

SOMERSET COUNTY SURROGATE'S COURT

INFORMATION ON HOW TO NAVIGATE THE SURROGATE'S COURT



including

PROBATE OF A WILL

and

ESTATE ADMINISTRATION

BERNICE MARTINA JALLOH

**JUDGE OF THE SOMERSET COUNTY
SURROGATE COURT**

SOMERSET COUNTY SURROGATE'S OFFICE
SOMERSET COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
20 GROVE STREET, P.O. BOX 3000
SOMERVILLE, NEW JERSEY 08876
(908) 231-7003

**THE BASICS OF
ESTATE PLANNING
AND
ESTATE ADMINISTRATION**

**BERNICE MARTINA JALLOH, ESQ.
SOMERSET COUNTY SURROGATE**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Basics of Estate Planning	1
Last Will & Testament	2
Testamentary Trusts	3
Living Will and Health Care Directive	4
What to Bring to the Surrogate's Court	6
How to Probate a Will in Somerset County	7
How Does the Process Work	8
What Comes Next	9
Estate Tax – Federal & NJ	10
NJ Inheritance Tax	10
Refunding Bond & Release	13
When Someone Dies without a Will	14
Table of Consanguinity	15
Glossary	17
Directions	19
Contact Information	22

*To make an appointment
with the Surrogate's Office,
please call (908) 231-7003*

MESSAGE FROM THE SURROGATE



Dear Somerset County Residents

It is my great privilege to serve the residents of Somerset County as the County Surrogate. This important position impacts many aspects of the lives of the residents of Somerset County. The many duties of the Surrogates' court includes the probate of Wills, appointments of estate administrators and trustees, supervision of guardianship appointments, administration of adoptions, and safe keeping of minor trust funds.

I also act as the Deputy Clerk to the Superior Court of the Chancery Division, Probate Part, Somerset County. This title is part of a dual role as the elected judge of the Surrogate's Court and manager of filing and records for the County Probate Part of the Judiciary of the State of New Jersey. I also oversee the staff of the Surrogate's Court.

I believe, the most important official duty I have is reaching out to the residents of Somerset County to educate them about the importance of having a Will and to estate plan, the probate/estate administration process, and some of the responsibilities executors and administrators have. That is why this booklet offers an introduction and general overview of these tasks. In

addition to the booklet we are also available to answer your questions, listen to your concerns, and offer guidance where appropriate.

Additionally, we are available to give presentations to organizations and community groups. Please contact us at (908) 231-7003 during business hours, Monday through Friday from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm. You may access important information by visiting us on our website at www.co.somerset.nj.us/surrogate.

Bernice Martina Jalloh, Esq.
Somerset County Surrogate



The Surrogate's Court is almost certain to touch the lives of every person in the county at some time.

The duties of the Surrogate are:

- Probating Wills
- Processing adoptions
- Processing contested probate matters
- Processing alleged incompetency complaints
- Filming and recording all probate proceedings
- Investing minors' funds
- Appointing guardians of minors
- Administrating estates without Wills

THE BASICS OF ESTATE PLANNING

You will benefit from taking the time to prepare an *estate* plan, regardless of how simple or complex your estate may be. Planning can save your *heirs* time, money and perhaps some emotional pain. Remember, the material presented here is not a substitute for sound legal advice from a qualified attorney or other professional.

Personal organization is important in any estate plan. Consider the following:

- Create an inventory of your bank accounts, IRA accounts, stock funds, insurance policies, employment benefits and other assets. If applicable, list the contact individual. Compile the information in a single document. Update the information regularly.
- If you have a safe deposit box, consider adding a second name on the box so that individual will have access to the contents after your death.
- Tell someone where your papers and records are kept. It does not mean you have to tell them what assets you hold or their value but someone should know where they will find your important papers if the need arises.
- Weed out papers that are no longer relevant.
- Invest in a shredder to further protect yourself against identity theft.

The Basics of Estate Administration. As noted earlier, the staff in the *Surrogate's* Court is available to assist you in the initial phase of administering an estate. Our office is open from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday (except holidays), and late Wednesday night until 6:00 p.m. While the Surrogate's Court staff is prohibited by judiciary rules from providing legal advice, we can answer procedural questions relating to the *probate* or *intestate* succession process and are happy to do so.

LAST WILL & TESTAMENT

A Will is a legal document by which you state how your property is to be divided at the time of your death. The principle reason for preparing a Will is to control the manner in which your property is passed at death. Other reasons include naming the individual who will control the estate, naming a guardian for minor children, appointing a trustee to control funds and in many cases to engage in tax planning. When no Will exists, real and personal property is not distributed according to the decedent's wishes. Rather, it is distributed according to the statutes of the state of New Jersey. An administrator must be appointed for the estate.

Limitations on distribution by Will. Certain types of property are not transferred by a Will. Frequently referred to as non-probate assets, this type of property includes the following:

- Jointly held property, such as real estate and bank accounts.
- Pension and other employment benefits with named beneficiaries.
- IRA accounts with named beneficiaries.
- Life insurance policies with named beneficiaries.

Beneficiaries. Under New Jersey law you are not obligated to leave property to any specified individual. There is a provision in the law for a spouse who is left out of a Will to claim a spousal share if certain conditions are met. Children born or adopted after a Will is executed may also have a claim under certain conditions. If you are not leaving a share to a child it may be prudent to make a reference to that fact in the Will, although it is not required.

Will challenges are frequently brought by disinherited children or children who receive a small inheritance claiming the decedent was not of sound mind when the Will was made or was unduly influenced by someone else leading to the exclusion of the complaining party.

***WARNING:** If you are assisting a parent or anyone else in preparing a Will or estate planning, make certain they are represented by an independent attorney who has no relationship with you. Conflicts of interest are a common allegation in a contested Will.*

Tangible Personal Property. Under New Jersey law, a Will may make reference to a separate writing that makes provisions for disposition of tangible personal property after your death. Tangible personal property is comprised of assets like jewelry, furniture and art. Stocks, bonds, and automobiles are not considered tangible personal property. This list, which should be kept with your Will, may be changed as often as you like without executing a new Will.

Testamentary Trusts. There are several reasons you may want to create a *Trust* in your Will. The most common reasons are to hold assets for minor children or to take advantage of tax saving strategies that usually involve a Trust for a surviving spouse. The Trust will terminate at some point in the future when a specified event occurs. In some cases a Special Needs Trust may be created to protect a handicapped child or other *beneficiary*. More is stated about Special Needs Trusts later in this booklet. A Trust can also be used to control a beneficiary's access to assets where waste is a concern.

Store-bought / computer-generated and other self-help kits. If the requirements of execution are met, these Wills are valid. Often they are not properly executed or important terms are missing, such as naming a fiduciary, which may result in your wishes not being followed. Be wise and make certain that requirements of the law are followed. The law is very specific about the manner in which a Will must be executed. An effort to save a few dollars today may cost your estate hundreds or thousands of dollars later. Educate yourself before using a self-help kit. While these kits may help you save on professional fees, they are not a substitute for sound legal advice.

Execution of the Will. All Wills should be executed so they will be self-proving. A Self-Proving Will requires two witnesses to the testator's signature and a notary or attorney who acknowledges that the witnesses and the testator signed in his or her presence.

***WARNING:** The notary cannot be one of the witnesses, which is a common mistake in the execution of Self-Help Wills. If the Will is not Self-Proving, a witness to the Will needs to submit sworn and notarized statement or testify in person that he/she actually witnessed the Will being executed in order for the Will to be admitted to probate.*

Care of your Will. Keep the original Will in a safe, secure location. A safe-deposit box is okay if you think it is secure. A box can be opened at the time of death to remove a Will and life insurance policies. It is advisable to let your executor know where the original Will is stored. It is also important that you not mark up, make changes to, or remove staples from your original Will as this may compromise its validity, or require approval by the Superior Court before the Will is admitted to probate.

Updating your Will. It is advisable to review and update your Will every three to five years or anytime there is a major change in your family situation. Changes to your Will may be accomplished through a codicil to your existing Will or by executing an entirely new Will. Please note that codicils must be executed and acknowledged in the same manner as a Will.

Living Will and Health Care Directive. A Living Will or Health Care Directive, coupled with a Medical Power of Attorney, allows you to designate the level of care you desire should you be in a life-threatening medical condition or emergency and also appoints the person you wish to make decisions on your behalf if you are unable to do so. A Medical Power of Attorney authorizes your designated agent access to your medical records even when you are not in a medical emergency. The documents should reference the Federal HIPAA legislation.

Power of Attorney. A Power of Attorney is a written document in which another adult person is authorized to act on your behalf for whatever purposes are stated in the document. With this instrument, a spouse, friend or family member, called an Agent, may act on behalf of you, the Principal. A Power of Attorney may be limited to a single activity, such as attending a real estate transaction, or it may grant general powers that continue until your death.

General Power of Attorney. Absent language making a general power of attorney durable, this type of power of attorney may not be valid if the Principal becomes mentally incapacitated. The authority granted under a power of attorney ends when the principal dies.

Trusts other than Testamentary Trusts. There are a variety of Trusts created which are used by individuals to address specific needs that may not be met by a Will. Be cautious before paying for a Living Trust. In many cases they are more expensive than a Will and for most New Jersey residents, a living Trust is an unnecessary expense. This type of Trust is often advertised as a protection against costly probate fees and court supervision. While this is true in some states, probate in New Jersey is inexpensive and it is rare that a New Jersey Court has any involvement in the estate once the Will has been admitted to probate. In general, Living Trusts are subject to the same estate administration expenses established under a Will or intestacy.

Special Needs Trusts. This type of Trust is appropriate where a beneficiary of your estate is receiving government assistance and may be disqualified from that assistance if they receive a direct distribution from your estate. There are many laws and regulations that affect the creation of a Special Needs Trust which are beyond the scope of this booklet. Professional guidance is a must in creating this type of Trust.

WHAT TO BRING TO THE SURROGATE'S COURT IN ORDER TO PROBATE A WILL

In order for a Will to be admitted to probate, the following documents and information must be supplied to the Surrogate's Court:

1. Original Will.
2. Original codicil, if applicable.
3. Certified copy of death certificate.
4. Name, address and telephone number of each fiduciary who will qualify.
5. Name and address of each beneficiary under the Will and the decedent's other next of kin.
6. The probate fee, which usually ranges between \$100 and \$200 and can be paid by cash or check. Please be aware that checks drawn on accounts with the name of the decedent are not accepted as those accounts are often closed before the check clears the bank.

HOW TO PROBATE A WILL IN SOMERSET COUNTY

Probate is often assumed to be a terrible process that must be avoided. It is not, it is a common misconception that the process of probating a Will is complicated and expensive. In fact, in New Jersey, and particularly in Somerset County, probate in the vast majority of cases is simple and inexpensive. In Somerset County an individual may probate a Will in the Surrogate's Court, with or without the assistance of a lawyer, in approximately thirty minutes. We require appointments for services in the Somerset County Surrogate's Court.

What is Probate? Probate is the process by which a Last Will and Testament is presented to the Surrogate's Court and an application is made by the named executor for appointment as the fiduciary (executor) to represent the interests of the estate. A judgment admitting a Will to probate is issued by the Somerset County Surrogate if the testator resided in Somerset County at the time of his or her death or owned property in Somerset County at that time.

When to Probate the Will. Pursuant to New Jersey law, a Will is not admitted to probate until the eleventh day following the date of death of the testator. You may begin the process with the Surrogate's Court at any time prior to the eleventh day, but the Surrogate cannot appoint the fiduciary until the eleventh day has passed.

In addition, if a Will is not self-proving, then a person who signed the Will as a witness or a bystander witness (one who witnessed the testator and two witnesses signing the Will but did not sign the Will as a witness) must also come to the Surrogate's Court to testify as to the validity of the Will or sign a sworn and notarized statement if they cannot come to the Surrogate's Court.

If a Will is Self-Proving, there is no need for a witness to the execution of the Will to come to the Surrogate's Court to authenticate his or her signature. If in doubt, ask a Probate Clerk at the Surrogate's Court or an attorney.

HOW DOES THE PROCESS WORK?

When you arrive at the Surrogate's Court, you will meet with a Probate Clerk. The Probate Clerk will review the original Will to ensure that it has been properly drawn, signed and witnessed. If there are no problems with the Will or with the items you have brought, the named executor will sign qualification papers, pay the fee, the Judgment of Probate will be entered and the executor will be given proof of their appointment, referred to as Letters Testamentary.

The Probate Clerk will also ask you how many executor certificates you will need. An executor certificate is additional proof that you are the representative of the estate and is delivered to institutions where you are claiming funds or asking for records. You will generally need an executor's certificate, with a raised seal, for each asset to be claimed by the estate. The current cost is \$5.00 per certificate.

Many executors find it easier to obtain extra certificates to avoid the need to purchase more at a later date. However, be aware that some financial institutions and most stock brokers require that the executor certificate be no more than 60 days old. Additional certificates may be obtained from the Surrogate's Court when necessary.

Once the judgment for probate is signed and Letters Testamentary have been issued, the Will is deemed to have been admitted to probate.

Notification Requirements. After the Will is admitted to probate the executor must send written notification to the decedent's spouse, heirs, next of kin and beneficiaries under the Will advising that the Will has been probated. The notice must indicate the place and date of probate, the name and address of the executor and a statement that a copy of the Will shall be furnished upon request. This notice must be sent within 60 days following the date of probate and a proof of mailing must be filed with the Surrogate no later than 10 days after the notice is mailed. The fee for the proof of mailing is \$5.00 per page and must accompany your submission. Make checks payable to the Somerset County Surrogate. If you desire a filed copy of the proof

of Notice, include a copy of the proof of Notice and a self addressed stamped envelope.

If the decedent left any portion of the estate to a charitable organization, the notice and a copy of the Will must also be sent to the New Jersey Attorney General. If an address is unknown, the notice must be published in a newspaper of general circulation in the county where the Will was probated.

WHAT COMES NEXT?

Following probate, the executor begins the process of administering the estate. It is the executor's duty to collect the decedent's assets, manage them during administration, maintain records, pay debts and expenses, compute and pay income, estate, inheritance and any other taxes, and distribute the estate assets to the designated beneficiaries. As necessary, the executor enlists the services of professionals such as an attorney or accountant to assist the executor with performance of the administrative duties.

The executor may also be asked to assist with the collection of non-probate assets and may need information regarding those assets where they are required to be included in the computation and payment of income and estate taxes.

Potential Tax Liability. There are three distinct tax liabilities to which New Jersey decedent's estates and beneficiaries may be subject. The Federal estate tax and the New Jersey estate tax are imposed upon the decedent's estate. The New Jersey inheritance tax is assessed against the inheritance received by beneficiaries.

It must be noted, tax laws are complex and fluid; executors should consult with an attorney or qualified accountant to determine if the estate they are administering is subject to any estate or inheritance taxes.

FEDERAL ESTATE TAX

Federal law imposes an estate tax on estates that exceed a certain value. At the time this booklet is being written, the Federal estate tax for 2021 is on estates equal to or above \$11.7 million. There is no Federal estate tax imposed on a surviving spouse.

NEW JERSEY ESTATE TAX

The New Jersey Estate Tax was phased out in two parts. If the resident decedent died:

- On or before December 31, 2016, the Estate Tax exemption was capped at \$675,000;
- On or after January 1, 2017, but before January 1, 2018, the Estate Tax exemption was \$2 million;
- On or after January 1, 2018, no Estate Tax will be imposed.

NJ TRANSFER INHERITANCE TAX

How the Tax Works. New Jersey still has an inheritance tax. The inheritance tax is assessed against the amount received by an individual beneficiary.

Parties Exempt from the New Jersey Transfer Inheritance Tax. If the beneficiary under a Will is a spouse, child, parent, grandchild, grandparent or step-child, no inheritance tax is due regardless of the size of the inheritance. These beneficiaries are called Class A beneficiaries.

If a gift is left to a charity, an educational institution, a church, a hospital, a library or the State of New Jersey or its political subdivisions, no inheritance tax is due. In addition, transfers or gifts having a value less than \$500 are also exempt from inheritance tax.

Recipients That Pay Tax. All other beneficiaries will be required to pay an inheritance tax, though gifts to siblings for less than \$25,000 are exempt. The tax rate ranges from 11 percent to 16 percent.

Tax Waivers. Some assets (real estate, stocks and bank accounts) require the executor to obtain a tax waiver certificate from the New Jersey Division of Taxation before they may be transferred. Waivers are not generally required to transfer cars, personal property such as household goods and jewelry, and most employee benefits.

Class A beneficiaries are usually entitled to receive assets from a financial institution by completing a Self-Executing Waiver, Form L-8. This Self-Executing Waiver is filed with bank, financial institution or broker where the asset is located and requires no action by the State. In the L-8 Affidavit the party completing the form is certifying that they are a Class A beneficiary and no inheritance tax is due.

Real Estate. If a Class A beneficiary is receiving a gift of real estate, a Form L-9 is filed with the Inheritance and Estate Tax Branch in Trenton. This form requires a bit more work than the Form L-8. Upon receipt and approval of the Form L-9, Trenton will issue a tax waiver certificate which is filed with the County Clerk, in the county where the real estate is located, which will be a representation that the State has no claim on the real estate for inheritance taxes.

If a husband and wife own real estate as *tenants by the entirety*, the surviving spouse need not file a Form L-9, as the property passes to the surviving spouse by operation of law upon the death of the spouse.

New Jersey Transfer Inheritance Tax. A formal Inheritance Tax Return will have to be filed if the estate does not pass 100 percent to Class A beneficiaries. All of the necessary forms for filing the Inheritance Tax Return can be obtained from the Individual Tax Audit Branch, Inheritance and Estate Tax, New Jersey Division of Taxation, P.O. Box 249, Trenton, New Jersey 08695-0249 or by accessing their web site at www.state.nj.us/treasury/taxation/. Also, the branch will answer questions if you call (609) 292-5033.

If a formal Inheritance Tax Return is required, it is important to remember that you will need to attach a copy of the decedent's Will and any amendments (codicils), a copy of the decedent's last full year's federal income tax return (Form 1040), and a certified check for any tax due.

Formal tax returns are due eight months after the decedent's death. If the inheritance tax is not paid within eight months, interest will accrue and no tax waivers will be issued until payment is received.

CAUTION: This is one month earlier than the federal and New Jersey estate tax returns are due.

Executor and Administrator Fees. The executor or administrator is entitled to a fee for services performed. Under New Jersey law, the executor of an estate is generally entitled to the following commissions:

- a. 6% on all estate income;
- b. 5% of the estate corpus (principal) up to \$200,000;
- c. 3.5% on excess above \$200,000 up to \$1,000,000;
- d. 2% on excess over \$1,000,000 or such other percentage as the Superior Court may determine.

There are different rules for commissions where there is more than one executor, or where the executor has rendered unusual or extraordinary services. Commissions are also payable to individuals serving as trustees and guardians.

REFUNDING BOND & RELEASE

Once all assets of the estate have been disbursed, the executor must have each beneficiary sign a Refunding Bond. The executor should also have each beneficiary sign a Release at the same time. By executing a Refunding Bond and Release, the beneficiary is agreeing that, in the event the assets distributed to him or her are needed at a later time to pay any debt of the estate, the beneficiary will return part or all of the assets needed to pay the estate debts. This provides the executor with security in the unlikely event claims are subsequently made against the estate. The release absolves the executor from any liability pertaining to his or her administration of the estate.

The executed Refunding Bond and Release (as executed in front of a notary public) should then be filed with the Surrogate's Court. When all Refunding Bond and Release have been filed, the estate is then closed.

These comments are a general overview of the probate process. Should you have any questions, the Somerset County Surrogate's Court is here to help. You may want to seek the advice of an attorney, accountant or other professionals to help guide you through the probate procedures.

MISCELLANEOUS

WHEN SOMEONE DIES WITHOUT A WILL

Intestate Succession. When no Will exists, real and personal property may not be distributed according to the decedent's wishes. Rather, it is distributed according to the statutes of the State of New Jersey. An administrator must be appointed for the estate. The following information is necessary for an application for administration to be processed:

1. Certified copy of death certificate.
2. Name and address of all next of kin.
3. List of assets in decedent's name.
4. Value and location of the assets at the time of death.

When an individual seeking appointment as administrator submits the required information, the Surrogate's Court will determine the need for a bond. The bond acts as an insurance policy that the administrator will perform his or her duties. Once the necessary forms are executed, and any required bond returned, the administrator will receive Letters of Administration and the Administrator Certificates.

New Jersey law designates the right to apply as administrator to the person who is the nearest degree of kinship to the decedent. In the event multiple individuals are eligible to apply, they will need to agree on who will serve by renouncing in favor of the designated person or they may all qualify and serve together.

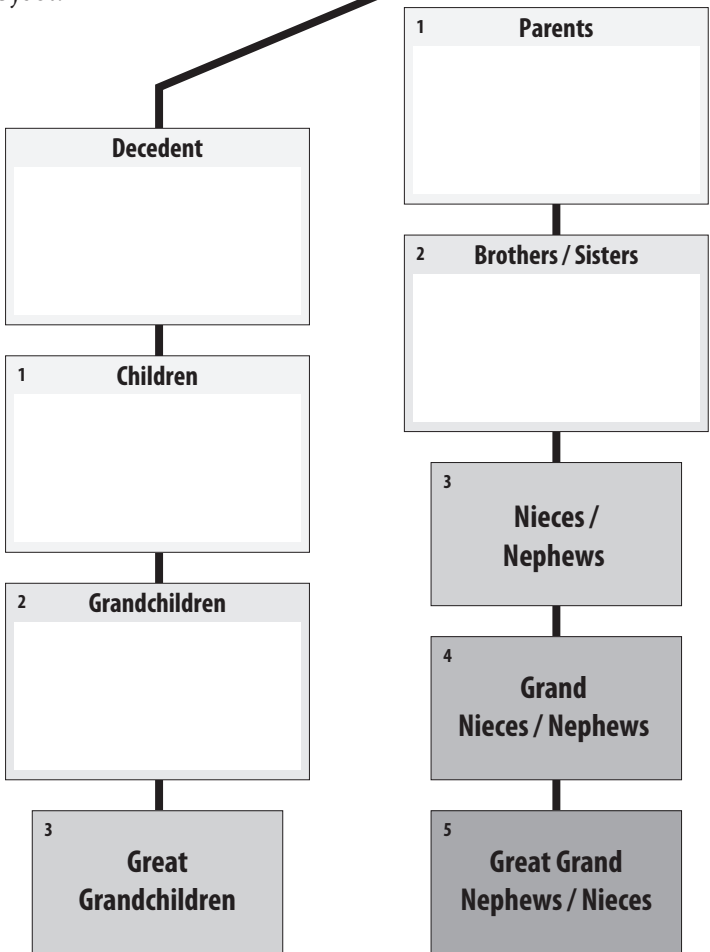
The Table of Consanguinity

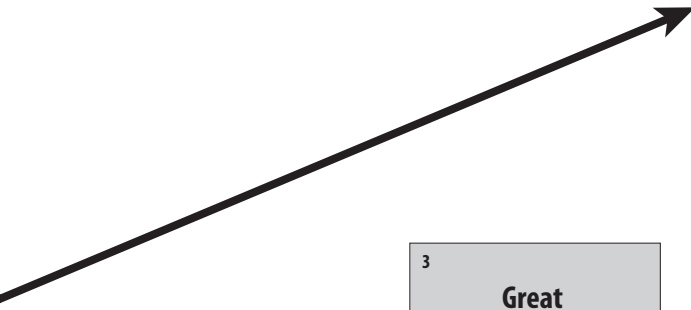
determines which relatives will inherit, and in what order, if you do NOT have a Will.

Shows the degrees of Relationship by blood

Instructions:

Place the subject / decedent for whom you need to establish relationships in the blank box. The labeled boxes will then list the relationship by title to the subject and the degree of distance from the subject.





2 Grandparents

3 Aunts / Uncles

4 First Cousins

5 First Cousins once removed

6 First Cousins twice removed

7 First Cousins thrice removed

3 Great Grandparents

4 Grad Aunts / Uncles

5 First Cousins once removed

6 Second Cousins

7 Second Cousins once removed

8 Second Cousins twice removed

9 Second Cousins thrice removed

4 Great Great Grandparents

5 Great Grad Aunts / Uncles

6 First Cousins twice removed

7 Second Cousins once removed

8 Third Cousins

9 Third Cousins once removed

10 Third Cousins twice removed

11 Third Cousins thrice removed

GLOSSARY

Administrator: A person appointed by the courts to take charge of the estate of a decedent who dies without a Will.

Beneficiary: A person designated to receive money, property or benefits in a Will.

Bequest: A gift of personal property by a Will.

Bequeath: To dispose of personal property through a Will.

Caveat: A formal notice given by someone to prevent the proving of a Will or the grant of administration of an estate.

Codicil: An addition or supplement to an original Will that adds to or deletes only a part of the Will.

Decedent: A deceased person.

Devise: A gift of real estate through a Will.

Estate: Property and possessions, everything a person owns.

Executor/Executrix: A person named in a Will to carry out the wishes and intentions of the Will, also known as a personal representative.

Guardian: A person entrusted by the law with the fiduciary care of a person, such as a minor or mental incompetent, or of their property.

Heir: A person legally entitled to the property or rank of another on that person's death.

Intestate: When a person dies without a Will.

Legatee: An entity or person who receives an inheritance from a Will.

Personal Property: Intangible property, such as stocks, bonds or bank accounts, and tangible property such as jewelry, furniture and automobiles.

Probate: Official proof of authenticity or validity of a Will.

Real Property: Land and/or buildings.

Surrogate: The elected county official who oversees probate in the State of New Jersey.

Tenants by the Entirety: Property ownership for married couples only. Each spouse has legal right to an equal portion of the property. When one spouse dies, the person's share of property is automatically transferred to the surviving spouse.

Tenants in Common: Two or more persons owning individual interests in a single piece of property.

Testator/Testatrix: The person who makes a Will.

Trust: Property owned or managed by a person for another.

Trustee: Person holding property in Trust for another.

Will: A legal declaration of the manner in which a person wishes their estate to be divided after their death. (Also known as a Last Will and Testament).

Witness: Person who observes the signing of a document and attests to the signatures of the testator.

**DIRECTIONS TO THE
SOMERSET COUNTY SURROGATE'S OFFICE
20 GROVE STREET, SOMERVILLE, NEW JERSEY 08876
(908) 231-7003**

PARKING NOTICE: There is no charge to park in the Bernie Field Parking Deck. After you have parked, go to the GREEN level to enter the Administration Building and the Surrogate's Office is the last office on your left before you exit the building.

If it is more convenient, there is metered parking available on Grove Street and Main Street that will allow you to enter via the front entrance of the administration building. The Surrogate's Office will be your first office on the right if you enter the Administration building from Grove Street.

FROM THE NORTH

Take Route 287 South to Exit 17, formerly Exit 13 (Route 202-206 South)

Landmark: Pass Bridgewater Commons Mall on left; stay to right when the third lane appears

Turn right onto Route 22 East

Immediately after the 2nd overpass, turn right onto Grove Street (just past Wendy's/Kentucky Fried Chicken)

At the 2nd traffic light, turn left onto East High Street

Entrance to Parking Deck is on the right

Park in the deck (Levels 2-6); Administration Building entrance is via the GREEN (2nd) level of the parking deck.

FROM THE SOUTH (Via Route 287)

Take Route 287 North to Route 22 West

Landmark: Pass Bank of America on the right

Immediately after the 1st overpass, turn right (see sign for Somerville, Grove St. & North Bridge St.)

Bear right, go up over the overpass; this leads to Grove Street

At the 2nd traffic light, turn left onto East High Street

Entrance to Parking Deck is on right

Park in the deck (Levels 2-6); Administration Building entrance is via the GREEN (2nd) level of the parking deck.

FROM THE SOUTH (Via Route 206)

Take Route 206 North

Landmark: On Route 206 North approaching Somerville, look for a low stone wall on left (Duke Gardens)

Shortly past this wall, turn right onto South Bridge Street (Somerville)

At 2nd traffic light, turn right onto East Main Street

Make next left onto Grove Street

Make next right onto East High Street

Entrance to Parking Deck is on right

Park in the deck (Levels 2-6); Administration Building entrance is via the GREEN (2nd) level of the parking deck.

FROM THE EAST:

Take Route 22 West

Go under Route 287 overpass in Bridgewater

Landmark: Pass Bank of America on the right

Immediately after the next overpass, turn right (see sign for Somerville, Grove St. & North Bridge St.)

Bear right, go up over the overpass; this leads to Grove Street

At the 2nd traffic light, turn left onto East High Street

Entrance to Parking Deck is on right

Park in the deck (Levels 2-6); Administration Building entrance is via the GREEN (2nd) level of the parking deck.

FROM THE WEST:

Take Route 22 East into Somerville

Landmark: Pass Ethicon Inc. on left

Immediately after the 2nd overpass, turn right onto Grove Street (just past Wendy's Kentucky Fried Chicken)

At the 2nd traffic light, turn left onto East High Street

Entrance to Parking Deck is on right

Park in the deck (Levels 2-6); Administration Building entrance is via the GREEN (2nd) level of the parking deck.

CONTACTING THE SOMERSET COUNTY SURROGATE

The principle governing my staff and me is that, during periods of grief and family uncertainty, the Surrogate's Court is available to listen, help and guide. If you have any questions regarding any topic referred to in this booklet or involving the Surrogate's Court, please contact my office.

The Somerset County Surrogate's Court is located on the first floor of the Somerset County Administration Building, 20 Grove Street, Somerville, New Jersey 08876. The office is open daily from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday (except holidays), and late Wednesday night until 6:00 p.m. Have questions, call us at (908) 231-7003 or visit our website:

www.co.somerset.nj.us

We are here to serve you.

No walk-ins at this time.

***Due to Covid-19 precautions,
please call 908-231-7003
to make an appointment.***

Surrogate Court Staff

Stanley Layton, Esq. - Deputy Surrogate

Brian K. Marshal - Special Deputy Surrogate

Anita Singleton - Records Manager /
Executive Clerk

Jamie Fellin - Probate Clerk

Donna Mortensen - Paralegal / Admin Asst.

908-231-7003

