



SINAI MEMORIAL

The Bay Area’s nonprofit Jewish funeral home

Sinai Memorial Obituary Templates

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How to Use These Templates

These obituary and death-notice templates are offered as flexible guides to help families and communities share accurate information and honor a life with dignity. You may use them exactly as written or adapt them as needed—adding, removing, or rephrasing sections to reflect personal values, cultural practices, religious traditions, and publishing requirements.

Not every section is necessary. Choose the details that feel most meaningful and appropriate for the audience and setting. Language cues such as “optional” are intended as gentle prompts.

Trust your instincts—what matters most is that the words feel true to you and to the person you are honoring.

Obituary Template: *Website*

[Full Name], [age], of [city], died [peacefully / surrounded by loved ones / at home / at the hospital] on [day, date].

Born on [date] in [city/state], [first name] was the [son/daughter/child] of [parents’ names]. [He/She/They] grew up in [place], where [brief detail about childhood, education, or early influences—1 sentence].

[First name] spent [their/his/her] life [brief summary of work, vocation, or primary roles—profession, service, caregiving, artistry, activism, etc.]. [He/She/They] were known for [key qualities—kindness, curiosity, humor, devotion, creativity, resilience], and [one short, unique detail: what they loved doing, how people experienced them].

A [devoted / loving / proud] [partner, parent, grandparent, sibling, friend], [first name] found deep meaning in [family, community, faith, learning, justice, nature, travel]. [Optional sentence about values, beliefs, or what mattered most.]

[First name] is survived by [list of close family]. [He/She/They] were preceded in death by [names, if applicable].

A [funeral / memorial service / celebration of life] will be held on [day, date, time] at [location].

[Optional: service will be livestreamed / private / by invitation only.]

[Optional: Interment will follow at [cemetery name], [city].]

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to [organization(s)], in honor of [first name]'s life and legacy.

[First name] will be deeply missed and lovingly remembered by all who knew [him/her/them].

Obituary Template: *Newspaper*

[Full Name], [age], of [city], died on [date].¹ Born in [place] on [date], [he/she/they] was the [child] of [parents' names].

[First name] was known for [brief descriptors—kindness, devotion to family, commitment to community, professional or volunteer life]. [He/She/They] took great pride in [family / work / Jewish life / learning / service / passions] and will be remembered for [one human detail or value].

[First name] is survived by [spouse/partner], [children], [grandchildren], [other close family]. [He/She/They] was preceded in death by [names, if applicable].

A [funeral / graveside service] was held on [date] at [location]. May [his/her/their] memory be for a blessing.

Obituary Template: *Alumni Network*

[Full Name] [Class Year], of [city/state], passed away on [date] at the age of [age].

A graduate of [School Name], [first name] earned a [degree(s)] in [field(s) of study]. During [his/her/their] time at the university, [he/she/they] were involved in [student organizations, athletics, honors, leadership roles, or notable experiences—brief].

¹ Some newspapers have strict length and content requirements; cause of death is optional and **not** required.

Following graduation, [first name] went on to [brief overview of career, vocation, service, or major accomplishments]. [He/She/They] were known for [personal qualities—dedication, curiosity, leadership, generosity] and maintained a strong connection to [the school / alumni community / mentoring / continued learning].

[First name] is survived by [spouse/partner and/or family as appropriate].

Obituary / Death Notice Template: *Newsletter Blurb*

[Full Name], of [city/neighborhood], passed away on [date]. [First name] was a valued member of the [community/organization/congregation], known for [one or two qualities or contributions]. [He/She/They] will be deeply missed by all who knew [him/her/them].

We extend our condolences to [first name]'s family and loved ones.
May the family be comforted among the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem.²

Obituary / Death Notice Email Template: *For Friends and Family (Extended)*

Subject: With Sadness, We Share the Passing of [Full Name], 7"ט

Dear [Family and Friends / Dear Friends and Community],

We share with deep sadness that [Full Name] died on [day, date]. [He/She/They] was [age] years old.

[First name] was known for [kindness, devotion to family, commitment to community, love of learning, generosity, etc.], and touched many lives through [one brief sentence about what mattered most]. [Optional sentence about values, community involvement, or personal legacy.]

[First name] is lovingly remembered by [spouse/partner, children, grandchildren, siblings, and/or other close family].

May [his/her/their] memory be for a blessing.

The [funeral / graveside service / levayah] will be held on [day, date, time] at [location].

[Optional: service will be livestreamed / private.]

[Optional: Interment will follow at [cemetery name], [city].]

[Optional: Shiva information, including dates, times, and location or livestream details.]

² This is a translation from the traditional Jewish expression of condolence in Hebrew "HaMakom yenachem etekhem betokh she'ar avelei Tziyon viYerushalayim" commonly said to mourners during shiva, the first structured period of Jewish mourning.

At this time, the family appreciates [privacy / the comfort of prayers and messages].

[Optional: In lieu of flowers, tzedakah may be made to...]

Thank you for holding [first name] and our family in your hearts during this tender time.

With gratitude,

[Your name / The family of...]

Obituary / Death Notice Email Template: *For Friends and Family (Abbreviated)*

Subject: Baruch Dayan HaEmet³ — [Full Name] ל"ט⁴

We are saddened to share that [Full Name] passed away on [date].

Funeral and shiva details [to follow] [are below].

May [his/her/their] memory be for a blessing.

[Name / Family]

Obituary Sample: *For Reference*

The following obituary is a fictional example, using real family names by a staff member of the Sinai Memorial community with permission. It is shared for illustrative purposes only. This example is offered to help others see how a completed obituary might look. Families are encouraged to write what feels true for them.

Les Finkelstein died after a full life marked by deep connection to family and community.

Les was a devoted spouse, parent, and steady presence in the lives of those who knew him. He was someone people turned to—for conversation, perspective, and comedy—and he carried his relationships with care and intention. Throughout his life, Les found meaning in family, shared history, and the everyday rituals that bind people together. He believed in showing up, staying engaged, and making room for laughter as well as reflection.

Les is lovingly remembered by his friends and family, including his beloved wife, Ruthie; his children and grandchildren: Jeff, Danny, Lisa, Sadie, and Jay; his bonus grandchildren, Matthew, Rory, and Ella; his nieces, Dina and Jill; and his extended family, who continue to carry his values forward in their lives.

³ This traditional Jewish statement is said upon hearing of a death. It can also be written as BD"E and means, "Blessed is the True Judge."

⁴ ז"ל or ז"ל or *Zichrono* (זכרונו) [for a man] or *zichrona* (זכרונה) [for a woman] *l'bracha* (לברכה) usually appears after the name of a deceased person as an acronym for "memories for blessing." Usually translated from the Hebrew to "may his/her memory be a blessing."

He will be deeply missed by all he made laugh. While he loved flowers, he loved watching them grow even more. In lieu of flowers or food, please consider donating time or money to your local botanical garden in his blessed memory.

Before You Publish: *A Gentle Checklist*

Before sharing an obituary or death notice—especially on a website, in a newspaper, or on social media—take a moment to review the following considerations. Obituaries are public documents and may be shared widely beyond their intended audience. To protect privacy and reduce the risk of fraud or unwanted contact, families may wish to avoid including certain details. These can include exact home addresses, email addresses or phone numbers, full birthdates, details about assets, or prolonged periods when a home may be unoccupied. Service locations and times are usually appropriate to share, but livestream links or shiva addresses details may be shared privately whenever possible.

Trust your instincts—what matters most is honoring the person with care and intention.

Accuracy & Tone

- Names, dates, and locations are correct and spelled accurately
- Pronouns and relationship descriptions reflect the family's wishes
- The tone feels right—true to the person and meaningful to those who knew them
- Only information the family is comfortable making public is included

Privacy & Security

- No exact home addresses are listed (for residences, shiva, or family members)
- No personal phone numbers or private email addresses are included
- Full birthdates are included only if desired or required
- No details about estates, assets, or insurance are mentioned
- Language does not indicate that a home will be unoccupied for an extended time

Service & Gathering Details

- Service date, time, and location are appropriate to share publicly
- Livestream links, or *Shiva* addresses are shared privately when possible
- If a service is private or by invitation only, that is clearly noted

Social Media Considerations

- The post includes fewer personal details than a full obituary
- Comments settings and privacy controls are reviewed
- Service details that may change are shared separately or updated as needed

Final Check

- A trusted family member or friend has reviewed the text and image
- The family feels at peace with what is being shared—and what is being held close

Obituary & Death Notice: *Fillable Worksheet*

This worksheet is designed to help you gather the information needed to write an obituary or death notice. You may complete as much or as little as feels right. Not all sections are required.

Trust your instincts—when in doubt, it is always acceptable to share less and be open to questions.

Full name of the person who died (*Preferred name or nickname if different*):

City and state of residence:

Age, Date and Place of death (optional):

- Home
- Hospital
- Other / Prefer not to say: _____

How would you like the death described (optional):

- Peacefully
- Surrounded by loved ones
- Other: _____

Date & Place of Birth:

Where did they grow up?:

Parents' names:

How would you describe their work, vocation, or primary roles?

(e.g., profession, caregiving, service, artistry, activism)

Key qualities they were known for:

- Kindness
- Curiosity
- Humor
- Devotion
- Creativity

Resilience

Other: _____

One unique detail or memory you'd like included (optional):

(e.g., *what they loved doing, how people experienced them*)

How would you describe their relationship to family or community?

(e.g., *devoted parent, loving partner, cherished friend*)

What mattered most to them?

- Family
- Community
- Faith or spirituality
- Learning
- Justice
- Music
- Nature
- Travel
- Other: _____

Survived by:

(List names and relationships in the order you prefer it is common to list immediate family members)

Preceded in death by:

(List names and relationships in the order you prefer it is common to list immediate family members that have died)

Date, Time, Location, Type & Access of Service:

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Date: | <input type="checkbox"/> Cemetery Chapel | <input type="checkbox"/> Open to immediate family only |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Time(s): | <input type="checkbox"/> Graveside service | <input type="checkbox"/> Open to all |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Locations(s): | <input type="checkbox"/> Graveside service | <input type="checkbox"/> Private / by invitation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Interment Type: | <input type="checkbox"/> Memorial service | <input type="checkbox"/> Livestreamed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Funeral Home Chapel | <input type="checkbox"/> Celebration of life | <input type="checkbox"/> Shiva details to follow. |

In lieu of flowers, donations or acts of kindness may be made to:

Closing Line:

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> "Rest in Peace" | <input type="checkbox"/> "May their life be remembered a blessing" | <input type="checkbox"/> Include ל"ט or ז"ל
<i>(zikhrono/zikhronah livrachah)</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> "Deeply missed" | <input type="checkbox"/> "May their memory continue to be a source of comfort" | <input type="checkbox"/> No closing line |
| <input type="checkbox"/> "Lovingly Remembered" | <input type="checkbox"/> "May their memory be a blessing." | <input type="checkbox"/> Other wording: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> "Forever in our hearts" | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> "With love and gratitude" | | |