



## EXECUTOR CHECKLIST

**Note:** This checklist is not exhaustive. The terms of the will as well as state law determine the executor's tasks.

- Assemble the Pertinent Documents
  - Will (and codicils if applicable)
  - Life insurance policies
  - Death certificate (as well as birth certificate and marriage license)
  - Social Security information
  - Income tax returns for previous three years
  - Gift tax returns
  - Trust documents
  - Divorce decree
  
- Notify Interested Family, Friends and Business Associates
  
- Make Funeral Arrangements
  
- Hire Counsel (Possibly the Attorney who Prepared the Decedent's Will)
  
- Access Safe Deposit Boxes
  
- Inventory Assets
  - Bank accounts
  - Brokerage accounts
  - Real estate
  - Tangible personal property (vehicles, collectibles, etc.)
  - Intangible property (royalties, copyrights, etc.)

- Business interests
- Accounts receivable

Identify Liabilities

- Real estate mortgage(s)
- Property leases
- Credit card debts
- Auto loans
- Personal loans

Apply for Benefits

- Life Insurance Proceeds
- Retirement Plan Benefits (both qualified plans and non-qualified deferred compensation)
- Veteran's Benefits
- Social Security Benefits

File Income Tax Return for Decedent

Assume Legal Ownership of Assets

- Forward mail service
- Discontinue utilities
- Notify property insurers
- Collect all income due decedent
- Monitor investments held by the estate in trust
- Manage ownership interests held by the estate in trust
- Investigate any legal claims belonging to the estate (i.e., wrongful death lawsuit)
- Defend estate from legal claims

Order Appraisals

- Submit Will to Probate
  - File petition with the probate court
  - Arrange for bond (if required)
  - Notify beneficiaries
  - Notify creditors
  - Seek payments for spouse (as the law permits)
  
- Pay Valid Claims on the Estate
  - Attorneys fees
  - Appraisal fees
  - Burial costs
  - Federal and State Estate Taxes
  - Creditors
  
- Sell and/or Distribute Assets to Liquidate the Estate

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