

# Information for Representatives of a Deceased Individual

The death of a loved one is a difficult time, but as the representative of the deceased, there are a number of important matters that must be dealt with to fulfill your responsibilities as an Executor or Administrator. These are legal responsibilities for which you are personally liable, and should be taken very seriously.

The first few steps after a death are to see to the immediate affairs of the deceased, such as:

- **Finding and examining the Will, if there is one;**
- **Making immediate arrangements for the needs of any dependants such as children; and**
- **Planning and arranging for the funeral.**

However, once that's done, an Executor or Administrator has other legal duties to perform. While not a comprehensive list, these are just some of the duties that are required by an executor or administrator:

- **Examine & manage the complete finances of the deceased**  
*Opening the safety deposit box; transferring control of bank accounts; examining insurance policies, deeds, leases, mortgages, or investments such as stocks and bonds. Pay the deceased's bills, and deposit any cheques or cash they had on hand.*
- **Inform agencies and businesses of the death**  
*For instance, you should contact the post office to have the deceased's mail delivered to your address*
- **Arrange for the protection and security of the deceased's property**  
*This includes locking up their house and securing any valuables as well as paying the insurance on the property.*
- **Carry on the operation of a business or farm owned by the deceased**  
*You're responsible for operating the deceased's business, up to and including its possible sale.*
- **Paying Income Tax**  
*You can't escape taxes, even in death. You are responsible for seeing that the government is informed of the death of the deceased and that the appropriate income taxes are paid.*
- **Providing for the care of children**  
*If there are children of the deceased and both parents are deceased, you are normally responsible for providing for their welfare.*

This is a great deal of work, and this list is by *no means exhaustive*. Many Administrators and Executors turn to the lawyers of Kelly Manthorp Heaphy to take on much of the heavy lifting when it comes to settling an individual's final affairs.