

Sharon L. Parker, P.A.

Attorney at Law
P.O. Box 983,
26 West Court Street, Marion NC 28752
Telephone: (828)652-2441
Fax: (828)652-9579

Sharon L. Parker
sp@sharonlparker.com
www.sharonlparker.com

INSTRUCTIONS TO OUR EXECUTORS FOR STEPS AFTER OUR DEATH

Because we have died, we urge you to talk with our lawyer as soon as possible to discuss the details of administering our estate. Our lawyer will explain to you the various things which will need to be done. Please note, there are some things that only you, as Executor, can do. However, just to give you an idea of what is involved, these tasks will probably include the following:

1. Review our Will, particularly the sections dealing with our beneficiaries, the distribution of property, and the Executor 's powers.
2. Order death certificates. Death certificates will probably be needed to obtain the proceeds of any life insurance policies and for other transfers. We recommend ordering five (5) or six (6) certified copies of the death certificate, **plus** one for each vehicle, bank, and financial institution, to begin. These can be ordered from the funeral home or from the Register of Deeds Office for the county where I died.
3. Probate our Will. Contact the Clerk of Court for the County where we reside or where we own real estate to determine the process for probating our Will and handling our Estate. Once the Will is probated, the Executor will receive Letters Testamentary giving them authority to handle our Estate. Assets governed by the will are probate assets. You will need to file Inventories of certain assets and Accountings of all monies taken in, expenses paid and fund disbursed. Obtain legal advice regarding this process.
4. Identify Non-Probate Assets. We may have assets that pass outside of probate or pass by deed, operation of law or beneficiary designation. We have tried to keep records of beneficiary designations and records showing how bank accounts, vehicles and real property are titled to assist you in determining what assets pass within my probate estate and what may pass outside of my probate estate. Those files are kept: _____
5. Ask the funeral home if they notify Social Security and if you need to notify them in any way. The Social Security Administration can also instruct you on next steps.
6. Notify any other retirement plans, annuity companies, etc of our death. They will instruct you on next steps.

7. Check our Lock box/safe/ or safety deposit box for any instructions which we may have left for actions to be taken after our death. Note: It may be necessary to prepare an inventory of the contents of the box.
8. Notify any Mortgage Holder of our death. This can be done by calling or writing a letter to the company on the addresses listed on our mortgage statements. They will instruct you on next steps.
9. If our residence or real property is willed to a person, move all utilities and insurance on the property to the beneficiary, who will need to help you in this process. If we willed our residence or Real Property to our Executor in Trust for the Benefit of our Estate, talk to legal counsel on how to handle the utilities and bills.
10. Notify all life insurance companies of our death. This can be done by calling the local agent, if applicable, or writing a letter to the company's main office. Some companies require a certified copy of the death certificate; some companies will accept a photocopy of the death certificate or even a copy of the newspaper obituary notice.
11. Review business agreements. Review any business agreements, contracts, stock certificates, partnership agreements, etc., to which we are parties. If the Estate includes a business interest, it will be important to document the value of this interest if either the estate is likely to be taxable or the business interest will be sold. To obtain this valuation We recommend hiring a qualified appraiser of business interests or a CPA who is experienced at valuing business.
12. Our Estate will need a Taxpayer Identification Number from the Internal Revenue Service, which can be done at no charge on www.IRS.gov. Our attorney or CPA can assist you.
13. Review and pay all bills. Review any bills or accounts which it is claimed that we owe. Pay the ones which we do owe. Consult with our attorney as you may want to deny the other claims in writing in order to obtain possible benefits limiting their ability to later proceed with a claim against our Estate.
14. File income tax returns and pay income taxes, both for me and for our Trust. It will probably be necessary to file our final income tax return. Our lawyer and CPA can help determine this. In addition, if the Estate has earned and/or retained income, it will probably be necessary to file federal and state income tax returns.
15. Collect all my credit cards, cancel them, and pay the balance due.
16. Distribute our personal effects. Distribute any personal effects and household furnishings as provided in our Will, including any written memorandum of instructions.
17. Determine if a disclaimer is appropriate. It may be appropriate for one or more of the beneficiaries to disclaim an interest in all or part of his or her share, so that the property will automatically pass to the next beneficiary in line. **This absolutely must be done**

before the beneficiary receives any assets and within nine months of the date of our death. Our lawyer will be able to assist you in determining whether any disclaimer is appropriate.

18. Determine whether to File Federal Estate Tax Forms. Form 706 or other forms may need to be filed. At the time we prepared this memorandum taxes will not be due unless our gross estate exceeds \$12,400,000.00 but return filings may still be necessary or desired. **Consult with a CPA.**
19. Distribute the assets. After all our bills and the expenses of administering our Estate have been paid and the Clerk of Court has signed off on all Inventories and Accountings, the final step is to distribute the remaining property. Pay careful attention to the distribution and allocation of assets to ensure that this is done in accordance with our wishes.

There will probably be many other tasks to be done in this after death administration of our Estate, many of which involve legal, financial, or tax issues. **This is why we recommend that you work with our lawyer and the other members of our planning "team," such as our CPA, our insurance agent, and our financial advisor.**

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