



PERSONAL AFFAIRS RECORD BOOK

A companion booklet to
When Someone Dies: A Non-Lawyer's Guide to Probate

PROBATE
Council for
Court Excellence

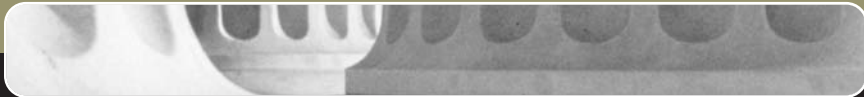
Council for
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Improving Justice for the Community



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Letter from the Executive Director	1
Introduction	2
How the Book is Organized	3
Quick Reference Locator.....	4
Section I: Personal and Family Information	5-9
Section II: Employment Information.....	10
Section III: Information About Your Assets	11-14
Section IV: Information About Your Liabilities	15 & 16
Section V: Other Helpful Information.....	17 & 18
Section VI: Glossary	19

Dear Community Member



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

INTRODUCTION

Why you should take time to fill out this booklet now



The Importance of Completing a Personal Affairs Form

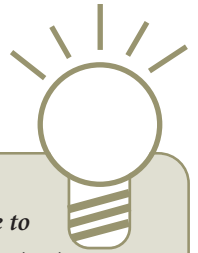
At the time of your death, someone close to you—a relative, friend, or perhaps your family lawyer—will need to know how to handle your affairs for you. This Personal Affairs Record Book is intended to assist you in listing information and identifying the location of all documents which will aid your 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.



The subject of where to keep your most important papers is a question asked by many people. There is no right answer 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 keep all your important papers together.

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.

Your Quick Reference Financial Affairs Locator



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.

Date page was completed: _____

1. Bank Statements for Checking Account: _____
2. Bank Statements/Passbooks for Savings Account: _____
3. Birth Certificate: _____
4. Birth Certificates of Children: _____
5. Adoption Certificates of Children: _____
6. Passport: _____
7. Naturalization Papers: _____
8. Marriage Certificate(s): _____
9. Last Will and Testament: _____
10. Divorce Papers: _____
11. Safe Deposit Box Key: _____
12. Deed to Home: _____
13. Insurance Policy Records: _____
14. All of Your Vehicles: Model/Registration/Title/Papers: _____
15. Stock Certificates/Records: _____
16. Bond Certificates/Records: _____
17. Mutual Funds Certificates/Records: _____
18. Military Records/Papers: _____
19. Records of Debts Owed to You: _____
20. Mortgage/Home Equity Loan Payment Book/Statements: _____
21. Credit Card Statements: _____
22. Loan Papers/Records: _____
23. Post Office Box Key/Combination: _____
24. Social Security Card: _____
25. Cemetery Plot Papers/Records: _____
26. Previous Income Tax Returns/Records: _____



Section 1. My Personal and Family Information



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 _____.

Date page was completed: _____

Section 1. My Personal and Family Information



Date page was completed: _____

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

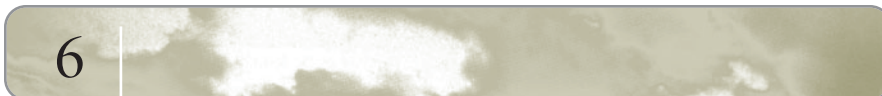
_____.

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

_____.



Section 1. My Personal and Family Information



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 _____

Section 1. My Personal and Family Information

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

_____.

_____.

_____.

Section 1. My Personal and Family Information



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: _____

Section II. My Employment History



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



Date page was completed: _____

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

I. Checking Account(s):

How many checking accounts do you have now? _____

Bank/ Location	Checking Account Number	Other Names on Your Bank Account
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

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? _____

Bank/ Location	Savings Account Number	Other Names on Your Bank Account
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

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

Section III. My Assets



Date page was completed: _____

3. Stocks and Mutual funds

How many different stocks do you have? _____

How many different mutual funds do you have? _____

Name of Company Invested in	Your Broker's Name/Address Phone Number	Name on Certificate
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

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

Type of Investment	Location/Address and Phone Number	Name on Account and Account Number
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

The specific location (e.g., file cabinet in den) where all my records for these investments are

Section III. My Assets



Date page was completed: _____

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

Address of Property

Date Purchased (month & year)

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



Date page was completed: _____

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

Insurance Company Name	Address/Phone Number	Policy Number/Type
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

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



Section IV: My Liabilities



Date page was completed: _____

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



Date page was completed: _____

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

**Bank/Financial Institution/
Creditor That Handles My Loan**

Address/Location

Telephone Number

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? _____

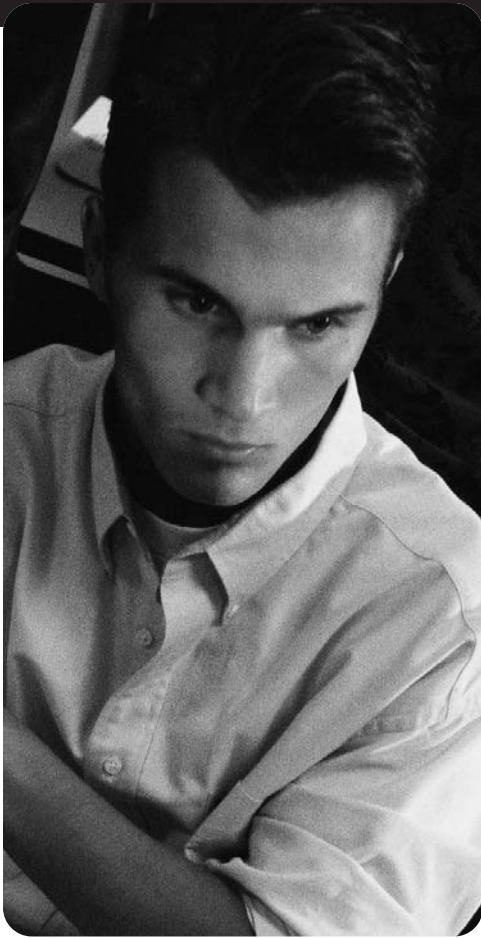
List all credit card companies and the numbers and names that appear on each card

- 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



Section V: Other Helpful Information



Date page was completed: _____

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

_____.

Section V: Other Helpful Information



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) _____



Section VI: Glossary of Terms

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.

Notes

[illegible]

Gifts and Bequests to the Council for Court Excellence

Financial gifts to the Council for Court Excellence help ensure the long-term financial stability of the organization so that it may continue to be an independent voice working to improve the administration of justice.

The Council actively solicits both current donations and planned gifts. If you would like more information about the Council or guidance about how to make a tax deductible gift, please contact:

COUNCIL FOR COURT EXCELLENCE

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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.

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Court Excellence**



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