

## *Helpful Ideas for Executors*

The role of an Executor is an important responsibility. Your legal obligations will vary depending on the specifics of your deceased loved one's estate after their death. Ideally, your loved one prepared ahead for his/her death with documents that will provide you with specific instructions.

Here are some helpful ideas to guide you as an Executor of your deceased loved one's estate:

### *#1 Collect the will and/or trust documents*

These documents can include life or medical insurance policies, investment accounts, pre-arranged funeral plans, real estate or other property, business partnerships, and bank account information.

### *#2 Seek appropriate tax and legal advice*

The estate you serve will pay the fee for a lawyer to assist you with Executor duties. An attorney can help you file the correct documentation to make the process go smoothly, and help you execute any fiduciary duties issued by the court.

### *#3 Order twice as many death certificates as you think*

You will need death certificates to file for Veteran's Administration benefits, Social Security Administration benefits, and to notify bank accounts and life insurance.

### *#4 Notify an attorney if you cannot serve as Executor*

It's important to know that if you are unable or unwilling to serve as Executor, you have the right to refuse the responsibility. If you are not able to perform the Executor responsibilities, notify an attorney immediately. A contingent Executor will be named by the court.

### *#5 Consider Executor Responsibilities*

Do not underestimate the importance of your role as the Executor. As an Executor, you may be compensated for your time and effort, but if you make legal mistakes, you could be held personally liable.