

YOUR GUIDE TO ADMINISTERING AN ESTATE

A LAW SOCIETY OF IRELAND SERIES



What happens after someone dies?

Nothing can adequately prepare us for the loss of a loved one. A lot of everyday tasks need attention, and you may have to make important decisions about the person's property, money and belongings (known as their estate).

If the person who has died leaves a will

If the person who has died (the deceased) leaves a will, it will usually name one or more people to be their executor – that is, to administer their estate. If you are named as an executor of a will, you may need to apply for a grant of probate – formal permission to deal with the deceased person's estate. Your solicitor can help you with this.

If there is no will

If the person dies without leaving a will (known as dying intestate), the process is more complicated. Usually, a close relative (known as an administrator) will apply for a grant of letters of administration – formal permission to deal with the deceased person's estate. Your solicitor can help you with this.

Executors and administrators are also known as personal representatives.

Responsibilities of personal representatives

The personal representative is responsible for administering the estate of a deceased person. This includes:

- identifying the person's property, money and possessions (assets),
- identifying the person's debts, such as taxes,
- getting control of the person's assets,
- paying the person's debts, and
- distributing the remaining assets to the beneficiaries.

I am a personal representative – where do I start?

Start by talking to your solicitor. Your solicitor will help you identify any issues that may need to be dealt with and guide you through the process.

More information

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