financial assets with account numbers, policy numbers, and institution details. **[Documentation]**
- Physical documents (property deeds, original policies, FD receipts) are stored in a known, accessible location. **[Storage]**
- Digital copies of all documents are stored in a secure vault with trusted contact access. **[Backup]**

### Nominations & KYC

- Nominations are updated on all bank accounts and fixed deposits. **[Nominations]**
- Nominations are updated on all insurance policies (life, health, vehicle). **[Nominations]**
- Mutual fund and demat account nominations are in place. **[Nominations]**
- KYC details (PAN, Aadhaar, address, phone number) are current across all institutions. **[KYC]**

### Readiness

- All insurance premiums are being paid on time (or via auto-debit). **[Premiums]**
- You have written a will that covers all your assets and clearly names beneficiaries. **[Will]**
- At least one trusted person knows where your physical and digital documents are stored. **[Access]**
- You have a plan for your digital assets (email, social media, crypto). **[Digital]**

#### How many did you tick?

**9-10:** You are well prepared. Share this guide with someone who isn't.

**5-8:** Good start, but there are gaps that could create problems.

**0-4:** Your family is at significant risk. Start with the first unchecked item today.

Take the interactive version on our website: [www.myafterlife.in/features/claim-assistance](http://www.myafterlife.in/features/claim-assistance)

## SECTION 03

## 8 Things Most People Get Wrong About Filing Claims

These are the beliefs that cost families time, money, and peace of mind. Every single one of them is either completely wrong or dangerously incomplete.

**01** **WRONG**  
**"Nominees automatically become the legal owners of the asset."**

**ACTUALLY**

A nominee is a custodian, not the owner. Legal heirs determined by succession law (or a will) are the rightful owners. Without a will, the nominee holds the asset but legal heirs can and often do challenge ownership in court.

**02** **WRONG**  
**"If I have a will, my family won't face any claim issues."**

**ACTUALLY**

A will helps enormously, but it doesn't eliminate paperwork. Families still need death certificates, KYC documents, and institution-specific forms. What a will does is remove ambiguity about who gets what - which prevents the costliest delays.

**03** **WRONG**  
**"Insurance companies must settle claims within 30 days of receiving all documents."**

**ACTUALLY**

This is actually true. Under IRDAI regulations, insurers must settle a claim within 30 days of receiving the last required document. If they need to investigate, they have 90 days. Knowing this timeline protects families from unnecessary delays.

**04** **WRONG**  
**"You can claim unclaimed bank deposits even after 10 years."**

**ACTUALLY**

Yes, this is true. Unclaimed deposits are transferred to the RBI after 10 years, but they can still be claimed. The RBI's UDGM portal helps trace unclaimed deposits. The money doesn't disappear - but finding it gets harder with time.

## SECTION 03 (CONTINUED)

**05** **WRONG**  
**"A succession certificate is needed only for property claims."**

**ACTUALLY**

Succession certificates are needed for any asset where nomination is absent or disputed including bank accounts, insurance payouts, mutual funds, and securities. It's a court-issued document that establishes legal heirship.

**06** **WRONG**  
**"If my spouse is the joint account holder, they don't need any documents to access the money."**

**ACTUALLY**

It depends on the account mandate. 'Either or Survivor' allows continued access, but 'Former or Survivor' restricts it. Banks may still freeze the account temporarily and require a death certificate and KYC verification before releasing funds.

**07** **WRONG**  
**"Claim rejection can be appealed to IRDAI Grievance Redressal."**

**ACTUALLY**

Absolutely true. If an insurance claim is rejected, you can escalate to the IRDAI Integrated Grievance Management System (IGMS), then to the Insurance Ombudsman. Knowing your appeal rights is crucial - many rejected claims get reversed on appeal.

**08** **WRONG**  
**"Digital assets like crypto wallets and online accounts can be claimed by family members."**

**ACTUALLY**

Without access credentials or a plan, digital assets are often permanently lost. Most platforms don't have inheritance processes. Crypto wallets without seed phrases become inaccessible forever. This is why documenting digital assets is essential.

**Think you know your claims?**

In our Claim Readiness Quiz, only 30% of participants scored above 75% on basic claim questions. The average score was 4.6 out of 8. We all think we know this stuff - but most of us get the basics wrong.

Test yourself: [www.myafterlife.in/features/claim-assistance](http://www.myafterlife.in/features/claim-assistance)

## SECTION 04

## Tools to Help You Get Started

Before you prepare, understand where you stand. These tools are available free on the Afterlife website.

### Claim Readiness Quiz

Test what you actually know about filing claims, nominations, and succession. 8 quick questions, instant scoring with community benchmarks, and a full explanation for every answer. Takes less than 2 minutes.

[www.myafterlife.in/features/claim-assistance](http://www.myafterlife.in/features/claim-assistance)

### Claim Readiness Checker

A 10-point self-assessment that tells you whether your family could claim your assets without complications. Covers nominations, documentation, KYC, and digital assets. Get an instant readiness score.

[www.myafterlife.in/features/claim-assistance](http://www.myafterlife.in/features/claim-assistance)

### Succession Planning Quiz

Test your knowledge of wills, succession law, and estate planning. 8 quick questions with detailed explanations. Complements this guide perfectly.

[www.myafterlife.in/features/digital-will](http://www.myafterlife.in/features/digital-will)

All these tools are accessible on [www.myafterlife.in](http://www.myafterlife.in). The quizzes and checkers are free to use - no payment or commitment needed.

# AFTERLIFE<sup>✦</sup>

## Your family deserves a smooth claim.

Not rejection letters. Not frozen accounts. Not years in court.

Getting claim-ready takes less than 10 minutes to start.

### Get Claim-Ready Today

Store your asset details in the Digital Vault. Update your nominations.

Assign Trusted Contacts. Ensure your family never has to struggle.

[www.myafterlife.in](http://www.myafterlife.in)

Available on Web, iOS, and Android

### Now it's your turn to be that person.

Someone cared enough to send this to you.

Now think of one person in your life who needs to read this.

Your parents. Your sibling. Your best friend. That cousin who thinks "nominations are enough."

One share. Two minutes of their time. And maybe - just maybe - an entire family avoids months of rejection letters, frozen accounts, and heartbreak.

**That's not a forward. That's a lifeline.**

[www.myafterlife.in/features/claim-assistance](http://www.myafterlife.in/features/claim-assistance)

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This guide is for informational purposes only and does not constitute legal or financial advice. Please consult qualified professionals for specific guidance.