



**RICHLAND COUNTY PROBATE COURT**  
**1701 Main Street**  
**Room 207**  
**Columbia, South Carolina 29201**

We, the employees of the Richland County Probate Court, understand that this is a very sad and emotional time. We are committed to making the Probate process as easy on you and your family as we can.

We are here to assist you. After meeting with you at your opening appointment, the probate staff may advise you that this is an estate that should be handled by an attorney. Please keep in mind that the Probate Court staff cannot give legal advice. The Probate Court receives and files documents and ensures that each estate is handled appropriately. We also conduct a quarterly workshop in which the staff explains the entire probate process and a guest attorney is present to answer your legal questions. Please contact the Court if you are interested in attending.

**BEFORE COMING FOR YOUR OPENING APPOINTMENT, YOUR APPLICATION FOR INFORMAL PROBATE ALONG WITH THE WORKSHEET MUST BE COMPLETED IN FULL. PLEASE COLLECT THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION AND BRING IT TO YOUR OPENING APPOINTMENT:**

- \_\_\_\_\_ **Completed Probate Court Worksheet** – this form is necessary to determine whether an estate needs to be opened, whether a small estate affidavit can be filed or whether the decedent’s Last Will and Testament needs to be filed only.
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Completed Application/Petition for Probate** – this form needs to be completed in it’s entirety either typed or printed in ink – **failure to include addresses on Parts 4a and 4b of Section I will delay the opening of the estate and the issuance of a Certificate of Appointment until all addresses are provided.** Please refer to the Sample for guidance. **The form needs to be completed in its entirety before you arrive for your appointment.**
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Certified copy of the decedent’s death certificate.**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Decedent’s original Last Will and Testament and any and all original Codicils and Memorandums, as applicable.**

\_\_\_\_\_ Copy of the obituary OR Funeral program which lists the surviving family members.

\_\_\_\_\_ Copy of all Deeds for real property that the decedent had an interest in.

\_\_\_\_\_ Family Tree, if applicable, if an heir predeceased the decedent.

\_\_\_\_\_ Copy of the paid funeral bill and/or funeral bill showing the outstanding balance.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Renunciation/Nomination of Right to Administer, if applicable** - if the primary person named in the Will is not going to serve or if the person with priority in an estate without a will (intestate estate) is not going to serve, then these forms are required to be filed at the time of your appointment.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Waiver of Bond, if applicable** - may be required in an intestate estate or in a testate estate when Renunciation/Nominations are filed.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Appointment of a Guardian ad Litem, if applicable** - if there are minor children in an intestate estate, this form as well as a **GAL OATH** will be a requirement prior to the appointment of a Personal Representative.

\_\_\_\_\_ A publication fee in the amount of \$51.50 made payable to the Richland County Probate Court and the initial filing fee in the amount of \$45.00 made payable to the Richland County Treasurer will be collected at your appointment. You may pay by checks, cash or Money Order as we are unable at this time to accept payment by debit or credit card.

**Please be advised that opening appointments usually last one hour. If you arrive late or the paperwork is not completed or the necessary documents are not brought with you to the appointment, your appointment will be delayed and may possibly have to be rescheduled to another day.**

**Please refer to the enclosed sample of the Application/Petition for Probate when completing the Application as we believe this sample will answer most of your questions. You will also find valuable information by accessing our website ([www.rcgov.us/probate](http://www.rcgov.us/probate)). You will also be able to download any additional forms from our website that you may need in order to open the estate.**

**As a reminder, the Probate Court staff is here to assist you. If you should need additional assistance or guidance in completing the documents, please call 576-1961.**