

## MANAGE THE ESTATE

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1. **Executor must** notify all interested parties of the probate within 60 days: advising of the name and address of the Executor, the place and date of the probate, and that a copy of the will be furnished upon request. If there are charitable bequests, notice must be given to the Attorney General of NJ. A proof of mailing is filed with the Surrogate's Court.
2. Obtain Federal ID# for the estate. Set up bookkeeping records and an estate account. **ESTATE FUNDS MUST NOT BE MINGLED WITH YOURS.**
3. Reregister stocks, bonds; arrange for collection of dividends and interest.
4. Inventory all items of property and arrange for their appraisal.
5. Examine all real estate as to condition, adequacy of insurance, status of taxes, and assessments.
6. Collect rents, make reports, obtain tenants, maintain necessary insurance in force, arrange for utilities.
7. Review all investments as to safety and quality; make necessary changes as prudence indicates.
8. Examine books and records of any business interest. Have necessary audits and appraisals made.
9. Supervise a family owned business.
10. Request allowance from court for support of deceased's family.

## DETERMINE AND PAY ALL TAXES

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1. Compute value of estate and probable state and federal taxes.
2. Select Federal estate valuation date.
3. Determine whether administrative expenses should be charged against income taxes or estate taxes.
4. Prepare estate's income tax return and last income tax return of decedent.
5. Determine charitable and other deductions.
6. Determine how funds will be raised to pay taxes.
7. Prepare inheritance tax returns.
8. Prepare Federal inheritance tax returns.
9. Pay personal property or real estate taxes, if any.

## DISTRIBUTE THE ESTATE

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1. Determine who will share in the estate.
2. Determine how assets will be distributed, which legatee and devisee is to get each item of property.
3. Sell assets to raise cash.
4. Pay all final costs. (Including any child support obligation).
5. Transfer and/or reregister securities.
6. Prepare detailed informal or formal account for court.
7. Obtain releases and refunding bonds from all beneficiaries and file with Surrogate.

# DUTIES OF AN EXECUTOR OR ADMINISTRATOR

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CUMBERLAND COUNTY

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**A MESSAGE FROM  
DOUGLAS M. RAINEAR  
SURROGATE OF  
CUMBERLAND COUNTY**

This pamphlet is provided to alert executors or administrators of the estates of deceased persons of the kinds of things they may need to do to properly handle an estate. These lists are not exhaustive and each item does not apply to every estate.

Those duties that are exclusively for executors are highlighted with the bold print "**Executors must**". Otherwise, these lists apply to duties that either executors or administrators may face.

Some use these lists to check off the duties they will face and then mark the date they complete the duty.

As you will note, several areas may call for the services of an attorney or C.P.A.. This is usually a good idea, but the law does not require it.

The law does prohibit the Surrogate's Court and it's staff from providing legal advice. Therefore, if you need to ask how to address a particular duty, we will have to respectfully decline.

I hope this pamphlet is helpful to you.

Douglas M. Rainear  
Cumberland County Surrogate

**DUTIES WHICH MAY BE REQUIRED OF AN EXECUTOR  
OR ADMINISTRATOR**

**COLLECT ASSETS  
AND INFORMATION**

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1. **Executor must** locate Will, death certificate, (birth and marriage certificates, if available,) and file or probate in Surrogate's Court.
2. Locate safe deposit box and key.
3. Obtain life insurance claim forms.
4. Obtain doctor's supporting statement for insurance claim.
5. Obtain Social Security burial allowance.
6. Check on veteran's benefits, social security benefits, pension benefits.
7. Locate bank accounts; have them transferred to estate account.
8. Collect all stocks and bonds.
9. Locate names and addresses of all heirs, legatees, devisees, and next of kin.
10. Assemble deeds, abstracts, lease contracts and insurance policies for each parcel of real estate.
11. Investigate the status of any business interest owned.
12. Locate and inventory automobiles, furniture, jewelry and other possessions.

**DETERMINE DEBTS AND OTHER  
CLAIMS AGAINST THE ESTATE**

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1. Determine current bills owed; (doctor, hospital, rent, utilities, etc.) and arrange to pay.
2. Check on decedent's charge accounts, make arrangements for continuing services, and for obtaining credit or discontinuing services.
3. Find out what debts exist - mortgage, life insurance loan, bank loan, automobile loan.
4. To determine if the beneficiary is a child support judgment debtor, obtain an identification certification from each beneficiary, and order a certified child support judgment search from a private judgment search company.
5. Publish legal notice about claims against the estate in newspaper.
6. Carefully examine all claims as to their validity, amount, and correctness.
7. Oppose (if necessary) all incorrect or invalid claims.
8. Obtain vouchers for every bill and claim paid. Keep books and records of all items.