

LAWRENCE S. TOLCHINSKY, P.A.  
ATTORNEY AT LAW

2100 E. Hallandale Beach Blvd. Suite #200  
Hallandale Beach, Florida 33009  
Telephone (954) 458-8655  
Facsimile (954) 455-3388

Website: <http://www.HallandaleLaw.com>

**Broward County Probate Information**

All matters relating to estates in Broward County are governed by the Probate Division, which is located in Room 252 of the Broward County Courthouse at 201 SE 6th Street, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301. It is open Monday through Friday from 8 AM to 4:30 PM.

Although all probate matters are governed by Chapters 731-735 of the Florida Probate Code, the Broward County Probate Division maintains its own comprehensive set of local procedures. An individual who wishes to open a new file or reopen a file for the disposition of an estate must provide the Clerk's Office with a filing fee and certain specified documents, both of which are determined by the applicable probate process – see below:

- If the probate proceeding concerns only the disposition of personal property (i.e. no real estate or title transfers) valued at less than \$6,000, the estate qualifies for disposition without administration. The filing fee is \$232.00.
- If the probate proceeding is not for personal property, but the decedent has been dead for more than two years or the assets subject to probate are valued at less than \$75,000, the estate qualifies for an abbreviated probate process called summary administration. The filing fee is \$236.00 if the assets are valued at less than \$1,000; otherwise, it is \$346.00. It should be noted that under summary administration, the beneficiaries of the estate remain liable to the decedent's creditors for up to two years after the decedent's death, unless a Notice to Creditors is Published or served upon each creditor.
- All other estates must be disposed of via a lengthier and more in-depth probate process called formal administration that generally takes six to nine months. The filing fee is \$401.00.

How to Proceed with Formal Administration of a Will:

After the Will is admitted to court, the judge must sign Letters of Administration appointing and authorizing a personal representative to act on behalf of the decedent's estate. The personal representative is then responsible for sending a Notice of Administration to persons interested in the decedent's estate (surviving spouse, beneficiaries, etc.) and a Notice to Creditors to all known creditors of the decedent. He

must also publish the Notice to Creditors in a local print medium to identify any unknown creditors, in which such creditors are told that they have 90 days to file a claim with the court or else surrender their right to collect on the debt.

Assets are then collected and the decedent's debts and taxes are paid. After all assets have been distributed, the estate is closed and the personal representative is relieved of his duties.

If you are interested in finding out more information about a Broward County Probate, I advise you to consult an [experienced Broward County Probate Attorney](#) or, alternatively, thoroughly study the Local Procedures of the Broward County Circuit Court Probate Division Handbook at <http://www.17th.flcourts.org>; and the Florida Probate Code at <http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes>.