A companion booklet to
When Someone Dies: A Non-Lawyer’s Guide to Probate
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Dear Community Member:

The Council for Court Excellence is pleased to provide you with this Personal Affairs Record Book. We encourage you to read it and to fill it out promptly. This Record Book is organized to help you list and record, on the pages which follow, the location and content of your important personal and financial papers.

We present this Record Book as a companion to the Council for Court Excellence’s community-education booklet When Someone Dies: A Non-Lawyer’s Guide to Probate in Washington, DC. When Someone Dies provides step-by-step guidance to the District of Columbia’s system for settling the financial affairs of deceased DC residents. That system was greatly simplified for our community by the DC Council’s passage of the 1994 DC Probate Reform Act and the Omnibus Trusts and Estates Amendment Act of 2000.

We thank our board member firms and other individual contributors for their generous support of this educational resource for the community. We especially thank the GEICO Philanthropic Foundation for underwriting the costs of redesigning and reprinting this new edition of the Personal Affairs Record Book. We are able to provide this booklet and our other educational materials free of charge because of the generosity of all our contributors. You may also download this Record Book and When Someone Dies from our website: www.courtexcellence.org.

As a local, nonprofit, non-partisan civic organization, the Council for Court Excellence depends on voluntary contributions from the private sector to accomplish our community education and justice system improvement goals.

We hope you will consider making a tax-deductible gift or a bequest in your Will to the Council for Court Excellence. Your gift in any amount will enable this fine organization to continue to promote public understanding and improvement in the administration of justice in this community in the years ahead. Please see the inside back cover of this booklet for more information about the Council for Court Excellence and how to make such a gift.

Sincerely,

June B. Kress
Executive Director
The Importance of Completing a Personal Affairs Form

At the time of your death, someone close to you—a relative, friend, or perhaps your family lawyer—will need to know how to handle your affairs for you. This Personal Affairs Record Book is intended to assist you in listing information and identifying the location of all documents which will aid your personal representative when the information is needed. (In other communities the term EXECUTOR may be used to describe the person named in the Will to handle your affairs after your death. Under District of Columbia laws this person is called the PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE.)

The Personal Affairs Record Book is not meant to be a nuisance or a somber reminder. It should be very helpful to you in organizing your personal and financial papers. By completing this booklet you will help ensure that your loved ones do not encounter difficulty when settling your estate and tending to your final wishes and concerns.

The Personal Affairs Record Book is not a substitute for your Last Will and Testament. Also, the Personal Affairs Record Book is not a legal document. Once you fill it out, it will assist you and your personal representative or other loved one in locating important papers and other records for your life. After your death, this Record Book could save your loved ones or personal representative many hours in locating important information about your affairs.

Where Should You Keep This Booklet?

Keep this Personal Affairs Record Book in the same safe place you store the original copy of your Last Will and Testament and other important family papers (e.g., your passport, mortgage, birth certificate, etc.). Many people store their important papers in a safe deposit box at their bank or at their lawyer’s office. The decision is yours to make. Both your Will and the completed copy of the Personal Affairs Record Book may be needed quickly. Be sure and inform your personal representative, spouse, or nearest relative exactly where you put them.
How This Booklet is Organized

The Personal Affairs Record Book is divided into six sections:

1. Personal and Family Information
2. Employment
3. Assets
4. Liabilities
5. Other Helpful Information
6. Glossary

Some items within each section of this booklet may not apply to you. If so, skip those items and proceed to the next relevant item. For some items you may need to make more than one entry; if this situation occurs use the blank sheet at the back of this booklet and number the entry accordingly. Detail is very important within the Personal Affairs Record Book. Less specific information will help the settling of your estate, but more detailed and specific information will enhance the efficiency, timeliness and comprehensiveness of settling your affairs.

On page 19 you will find a glossary of terms to further assist you in using this material.

On many of the pages which follow there is a space for you to fill in the date you prepared this page. It is important for you to fill in the date because it provides a point of reference for the information you have listed.
This is a checklist for you to indicate the location of your important papers. This list is not to be used in place of the Personal Affairs Record Book which follows. Please indicate the specific location (e.g., your bank safe deposit box) where you keep each of these papers on the lines below. If an item does not apply put N/A for not applicable.

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>2. Bank Statements/Passbooks for Savings Account:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Birth Certificate:</td>
<td></td>
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<td>4. Birth Certificates of Children:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Adoption Certificates of Children:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Passport:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Naturalization Papers:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Marriage Certificate(s):</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Last Will and Testament:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Divorce Papers:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>13. Insurance Policy Records:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. All of Your Vehicles: Model/Registration/Title/Papers:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Stock Certificates/Records:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Bond Certificates/Records:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>17. Mutual Funds Certificates/Records:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>18. Military Records/Papers:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Mortgage/Home Equity Loan Payment Book/Statements:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Credit Card Statements:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Loan Papers/Records:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Post Office Box Key/Combination:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Social Security Card:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. Cemetery Plot Papers/Records:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. Previous Income Tax Returns/Records:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
At the time of your passing, your Personal Representative, the person responsible for settling your financial affairs, will need to take care of a variety of matters to promptly settle your estate and to contact your loved ones. The information below will also aid your Personal Representative in providing comprehensive personal background information to your loved ones. The information will also help when writing obituary notices and speaking with funeral directors.

A. Personal Information

My full name is ______________________________________________________.

My maiden name was ________________________________________________.

I was born on (Month/Day/Year) _______________________________________,

in (hospital) ________________________________________________________.

(City/State/Country) __________________________________________________.

The specific location (e.g., desk in bedroom, safe deposit box) where my birth certificate is found ________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________.

My Social Security Number is __________________________________________.

I have been a U.S. Citizen for ______________________________________ years.

The date I became a Citizen was (Month/Day/Year) ________________________.

The specific location (e.g., desk in bedroom) where my passport/naturalization papers, etc. are found ________________________________.

I have lived in this jurisdiction for _______________________________________ years.

My current home address is ____________________________________________.

My marital status is __________________________________________________.
Section 1. My Personal and Family Information

My spouse is ________________________________________________________.

His/her Social Security number is ________________________________________.

The specific location where my marriage certificate(s) are found

____________________________________________________________________.

The dates and names of my prior marriages are

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________.

The specific location where my divorce papers are found

____________________________________________________________________.

The specific location (e.g., bank safe deposit box; my lawyer’s safe) where my Last Will and Testament can be found

____________________________________________________________________.

Date page was completed: __________
B. My Safe Deposit Box

The subject of where to keep your most important papers is a question asked by many people. There is no one answer right for every person but suggestions can be helpful. Many informed people feel most comfortable keeping their Last Will and Testament and other important papers in a safe deposit box at their bank or at their family lawyer’s office. It is strongly advised that you should also keep your other important papers together.

I have a safe deposit box. ☐ Yes ☐ No
(If yes, continue to next item below. If no, skip to section C.)

I have a safe deposit box located in (Name of Bank) _________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
(Address/City/State of your bank)

The other person(s) who have access to my safe deposit box are

_____________________________________________________________________

Their phone numbers are ______________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

The specific location (e.g., file cabinet in den) where my personal safe deposit key can be found is _______________________
_____________________________________________________________________

The general contents within the safe deposit box are _______________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

Date page was completed: _________
C. My Family

My father’s name is __________________________________________________.

He was born on (month/day/year)______________________, in (City/State/Country)
____________________________________________________________________.

He died on (month/day/year) ____________________________________________.

My mother’s name is __________________________________________________.

She was born on (month/day/year)_____________________, in (City/State/Country)
____________________________________________________________________.

She died on (month/day/year)____________________________________________.

I have ________________ brothers and _________________ sisters.

Their names, birth dates, and addresses are
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

I have _________ children.

Their names, birth dates, and addresses are
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
The specific location (e.g., file cabinet in dining room) where their birth certificates/adoption certificates, etc. are found) __________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

My brother/sister have ________________ children

Their names, birth dates, and addresses are

__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

Date page was completed: _________
The information below will help your Personal Representative contact your present place of employment or the employer you retired from if need be. The information may also assist your estate in pursuing any benefits you are due.

A. My Present Employment (or Last if Retired)
I am presently working for/retired from
____________________________________________________________________.

My position was ____________________________________________________.

My dates of employment were from _______________ to _________________.

The address and phone number of my employer is
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________.

B. My Military Service
I served in the ______________________________________________________.

My military identification number is ______________________________________.

My last military rank was ______________________________________________.

My dates of service were from _______________ to _______________.

The specific location (e.g., file cabinet in den) where my military records/papers are found
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________.
Section III. My Assets

A. The Banks and Financial Institutions with which I Presently have Accounts

1. Checking Account(s):

How many checking accounts do you have now?____________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bank/Location</th>
<th>Checking Account Number</th>
<th>Other Names on Your Bank Account</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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</tbody>
</table>

The specific location (e.g., desk in bedroom) where my passbooks/statements, etc. are
____________________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________________

2. Savings Account(s):

How many different savings accounts do you have?____________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bank/Location</th>
<th>Savings Account Number</th>
<th>Other Names on Your Bank Account</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tbody>
</table>

The specific location (e.g., desk in bedroom) where my passbooks/statements, etc. are
____________________________________________________________________________________________________
3. Stocks and Mutual funds

How many different stocks do you have? ______________________________________________________

How many different mutual funds do you have? __________________________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Company Invested in</th>
<th>Your Broker’s Name/Address Phone Number</th>
<th>Name on Certificate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tbody>
</table>

The specific location (e.g., file cabinet in den) where my certificate(s)/records, etc. can be found

____________________________________________________________________________________

(Note: Repeat the information for each mutual fund/stock you own)

4. Other Financial Related Investments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Investment</th>
<th>Location/Address and Phone Number</th>
<th>Name on Account and Account Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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The specific location (e.g., file cabinet in den) where all my records for these investments are

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________
### B. My Real Estate

Check all that apply:

I rent/own:
- [ ] residential home
- [ ] apartment
- [ ] vacation home
- [ ] other

Repeat the following information for each type of real estate you checked above

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Address of Property</th>
<th>Date Purchased (month &amp; year)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The specific location where my deeds/papers, etc. can be found

____________________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________________

### C. My Vehicles

Check all that apply: I own/lease a
- [ ] car
- [ ] truck
- [ ] other

Repeat information below for each item checked above

The year, make and model of each of these vehicles is

____________________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________________

The specific location (e.g., file cabinet in den) where my registration/papers, etc. can be found

____________________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________________
Section III. My Assets

D. My Insurance Policies

Check all that apply:

The type(s) of insurance policies I have are:

- [ ] Life
- [ ] Property
- [ ] Accident
- [ ] Home
- [ ] Disability
- [ ] Automobile
- [ ] Medical
- [ ] Other

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Insurance Company Name</th>
<th>Address/Phone Number</th>
<th>Policy Number/Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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</tbody>
</table>

The specific location (e.g., file cabinet in den) where my policy/records, etc. can be found

____________________________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________________________

E. Debts Owed to Me

Does anyone owe you money or other debts? [ ] yes  [ ] no

(If yes, continue to item below. If no, skip to section IV.)

(Repeat all information for each debt owed to you)

The name, address, and phone number of the debtor is:

____________________________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________________________

The description and terms of the debt are

____________________________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________________________

The specific location (e.g., file cabinet in den) where my policy/records, etc. can be found

____________________________________________________________________________________________________
A. My Mortgages and Home Equity Loans

I have a mortgage/home equity loan  ☐ yes  ☐ no
(If yes, continue to item below. If no, skip to section B.)

1. The bank/financial institution that handles my mortgage/home equity loan is
   (name of bank/financial institution)

   _____________________________________________________________

   The address and phone number of the bank/financial institution is

   _____________________________________________________________

   _____________________________________________________________

   _____________________________________________________________

   The specific location (e.g., desk in bedroom) where my payment book/statements, etc. can be found

   _____________________________________________________________

   _____________________________________________________________

   _____________________________________________________________
Section IV: My Liabilities

B. My Loans
Check all that apply

The type(s) of loans I now have are

☐ Automobile  ☐ Personal  ☐ Education  ☐ Other

Repeat information below for each item checked above

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bank/Financial Institution/ Creditor That Handles My Loan</th>
<th>Address/Location</th>
<th>Telephone Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The specific location (e.g., desk in bedroom) where my papers/records, etc. can be found

____________________________________________________________________________________________________

C. My Credit Cards

How many credit cards do you hold? __________

List all credit card companies and the numbers and names that appear on each card

1) ____________________________________________

2) ____________________________________________

3) ____________________________________________

4) ____________________________________________

5) ____________________________________________

6) ____________________________________________

7) ____________________________________________

8) ____________________________________________

9) ____________________________________________

10) ____________________________________________

The specific location (e.g., desk in bedroom) where my papers/records, etc. can be found

____________________________________________________________________________________________________

Date page was completed: __________
Section V: Other Helpful Information

A. My Post Office Box
I have a post office box located at
____________________________________________________________________.

The number of my post office box is
____________________________________________________________________.

The name that my post office box is under
____________________________________________________________________.

The specific location (e.g., desk in bedroom) where my key/combination, etc. can be found
____________________________________________________________________.

B. My Social Security Card
The name on my social security card is
____________________________________________________________________.

The number of my social security card is
____________________________________________________________________.

The specific location where my social security card can be found
____________________________________________________________________.

C. My Cemetery Plot
My cemetery plot is located at
____________________________________________________________________.

The specific location where my papers/records, etc. can be found
____________________________________________________________________.

Date page was completed: _________
D. My Income Tax Returns
The specific location (e.g., desk in bedroom) where my previous tax returns/records, etc. can be found
____________________________________________________________________.

The name and address of my tax preparer is
____________________________________________________________________.

E. Important Names and Addresses
Please list the NAME, ADDRESS and PHONE NUMBER for the following people or organizations

Family Doctor ________________________________________________________

Dentist______________________________________________________________

Lawyer ______________________________________________________________

Accountant/Financial Advisor ____________________________________________

Life Insurance Agent __________________________________________________

Primary Bank ________________________________________________________

Stock Broker _________________________________________________________

Priest/Minister/Rabbi ________________________________________________

Personal Representative _____________________________________________

Charitable Interest(s) ________________________________________________

Date page was completed: __________
Account: The details of income and expenses relating to the estate.

Assets: Money and property a person owns, including any debts that others owe to that person.

Creditor: A person or organization owed money by the decedent.

Decedent: The person who died.

Estate: The general word for referring to the assets of the decedent.

Estate Administration: Formal procedure for identifying the decedent’s assets, paying his or her debts, and distributing remaining property to beneficiaries.

File: To submit or make an application with the appropriate governmental authorities, as in to file a Will with the DC Superior Court Probate Division.

Inheritance: Assets received from the decedent’s estate.

Inventory: A detailed list of all assets owned by the decedent at the time of death and the value of each. The inventory list also may show appraisal information.

Personal Representative: Person named in the Will or appointed by the DC Superior Court to settle the financial affairs of someone who had died. Commonly known as the executor of the estate.

Probate: Legal process where property of someone who died is distributed and debts are paid.

Will (Last Will and Testament): A written and properly executed document that gives instructions on how a person wants his or her property distributed after death.
About the Council for Court Excellence

Formed in Washington, DC in January 1982, the Council for Court Excellence is a nonprofit, nonpartisan civic organization. The Council works to improve the administration of justice in the local and federal courts and related agencies in the Washington metropolitan area and in the nation. The Council accomplishes this goal by:

- Identifying and promoting justice system reform,
- Improving public access to justice, and
- Increasing public understanding and support of our justice system.

The Council is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors composed of members of the legal, business, civic, and judicial communities. The Council is unique in bringing together all of those communities in common purpose to address justice system reform and access to justice needs. The Board accomplishes the work of the Council through direct participation in Council committees. The Council employs a small staff to assist the Board in meeting the objectives of the organization. Financial support comes from the members of the Board, businesses, law firms, individuals, foundations, and occasionally government.

The Council for Court Excellence has built a substantial record of success in the major justice system reform initiatives it has undertaken. The Council has been the moving force behind adoption of the one day/one trial jury system in the DC Superior Court, modernization of trial jury and grand jury systems, reform of the District of Columbia probate laws and procedures, reform of the DC administrative adjudication system, improvement in handling of child neglect and abuse cases, expansion of crime victim rights, proposing methods to speed resolution of criminal cases, and proposing methods to speed resolution of civil cases by the DC trial and appellate courts. To improve the public’s access to justice and increase their understanding of our justice system, the Council over the years has published and distributed over 350,000 copies of plain-language booklets and other materials explaining a wide variety of court systems.