



KERSHAW COUNTY PROBATE COURT

Debra B. Branham
Probate Judge

Kershaw County Courthouse
1121 Broad Street, Room 225
Camden, South Carolina 29020
Phone (803) 425-1503 Fax (803) 425-1526

Rebecca J. Edwards
Associate Probate Judge

CHECKLIST TO OPEN AN ESTATE AND SCHEDULE INITIAL APPOINTMENT

On behalf of the Kershaw County Probate Office, we extend our condolences to you and your family for your loss. We understand this is an emotional time for you and your family and we hope you will find comfort in knowing that we are here to assist you through the probate process.

After meeting with you at your opening appointment, the probate staff may advise you that the estate should be handled by an attorney. The probate staff cannot give legal advice. The Probate Court receives and files documents and ensures that each estate is handled appropriately.

To begin the probate process and before your initial appointment, your application for informal probate along with the worksheet must be completed in full. Please collect the following information and bring it to your opening appointment. To make your initial appointment, call 803-425-1503, ext. 5350.

_____ **Completed Probate Court Worksheet-** this form is necessary to determine whether an estate needs to be opened, whether a small affidavit can be filed or whether the decedent's Last Will and Testament needs to be probated only.

_____ **Completed Application/Petition for Probate-** you must fill in this form completely, **either typed or printed in ink-** failure to include addresses on Parts 4a and 4b of Section 1 will delay the opening of the estate and the issuance of a Certificate of Appointment until all addresses are provided. **This form needs to be completed before you arrive.**

_____ **Certified copy of the decedent's death certificate.**

_____ **Decedent's original Last Will and Testament and any and all original Codicils and Memorandums.**

_____ **Copy of the obituary OR funeral program which lists the surviving family members.**

_____ **Copy of all Deeds for real property that the decedent had an interest in.**

_____ **Family tree, if applicable, if an heir predeceased the decedent.**

_____ **Copy of the paid funeral bill and/or funeral bill showing the outstanding balance.**

_____ **Renunciation of Right to Administer and/or Nomination and/or Waiver of Bond, if applicable-** if the primary person of the Will is not going to serve or if the person with priority in an estate without a will (intestate estate) is not going to serve, then these forms are required to be filed at the time of your appointment.

_____ **Waiver of Bond, if applicable-** Bond may be required in an intestate estate or in a testate estate when Renunciation/Nominations are filed.

_____ **Appointment of a Guardian ad Litem,** if applicable- if there are minor children in an intestate estate, this form as well as a GAL OATH may be a requirement prior to the appointment of a Personal Representative.

_____ **A publication fee in the amount of \$115.11 made payable to the Chronicle-Independent will be collected at your appointment.**

Please be advised that opening appointments usually take one hour. If you arrive late or the paperwork is not completed or necessary documents are not brought with you to the appointment, your appointment may be delayed or we may have to reschedule your appointment to a later date.

Helpful Resources:

A helpful video entitled "An Introduction to Probate Court Opening an Estate" may be found at www.judicial.state.sc.us/selfHelp/index.cfm .

Probate Court forms that you can download, type and print are available at www.judicial.state.sc.us/forms/ .

Kershaw County GIS Mapping: www.kershaw.sc.wthgis.com

Kershaw County Register of Deed's records that are available on line may be found at www.sclandrecords.com .

If you should need additional assistance or guidance in completing the documents, please call 803-425-1503.