



N. Virginia Essential Inherited Home Checklist:

Step 1 The First 48 Hours (security)

This stage-one checklist guides you through the immediate first steps to secure the inherited property and protect your interests.

- 1 Secure the Property:** Change all exterior locks immediately. Family members, neighbors, or old contractors might have keys, so rekeying the house right away ensures you have full control over who enters the property.
- 2 System Check:** Verify the HVAC is running and the sump pump works. Northern Virginia weather can be unpredictable. Keeping the heat or AC on prevents mold and frozen pipes, while checking the sump pump is plugged in and works to help stop basement flooding.
- 3 Post Signs:** Consider placing "No Trespassing" or "Private Property" signs in visible spots. Vacant homes can unfortunately attract unwanted attention. Posting clear signs around the yard may help deter trespassers and can assist local law enforcement by providing clearer legal grounds if they ever need to ask uninvited visitors to leave the property.
- 4 Insurance Review:** Call the homeowner's insurance company to review the existing policy. Most standard homeowners policies contain "vacancy clauses." If a house sits empty for more than 30 to 60 days, insurers may deny claims for major damage (like a sudden pipe burst or fire) or they could potentially cancel the policy altogether unless a specific vacant home rider is added.
- 5 Mail Logistics:** Forward all mail to the Executor's address. An overflowing mailbox or packages piling up on the front porch is a dead giveaway to the neighborhood that the house is currently sitting empty.



Finished???



Take a Breather. You're Doing Great.

Finishing these first five steps is a huge milestone. This process takes a lot, so take a well-deserved break!



<https://tinyurl.com/Step-2-4-Inherited-Home>

When you are ready, grab a cup of coffee or your favorite drink, and we will tackle the next steps together. You don't have to figure it out alone. We are always here to help you navigate this transition - feel free to call us anytime. **When you're ready for Steps 2-4 scan the QR code or click the link above and get the next steps.**

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While we love helping families with real estate, this isn't legal advice. We always recommend consulting a qualified attorney for specific legal guidance.