

art by Virginia M. Greer



## Clerk's Office Circuit Court of Smyth County

John H Graham, Esq.  
Clerk of Court

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### Probate and Estates Division

John H. Graham, Clerk  
Rachel Pennington, Master Deputy Clerk

Appointments are strongly encouraged, as having an appointment is the best safeguard against unnecessary waiting times. Please call (276) 782-4044 and schedule an appointment with Rachel Pennington or John Graham. Probate appointments tend to take at least one hour, and more complicated estates can take over two hours. Know that cell phones *are allowed* in our office.

#### What to bring with you to a probate appointment:

1. Proof of death (preferably a death certificate, but an obituary or funeral brochure will usually suffice)
2. The original will, if the decedent had a will (copies of wills cannot be probated)
3. A list of immediate family members with their full names and their addresses
4. A list of all real estate owned by the decedent (bring copies of deeds if convenient to do so)
5. A list of all bank accounts and their values as of the date of death. Are any jointly owned? (If you have any trouble obtaining this information, don't worry . . . just bring in what info you can.)
6. A list of all significant items of personal property *having a "yard sale value" of over \$500*, which were owned by the decedent, including but not limited to the most likely such items: cars, jewelry, firearms, antiques, furniture, china, silver, collections, business interests, and farm equipment.
7. Payment for probate and qualification fees (ie. cash, checks, and most credit/debit cards (w/ extra fee))
8. Your own cell phone, in case you need to "phone a friend" for an address or other information.
9. Non-Virginia residents seeking to become an executor or administrator must appoint a Virginia resident to serve as their agent for service of process and may need to be bonded. If you are not a Virginia resident, please call our office prior to your appointment for more information.

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WANT MORE INFO? GO TO: [www.smythcounty.org/clerk/circuit\\_court\\_wills.htm](http://www.smythcounty.org/clerk/circuit_court_wills.htm)

