



Choosing an Estate Executor

For individuals in a long-term marital relationship the choice of an estate executor is usually automatic – their spouse. But at some point in time, having your spouse as executor may no longer be the best option, or if you are single or widowed, you are also faced with selecting a suitable person as your estate executor.

Keep in mind, you are asking someone to become personally liable for the administration of your estate assets, so you should do everything you can to make their job easier, as well as selecting someone capable of doing such a task.

As you consider who to ask, it is useful to think about the six “A”s :

AGE – Obviously you cannot choose a minor in your province, but also consider that as individuals get on in years, an elderly individual may no longer be the best choice.

AREA – If your executor is located in another part of the country or world, they will likely have to leave their family and work for 1-2 weeks, to begin estate administration.

ABILITY – Administering an estate requires an organized and methodical person, so care should be taken the person named has these attributes.

APPETITE – Not everyone wants to take on the personal liability that comes with estate administration, nor foresee having the time due to family or work demands.

ASK – Make sure you ask the person selected, as they are far more likely to take on this task when called upon, if they had previously agreed to do it.

ALTERNATE – Even after someone agrees to serve as your estate executor, when the time comes, they may have family or work pressures that don't allow them to fulfil their duties, so having an alternate, or naming two (joint) executors resolves this problem.