

# NEW YORK STATE BAR ASSOCIATION

## PRACTICAL SKILLS COURSE

Preparation of the Account

and

Filing the Accounting\*

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### I. What a judicial accounting is

## II. When a judicial accounting is necessary

- A. Compulsory
- B. Resignation of Executor or Trustee of testamentary trust (recent trend to allow informal accounting however)
- C. Discharge from fiduciary bond (but see SCPA 2203(4))
- D. When absolute discharge from liability is desired (but see SCPA 315(8) informal accounting binding on non-parties by virtual representation)
- E. When informal accounting not practical or economical
- F. Where Court direction as to distribution of assets needed (Cy pres, e.g.)
- G. On Court's initiative

## III. Alternatives to a Judicial Accounting

- A. Do nothing (but will can't effectively dispense with accounting, even though many try against public policy)
- B. Informal Accounting filed in Court

# IV. Proper Time for an Accounting

- A. Final Accountings
- B. Intermediate Accountings
- C. How to Deal with Contingent Liabilities

# V. Papers in an Accounting (other than Schedules of Account)

- A. Petition
  - General information (names and addresses of accounting parties; date of death; dates of probate and letters; dispository provisions of Will; other relevant facts
  - 7 months elapsed (estates)

- 3. Provisions of instrument
- 4. Necessary parties (SCPA § 2210) (stress on estate accountings)
  - a. Specific legatees (if no receipt and release for legacy)
  - Outright residuary legatees; distributees (or their fiduciaries if deceased)
  - c. Trustees (and beneficiaries of trust, unless at least 1 Trustee (i) is not an accounting party, and (ii) has no conflict of interest)
  - d. Virtual representation
  - e. Creditors whose claims have not been paid
  - f. Attorney General (if charitable or unknown beneficiaries)
  - g. Infants (date of birth; with whom they reside; quardian)
  - h. Successor executor if accounting party no longer acting.
  - i. Addresses
  - j. Surety on bond, if any
- Prayer for relief
  - a. Settle accounts
  - b. Attorneys fees
    - (i) Both paid and unpaid, if any fees shown as unpaid
    - (ii) Where attorney sole fiduciary
    - (iii) Matter of Weinstock
    - (iv) Multiple attorneys
  - c. Order for service of citation by mail
  - d. Commissions
  - e. Compensation of deceased fiduciary

- 6. Signature page and affirmation
- 7. Attach copy of Will as Exhibit
- 8. Statement of no other proceeding (exception compulsory Accounting)

#### B. Citation

- 1. Citees
- Relief requested; should be practically verbatim with prayer for relief
- Return date (no later than four months after issuance; when to fill in; order for mailing)
- 4. Name, address and telephone number of Attorney
- 5. "you are not required..." etc.
- 6. Waiver; waiver and consent; appearance in proceeding
- 7. Service
  - a. In New York
  - b. Outside New York
  - c. Outside U.S.
  - d. Admission of due and timely service
  - e. Publication
  - f. Proof of Service
  - q. Infants
    - a. over 14 (infant and parent or guardian -SCPA 307(3)
    - b. under 14 (parent or guardian ibid.)
    - c. individual designated by court SCPA 311
  - h. Dispensation of Service under \$500 SCPA 2210(a) rare
- C. Affidavit of military service

#### VI. Schedules of Account

- A. Official Forms
  - 1. Estate with no trust
  - 2. Estate with trust
  - 3. Trust
- B Signatures required
  - 1. Summary statement (no notarization)
  - Affidavit of Accounting Party (notarized)
- C. Cover Schedules
  - 1. Who is accounting
  - 2. Period covered
  - 3. Final or intermediate
  - 4. List (index of all schedules)
- D. Summary statement
- E. Schedule A (principal received)
  - Inventory value (D.O.D., even if alternate value used)
  - Property subject to encumbrances
  - 3. Income accrued to date of death
  - No real property (unless sold)
  - Generally received as of date of death ("Schedule of Additional Property Received")
  - 6. Not property passing outside of Will
    - a. Joint WROS
    - b. Totten Trust
    - c. Pension and insurance payable directly to beneficiary
    - d. Trust property
  - 7. Exempt property (EPTL § 5-3.1)

- F. Schedule A-2 (income received)
  - 1. Format
  - 2. Stock dividends
  - Periodicity of Receipts
  - 4. Exclude income accrued to date of death
- G. Schedules A-1 and B (increases and decreases on principal); Schedules A-3 and B-1 (increases on income)
  - Different ways of realizing gains and losses
  - 2. Gains and losses based on inventory value
  - 3. No gain or loss transactions
  - 4. Revalue assets on hand for computing commissions
- H. Schedules C and C-2 (expenses paid from principal and income)
  - Types of expenses
  - 2. Charges of expenses against principal and income
    - a. General
    - b. Trusts
      - i. Income charges [EPTL 11-2.1(1)(1)]
      - ii. Principal charges [EPTL 11-2.1(1)(4)]
      - iii. Half income and half principal charges [EPTL 11-2.1(1)(6)]
    - c. Estates
      - i. Principal charges [EPTL § 11-2.1(d)(1)]
      - ii. Exceptions and possible exceptions
        - aa. Taxes on ordinary income
        - bb. Interest on income taxes
        - cc. Some long term regularly recurring expenses
        - dd. Portion of Executors commissions

#### iii. Interest on estate tax refund

- I. Schedule C-1 (unpaid administration expenses)
  - Principal and income expenses (generally)
  - 2. Commissions
  - 3. Legal Fees
  - 4. Accountants' Fees
  - Effect of showing unpaid expenses alternatives
- J. Schedule D (Estates) (Statements of all creditors claims)
  - Claims presented, allowed and paid
  - 2. Claims presented, allowed and not paid
  - 3. Claims presented but rejected
  - 4. Contingent and possible claims
  - 5. Personal claims requiring approval of court
  - List all categories even if nothing to report
- K. Schedules E and E-1 (distribution of principal and income)
  - Include estate taxes apportioned against individuals
- L. Schedule F (statement of new investments, exchanges and stock distributions)
  - 1. New "Prudent Investor" rule applies to investments made on or after 1/1/95 (EPTL 11-2.3)
  - Higher standard for professional investor
- M. Schedules G and G-1 (principal and income on hand)
  - General
  - "As of payments"
  - 3. Refunds due
  - 4. Income assets other than cash
- N. Schedule H (statement of interested parties)

- 1. Necessary parties
- 2. Interested parties
- 3. Approximate value of interests
- 4. Search of records of court
- O. Schedule I (Estates) (estate taxes paid and allocation thereof)
  - Final New York estate tax receipt or order of exemption from tax
  - 2. Tax clause in Will; EPTL § 2-1.8
    - a. Marital and charitable bequests
    - b. Apportionment within the residuary
      - (i) Residuary dispositions qualifying for marital and charitable deductions
      - (ii) Hybrid: initial tax payable out of charitable share, but not "snowball"
- P. Schedule J (computation of commissions)
  - 1. SCPA §§ 2307 (Executors)
  - 2. Receiving and paying
  - 3. Specific bequests
  - 4. Property pledged as collateral (Uniform Court Rule § 207.40)
  - 5. Property passing outside Will
  - Multiple fiduciaries (after 8/31/93, maximum of 2 commissions, unless Will provides otherwise)
  - 7. Deceased fiduciaries
  - 8. Payments on account
  - 9. Allocation between principal and income
- Q. Schedule K (other pertinent facts and cash reconciliation)
  - 1. Cash reconciliation
  - Non-probate matters affecting estate

#### 3. Income and principal allocation

- Income on pecuniary bequests not in trust -EPTL 11-1.5(d)
- b. Income on pecuniary distributions in trust -EPTL 11-2.1(c)(1)
- c. Other beguests EPTL 11-2.1(d)(2)(B)
- 4. Warms adjustment (reimbursement to principal where expenses taken as income tax deductions)
- 5. Holloway adjustment (reimbursement to income for "principal-trap" distribution)
- 6. Marital deduction computation
- 7. Income attributable to underproductive property
- 8. Schedule of Proposed Distributions
- R. Accounting Affidavit

#### VIII. Filing Papers in Court

- A. Filing fees (based on total of Schs A, A-1 and A-2)
- B. Bring eraser, pencil and pen, and extra copies of papers

## IX. Judicial proceedings

- A. Return date ("...for decree")
- B. Guardian ad litem ("... subject to guardian's report")
- C. Attorney General
- D Objections (within 8 days after account is marked for decree or within such further time as Court allows Uniform Rule 207.41)
- E. Affidavit Amending or Supplementing Account
- F. Supplemental Account (if too much time has passed since closing date of original account 1 year rule of thumb)
- G. Decree
  - 1. Papers filed and appearances

- 2. Status of Account
- 3. Decretal provisions
- H. Notice of Settlement
- I. Notice of Entry