

Bergen County Probate



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*Estate Planning, Elder Law &
Estate Administration*

- 1) If you are the Executor of a loved one's Will who died a resident of Bergen County, NJ you will need to start the estate administration process by probating the Will.
- 2) Probate is a process whereby the courts authenticate the Will as valid and officially appoint the Executor(s) named in the Will. The process is friendly, fast and simple in Bergen County, NJ.
- 3) Step one is to go the Bergen County Surrogate Court located on the 5th floor of Two Bergen County Plaza, right next to the Bergen County Court House in Hackensack, New Jersey, 07601 (Surrogate office right across from elevator on 5th floor). The address for the parking garage is 55 Court Street, Hackensack, NJ 07601 (right next to Two Bergen County Plaza). Let the receptionist know you are there to probate a Will. If you are there less than one hour parking is free.
- 4) **Bring with you:** the original Will, an original Death Certificate, a NJ checkbook for filing fees (typically \$100-\$200), and the home addresses of the beneficiaries of the Will.
- 5) You do not need an appointment; just arrive M-F between 8:30-4:30.
- 6) The probate clerk will walk you through the paperwork, explain the notice to beneficiaries and they will keep the original Will. Please be sure you keep a photocopy of the Will but never, ever un-staple or unbind it.
- 7) The probate clerk will mail you "Letters Testamentary" – a one page letter with a gold seal – officially appointing you as Executor. Please order 10 of these certificates which cost \$5 each.
- 8) If the estate leaves money to siblings, friends, nieces and nephews, there may be NJ Inheritance Tax. If the estate is larger than \$11,580,000 (2020 Federal Estate Tax Exemption), there may be Federal Estate Tax. Please come back to our office for tax and estate administration advice.

To learn more or make an appointment, please contact our office at admin@irinashea.com or (201) 327-7000