

A Few Helpful Pieces of Advice on being an Executor or Administrator ...

Whether you are an executor of a will or the administrator of a “will-less” estate, there are a number of practical issues you need to address, even as you deal with the loss causing your appointment. While we may well cover many of these issues in our discussions, please take the time to review this list so it can help you remember important steps as you deal with household of someone who has passed (the “decedent”):

1. There are often people who will prey on those in your position: make sure you have someone watching your home as you deal with funerals and estate issues.
2. Stop services at the decedent’s home if appropriate:
 - cancel telephone service
 - have mail redirected
 - cancel newspapers
 - cancel non-essential utilities – like cable television or computer service
3. Notify the police if the decedent’s home is to stay vacant. Consider installing an alarm or changing existing alarm codes if there are valuables remaining in the house.
4. Never enter the house alone – this will protect you from claims that valuable assets disappeared during your visits. Do not take any property from the home.
5. Consider moving valuables to a safe deposit box or vault for safe keeping
6. Take photographs of each room of the decedent’s house to document contents
7. Notify property insurers of the death and maintain insurance on home and vehicles until their status can be determined.
8. Cancel all credit cards or open credit lines.