

## PROBATE

### WHAT IS A SHORT CERTIFICATE?

A Short Certificate is a legal document issued by the Register of Wills that shows the appointment of an Executor(s) or Administrator(s) of an estate. This Document gives the appointed person the ability to access assets and to conduct business in the deceased person's name.

### HOW TO OBTAIN A SHORT CERTIFICATE?

In order to obtain a Short Certificate, you must go through *probate* of the decedent's estate.

WHAT IS NEEDED TO PROBATE AN ESTATE? It depends on whether you have a valid will.

#### **If you HAVE a WILL**

- The ORIGINAL will.
- Any original Codicil, if one exists.
- An ORIGINAL DEATH CERTIFICATE.
- The first named executor must be present at our office. If they are deceased, you must present proof of death. If he/she is renouncing (giving up) his/her right to serve as a listed alternate executor, then renunciations may be needed from others. You should contact this office or an attorney for additional information.
- The person intending to serve as executor must bring a current valid driver's license or a state issued identification card.
- A CHECK (personal check/attorney check, cashier's check or money order) credit or debit card to pay the probate fee. We do NOT accept cash for Probate Fees.

#### **If there is NO WILL, you will need to probate an Estate for Letters of Administration**

- An ORIGINAL DEATH CERTIFICATE
- Are you the sole next of kin? If there are others, you need their original, signed and notarized renunciations.
- Your current valid driver's license or state issued identification card.
- A CHECK (personal check/attorney check, cashier's check or money order) credit or debit card to pay the probate fee. We do NOT accept cash for Probate Fees.

Probate Questions? Call a Deputy at 610-891-4406, 4402, 4111 or 4401. The contents of this document do not constitute legal advice and are provided as a general guideline. You may need to enlist the services of an attorney for these and/or additional steps.

If you have any questions, please consult with an attorney.

Rachel Ezzell Berry, Esquire  
Register of Wills and Clerk of Orphans' Court of Delaware County

