

Executor's Checklist

This is not an exhaustive list of the duties and responsibilities of an executor/executrix, but it does provide a good overview of the principal tasks:

Make all funeral arrangements.

Identify all savings and chequing accounts of the deceased. Notify all financial institutions about the death and obtain up-to-date information about the balances on deposit.

Locate all insurance policies and obtain information about the amount payable on each. Notify the insurer of the death.

Access and list the contents of the deceased's safety deposit box.

Review the deceased's personal papers to determine all assets and liabilities (debts).

Prepare a detailed statement of assets and liabilities.

Arrange for storage and insurance of any assets that require it.

Notify the beneficiaries of the death, if necessary, and advise them of their entitlement under the Will.

Redirect mail and cancel any subscriptions or charge accounts. Return or destroy credit and charge cards.

Obtain all unpaid wages and other benefits from former employer.

Apply to the court for Letters of Probate.

Advertise for creditors, if necessary.

File income tax returns for year of death and any outstanding from former years.

Apply for Canada Pension Plan benefits, if any. (If the deceased ever worked outside Canada, foreign social security benefits may be payable.)

Apply for any amounts payable to the estate under insurance policies.

Pay funeral expenses, income taxes payable and all debts of the deceased.

Pay money bequests and distribute specific gifts of property according to the instructions in the Will (be sure to obtain receipts and retain sufficient cash to carry out the final steps).

File the estate's income tax return and pay any tax owing (i.e. if the estate earned any income following the death of the deceased).

Pay legal fees and any outstanding fees related to administering the estate, including compensation for the executor/executrix.

Determine residuary beneficiary preferences for asset transfer or cash distribution and arrange sale or transfers of the estate assets to the beneficiaries based on their preferences.

Prepare and distribute a final report to the beneficiaries.