



Estate Administration Checklist

First Steps

- Obtain Last Will and Testament, including Codicils
- Secure Home(s)/Properties and Contents
 - Change Locks, if necessary
- Secure Other Valuable Assets
- Gather Necessary Paperwork/Documents
 - Death Certificate, Bank Statements, Deeds, Mortgages, etc.
- Admit Will to Court for Probate Proceedings
- Apply to Court for Letters Testamentary – Appointing/Approving of Executor
- File Notice to Creditors
- Contact Attorney, CPA and/or Other Advisor For Assistance

Asset Inventory

- Determine How to Bookkeep and Maintain Records
- Inventory All Assets
 - Including, Bank/Brokerage Accounts, Real Estate Holdings, Safety Deposit Box Contents, Personal Tangible Property and Digital Property
- Apply with IRS for Federal Identification Number
 - Form SS-4
- Obtain Checking Account in the Name of the Estate
- Retitle All Accounts/Securities Into the Name of the Estate
- Contact Life Insurance Provider, If Necessary
 - Supply Provider with Death Certificate and Letters Testamentary
- Arrange for the Management of Rental/Commercial Properties
- Separate Assets in to Probate and Non-Probate Assets
 - Assets that Pass According to Will and Those that Pass According to Designation, such as Retirement Accounts, Payable-On-Death Accounts and some Life Insurance Contracts.
- Obtain Valuations and Appraisals on Necessary Assets

Other Steps

- Cancel All Unneeded Utilities and Subscriptions
- Notify Post Office of Change of Address
 - Typically, Forward to Executor's Office
- Close All Unneeded Bank Accounts
- Cancel All Credit Cards
- Contact Employer for Any Final Paychecks or Other Benefits
- Notify Social Security of Death and Cancel Benefits
- Notify Beneficiaries of Decedent's Estates
- File Necessary Tax Returns
 - Including, Federal, State and Local Income Tax Returns, Estate and Gift Returns and Business Returns

Payment of Expenses

- Sell Assets to Raise Funds To Pay For Estate Expenses or Will Bequests, If Necessary
- Compile All Claims Against The Estate
 - Pay Valid Claims, such as Credit Card and Medical Bills
 - Deny Invalid Claims, Including Court Action, If Necessary
- Pay Taxes Of Decedent
 - Including, Federal, State, Local and Property Taxes
- Distribute Bequests to Beneficiaries
- Establish Any Trusts Created By the Will

Closing Steps

- File Petition to Close the Estate with Court
 - Including a Final Report of Assets and All Disbursements, Receipts and Other Activities That Occurred During the Estate Administration
- Receive Order from Court to Close Estate
- Close and Pay Final Expenses