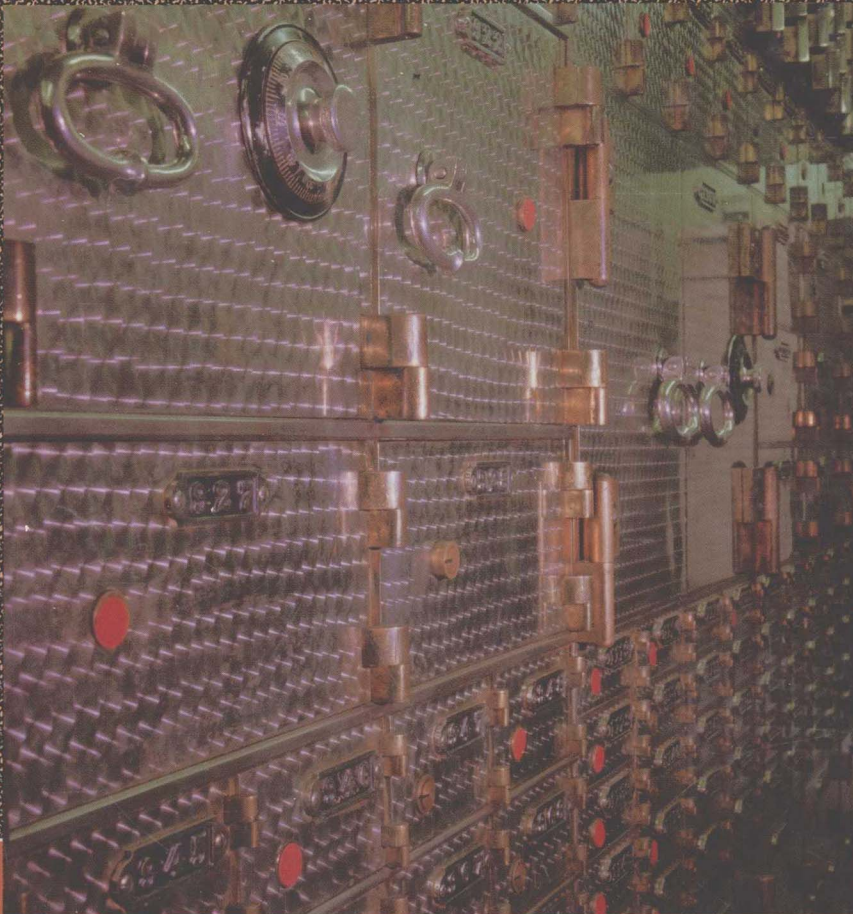




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ADMINISTRATION of WILLS, TRUSTS, and ESTATES



Gordon W. Brown

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Cover photo by Mike Gallitelli

Cover design by John Orozco

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For information, address

Delmar Publishers Inc.
3 Columbia Circle, Box 15-015
Albany, New York 12212

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Printed in the United States of America

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 XXX 99 98 97 96 95 94 93

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Brown, Gordon W., 1928—

Administration of wills, trusts and estates / Gordon W. Brown.

p. cm.

Includes index.

ISBN 0-8273-5053-8

1. Wills—United States. 2. Probate law and practice—United States

3. Trusts and trustees—United States. I. Title.

KF755.B76 1993

346.7305'4—dc20

[347.30654]

92-33816
CIP

ADMINISTRATION OF WILLS, TRUSTS, AND ESTATES

TITLES IN THE DELMAR PARALEGAL SERIES

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PREFACE

It is said that two things are certain in life—death and taxes. Although those two things are the subject of this book, more importantly, this book is directed toward giving paralegal students the knowledge to be able to assist lawyers in this most certain field.

A paralegal with knowledge of the law of wills, trusts, and estates is an extremely valuable asset to an attorney. The vast majority of law offices draw wills as a matter of course. Trusts are now more popular than ever, and more and more people every day are realizing the importance of estate planning. Many law firms have become highly dependent upon the use of skilled paralegals in this important field.

Administration of Wills, Trusts, and Estates was written with the student in mind. Each chapter begins with an outline, followed by a law office scenario that captures the student's interest at the very beginning. The scenario is followed by a discussion of the law, written in a lively, nonthreatening, easy-to-understand, straightforward fashion, making the book enjoyable to read. Legal jargon and unnecessary verbiage are avoided, and essential legal terms are defined when they are first presented.

Because this subject matter is governed exclusively by state law, which differs from state to state, it is important for students to be exposed to the law of their own states. For this reason, the book contains a wealth of legal forms from a variety of states. Similarly, up-to-date appellate court cases and statutes from many states are used to illustrate points of law. Cases are presented in an analytical style, with the facts summarized, the legal issue identified and answered, and the reason given for the court's decision. Maps and tables are used to pinpoint states that have adopted particular rules of law.

The book is filled with motivating features that help to reinforce learning. Charts, diagrams, cartoons, and illustrations are sprinkled generously throughout the text, making the subject matter interesting and easier to understand. Sample clauses found in wills and trusts are illustrated when they are discussed, and many documents are reproduced in their entirety. A highlight of the book is the *celebrity feature*, found in

each chapter, containing an interesting, true article about the will, trust, or estate of a well-known personality.

Administration of Wills, Trusts, and Estates contains a wealth of end-of-chapter features designed to provide classroom activity and realistic student projects. They include chapter summaries, numbered to correlate with the beginning outline and major chapter heads; questions for review; provocative cases to discuss; and assignments geared to sharpen students' skills as paralegals in this important field.

The author wishes to thank Mary McGarry, Senior Editor, Delmar Publishers Inc., for bringing this book into being; Ellen O'Donnell, Director of Paralegal Studies at North Shore Community College, for her initial guidance in the text's development; Sandra Knight, a paralegal student at North Shore Community College, for assisting with research; Thomas Scanlon for aiding in the production of our computer generated features; Dr. Marsha Gadzera, Professor at North Shore Community College, for assistance in preparing the appendices; and Richard Adamo, Librarian of the Essex County Law Library, Salem, Massachusetts, for making the library and its materials so readily accessible. Special thanks to Cynthia Entwistle, Reference Librarian at North Shore Community College, for researching and obtaining photographs, writing many of the celebrity features, and helping to bring the entire book together under a tight deadline.

I also express my appreciation to the reviewers whose thoughtful commentary has made this a better book:

Richard Glasner
University of San Diego
San Diego, CA

Peggy Kerley
Southeastern Paralegal Institute
Dallas, TX

Karen Schwartz
Woodbury College
Montpelier, VT

Jay Wolek
Lansing Community College
Lansing, MI

Ruth Ellen Post
Rivier College
Nashua, NH

Gordon W. Brown

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Gordon W. Brown is a college professor with 35 years of teaching experience. He presently teaches business law and real estate law at North Shore Community College in Beverly, Massachusetts, where he serves as a member of the paralegal advisory board. He is author of *Legal Terminology* and coauthor of *Understanding Business and Personal Law* and *Business Law with UCC Applications*. In addition, he is a speaker at workshops and conferences on methods of law instruction. Mr. Brown is a practicing attorney and a member of the Massachusetts Bar.

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