# ESTATE ADMINISTRATION
# MEETING PREPARATION CHECKLIST

## INTRODUCTION:

First, we would like to express our deepest condolences for your loss. The loss of a loved one can be difficult and overwhelming. We hope this list and our meeting will assist you, the executor of your love one's estate, with the probate proceedings and administration of the estate.

Chances are you have never administered an estate before. Your duties are many and varied and it is important you receive proper legal advice so as to avoid personal liability for errors in the administration of the estate. Our job is to assist and advise you during the course of the estate administration. We will notify you of deadlines you have to meet and advise you as to your legal obligations. We will also perform many of the tasks involved, such as gathering information, preparing tax returns and complying with legal requirements.

Because our advice to you is based on the information provided by you, it is important you promptly and accurately provide us with requested information and documents. If at any time you have a question as to why we are requesting specific information or about any aspect of the estate, please do not hesitate to contact us.

## DOCUMENTS TO BRING TO OUR INITIAL MEETING:

The following is a *comprehensive*, but by no means *exhaustive* list, of documents that may be necessary to properly administer the estate. Please bring as many of these materials as possible with you to our initial meeting. You may always update information as you receive new documents. And please ask any questions you may have about the requests. (*see pages 2-3*)

The decedent's original will (or a copy of the will if the original has already been probated).

Two original death certificates, which you should receive from the funeral director.

Copies of any documents that you have received from the Register of Wills if the will has already been probated.

Copies of any living trusts that have been established by the decedent during his or her lifetime.

Copies of all life insurance policies on the decedent's life and all policies that the decedent owned insuring another person's life.

A list of banks where the decedent had any accounts, certificates of deposit or safe deposit boxes and copies of any recent bank statements that may be available. If the decedent had an in-trust-for account or a joint account or joint box with anyone else, these should also be included on the list. Account numbers should be provided to us if available.

The most recent monthly statements available from all stockbrokers and mutual funds where the decedent had any securities or funds and copies of any stock certificates or bonds that the decedent owned that may not be reflected on the brokers' statements.

Copies of documents relating to any custodial bank or brokerage accounts that the decedent may have been holding for a minor or another person.

Copies of the deeds to all real estate that the decedent owned (either individually or jointly with another) and copies of real estate tax bills for any real estate that were not paid as of the decedent's death.

Copies of any documents relating to any retirement plan, pension plan, profit sharing plan, annuity plan, 401K plan, IRA or similar plan or arrangement.

Copies of any other documents that might disclose the existence of any asset or property owned by the decedent (individually or jointly with another) or that might disclose the value of any such assets of property.

Copies of the funeral bill and any bills for funeral-related expenses such as flowers, funeral luncheon, cemetery charges, etc.

Copies of all credit card statements for all credit card accounts of the decedent (individual or joint) for the month of death and for the following month.

Copies of all invoices for bills that had been submitted to the decedent before death but were not paid before death and all bills for services rendered or purchases made before death that were not submitted until after death. This would include medical and hospital bills, utility bills, and all other unpaid bills of any nature.

Copies of documents related to any other debts that decedent owed to others (alone or with another person) such as mortgages, loans payable, car leases, business accounts payable and other similar debts or obligations.

Copies of documents relating to any receivables, i.e. debts owed to the decedent by anyone else, including you.

Copies of decedent's federal and state income tax returns for the current year and the prior three years.

Copies of any federal gift tax returns that the decedent ever filed, no matter how long ago and copies of any other documents that reflect any gifts that the decedent may have given away, especially during the last year of the decedent's life.

Copies of any partnership agreements or buy-sell agreements to which the decedent was a party.

A list containing the names, addresses and telephone numbers (to the extent available to you) of the following persons or entities:

a. The decedent's surviving spouse, children, parents (if living) and the children (the decedent's grandchildren) of any child of the decedent who is no longer living.

b. All beneficiaries named in the decedent's will.

c. All those who you believe have claims against the decedent regardless of whether you believe the claims are valid.

Copies of any other papers or documents that you may feel are important for us to review.