

My friend wants me to be her executor. Should I accept this “honour”?

An executor is responsible for:

- arranging the funeral and paying the cost;
- protecting the assets of the deceased. This includes physically protecting assets, keeping property insurance in place;
- identifying liabilities to be paid from the estate;
- filing necessary income tax returns;
- carrying out the wishes of the deceased as expressed in the will;
- reporting to the beneficiaries and seeking their approval of your actions in dealing with the estate;
- applying to court for probate, unless the estate is very small.

Many executors hire professionals to assist. Often the executor will hire the deceased’s lawyer and accountant.

You should be methodical and keep impeccable records. If you’re comfortable with this responsibility, then accept this role.

Ask your friend where the original will is kept, and if she has prepared a “Just in Case” binder (available from the Saskatoon Community Foundation).

- Holly Ann Knott QC