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Settling an Estate - What You May Need (U.S.)

Settling an estate starts with locating important documents, assets, property and information about the deceased. Try to track down as many of these items as possible (as applicable):

Legal

- Death Certificate
- Last Will and Testament
- Trust documents
- Beneficiary contact info
- Marriage license
- Divorce/separation papers
- Pre/postnuptial agreements
- Child support papers
- Power of Attorney

Home/Property

- Vehicle registration
- Lease or rental agreements
- Landlord/tenant Info
- Deeds and titles
- Mineral rights
- Property income statements
- Timeshare agreements

Taxes

- Tax returns/assessments
- W-2 form
- Property tax bills
- Tax shelter documents

Government

- Social Security Number
- Driver's license
- Health insurance/benefits ID card
- Birth certificate
- Tribal identification cards
- Passport
- Green card/Permanent resident card
- Immigration/citizenship documents
- Firearm license

Utilities/Telecom

- Security
- Gas/hydro
- Electricity
- Phone/internet
- Cable/Satellite
- Water

Business

- Incorporation documents
- Business license
- Shareholder agreements
- Buy/sell agreements

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Settling an estate starts with locating important documents, assets, property and information about the deceased. Try to track down as many of these items as possible (as applicable):

Banking

- Safety deposit box
- Statements, agreements
- Debit card, cheques, bank books
- Mortgage information
- Credit card statements
- Lines of credit/loans

Investments

- Investment portfolio
- 401(k)/529 Plan/IRA
- Stocks, bonds and

investment certificates

- Certificates of deposit (CDs)
- Annuities
- Crypto wallet
- Mutual funds and ETFs

Memberships/Accounts

- Accounts held
- Passwords/account numbers
- Accessible parking permit
- Co-operative memberships

Insurance

- Life insurance policy
- Health insurance policy
- Home insurance policy
- Vehicle insurance policy
- Annuity statements

Employment/Pensions

- Employment contracts
- Pension/benefit statements
- Government benefits/Social assistance/disability records
- Military service records
- Unemployment records
- Professional/Union memberships
- Workers' compensation paperwork