Probate Documents Checklist

A blank checklist. The documents are named; the tick, the date and where each one is are yours to write.

This is a blank. Nothing in it has been filled in for you, and nothing in it is specific to your estate. It is the same checklist for everyone. Tick, date and note where each document is as you gather it.

Checked against gov.uk, HMRC guidance and legislation.gov.uk directly, on **11 September 2026**. Every table carries its own dated sources. Fees and thresholds change — check at source before you rely on one.

PROBATE REFERENCE

NAME OF THE PERSON WHO DIED		YOUR NAME	
DATE OF DEATH		YOUR RELATIONSHIP TO THEM	
THERE IS A WILL? (Y/N)		APPLYING ON PA1P OR PA1A?	
ROUTE: EXCEPTED OR IHT400		HMRC UNIQUE CODE (IF IHT400)	
DATE THIS CHECKLIST STARTED			

THREE QUESTIONS BEFORE YOU GATHER ANYTHING

- ☐ Is probate needed at all? (joint assets may not need it)
- ☐ Is there a will? (decides PA1P or PA1A)
- ☐ Does HMRC need a full account? (IHT400, or excepted)

CONTENTS

EVERY DOCUMENT, AT A GLANCE

Fourteen documents cover every route. Most estates need rows one to six and row ten. The rest apply to one named situation each.

DOCUMENT	WHO ISSUES IT / HOW TO GET IT	√	DATE	WHERE IT IS
Original will & codicils	The person who died; their solicitor; National Will Register search (£65.00 std, £140.00 combined) gov.uk, checked 11 Sep 2026	☐		
Death certificate, certified copies	Register office or GRO; £12.50 each, £38.50 priority gov.uk, checked 11 Sep 2026	☐		
PA1P (there is a will)	HMCTS — gov.uk/applying-for-probate or the paper form gov.uk, checked 29 Dec 2025	☐		
PA1A (no will)	HMCTS — same service, different form gov.uk, checked 27 Feb 2025	☐		
The five estate values	Worked out by you, from the valuations on pages 4–5 gov.uk, checked 11 Sep 2026	☐		
Valuation evidence	Surveyor, banks, registrars, agents — written, as at the date of death	☐		
IHT400 & schedules	HMRC — only where the estate is not excepted gov.uk, checked 4 Aug 2026	☐		
HMRC's unique code letter	Arrives up to 20 working days after IHT400 is filed; replaced the stamped IHT421 on 17 Jan 2024 gov.uk, checked 11 Sep 2026	☐		
Proof of your identity	As the application asks	☐		
The fee	£526 over £5,000; nothing at £5,000 or less gov.uk, checked 11 Sep 2026	☐		
PA13 — will lost	Download from gov.uk — only if the original cannot be found gov.uk, checked 11 Sep 2026	☐		
PA15 — renounce as executor	Download from gov.uk — only if named but not acting gov.uk, checked 10 Dec 2024	☐		
PA12 / PA16 — no will, not applying yourself	Download from gov.uk — PA12 lets others apply for the entitled person; PA16 gives up the right gov.uk, checked 11 Sep 2026	☐		
IHT207	Download from gov.uk — only if the person lived permanently outside the UK, UK assets £150,000 or less gov.uk, checked 11 Sep 2026	☐		

Sources: gov.uk/applying-for-probate, gov.uk/valuing-estate-of-someone-who-died, legislation.gov.uk (SI 2021/1167) — checked 11 September 2026.

THE WILL — SIX SITUATIONS

The registry needs the original will, not a copy — GOV.UK is explicit. What you send depends on which of six situations you are in.

SITUATION	WHAT TO SEND	FORM	√	DATE
You have the original, named executor	The original will and any codicils. Keep your own photocopy first — the registry keeps the original and it becomes a public record	PA1P	☐	
You only have a photocopy	The original, once found — a photocopy cannot be used. Ask the solicitor, the bank and the named executor first	PA1P	☐	
The original is lost	Your application plus a report that the will is lost. Expect to be asked what searches you made	PA13	☐	
More than one will exists	The most recent one. Do not destroy copies of earlier wills until probate is granted	PA1P	☐	
Named but do not want to act	A renunciation. Up to four executors can be named on one application — one stepping back does not stop the others	PA15	☐	
There is no will at all	An application by the person most entitled — usually the spouse or civil partner, then children aged 18 or over	PA1A, + PA12/ PA16 where needed	☐	

National Will Register search: £65.00 inc VAT standard (48 hours), £140.00 combined (28 days). Sources: gov.uk/applying-for-probate, gov.uk/applying-for-probate/if-theres-not-a-will — checked 11 September 2026.

THE VALUATIONS — PROPERTY, MONEY AND INVESTMENTS

You cannot apply until the estate has been valued and you know whether inheritance tax is due. Every figure is taken at the date of death.

ASSET	WHAT COUNTS AS A VALUATION / WHO PROVIDES IT	√	VALUE	DATE
The home	A probate valuation at the date of death from a chartered surveyor — HMRC does not always accept an estate-agent figure	☐		
Jointly owned property	The share's value at the date of death. Joint tenants pass by survivorship; tenants in common do not — either way it counts for IHT	☐		
Bank & savings accounts	Closing balance plus interest to the date of death, in writing from each bank's bereavement team	☐		
Shares & investments	The closing price on the date of death, from the registrar, broker or platform	☐		
Premium Bonds & NS&I	Written confirmation of holdings at death — prizes can still be drawn for 12 months after	☐		

Sources: gov.uk/valuing-estate-of-someone-who-died, gov.uk/applying-for-probate/before-you-apply — checked 11 September 2026.

THE VALUATIONS — PENSIONS, POLICIES AND THE REST

Five more asset classes, then the five figures the application itself asks for.

ASSET	WHAT COUNTS AS A VALUATION / WHO PROVIDES IT	√	VALUE	DATE
Pensions & death benefits	A written statement of what is payable and to whom, from each scheme — Tell Us Once does not reach pension schemes	☐		
Life policies	The sum payable on death, from the insurer. A policy written in trust pays direct and is not part of the estate	☐		
Personal belongings	An honest estimate for ordinary effects; a specialist valuation for jewellery, art, vehicles and collections	☐		
Business or partnership interests	Accounts and a valuation basis from the accountant — business property relief may apply	☐		
Foreign assets	Value in sterling at the date of death, from the overseas institution — over £100,000 forces full IHT details	☐		

Gross estate value for inheritance tax: ____________________

Net estate value for inheritance tax: ____________________

Net qualifying estate value for inheritance tax: ____________________

Gross value for probate: ____________________

Net value for probate: ____________________

The application itself asks for these five figures — write all five before you open the form. Source: gov.uk/applying-for-probate/before-you-apply, checked 11 September 2026.

THE INHERITANCE-TAX ROUTE

An excepted estate reports its values on the probate application itself. An estate that is not excepted files IHT400 first, then waits for HMRC's code. IHT205 was abolished for deaths on or after 1 January 2022 — never look for it.

ROUTE	THE FIGURE	WHAT YOU FILE
Below the threshold	Estate under £325,000	Values on the probate application itself
Transferred nil-rate band	Gross value £650,000 or less	Values on the application, claiming the unused threshold
Everything to spouse or charity	Estate under £3 million	Values on the application
Lived permanently outside the UK	UK assets £150,000 or less	IHT207 — the one excepted route with a separate HMRC form
Not excepted	—	IHT400 & schedules, to HMRC, before applying

WHAT FORCES FULL DETAILS EVEN ON A SMALL ESTATE	THE FIGURE
Lifetime gifts	More than £250,000 in the 7 years before death
A large estate	More than £3 million
Foreign assets	More than £100,000
Trusts	Various conditions
Gifts with reservation of benefit	Any
Deemed UK domicile	Regardless of where the person lived at death

Full IHT details must be reported within 12 months of the death, before applying for probate. HMRC's automatic discharge follows 60 days after the grant, where nothing further is asked for. Sources: gov.uk/valuing-estate-of-someone-who-died/check-type-of-estate — checked 11 September 2026.

FEES, AND HOW MANY COPIES OF EVERYTHING

The compulsory cost is fixed and small. Everything else here is optional or situational.

WHAT	FEE	WHEN IT APPLIES
Probate application	£526	Estates over £5,000
Small estates	No fee	Estate £5,000 or less
Sealed copies, with the application	£2 each	One per institution that will want to see it
Sealed copies, ordered later	£16 each	Any request after submission
Second application	£22	E.g. where power was reserved to another executor — payable even under £5,000
Help with fees	—	Apply online or on form EX160 before applying — refunded if it succeeds
Death certificate, certified copy	£12.50	Each
Death certificate, priority service	£38.50	Next working day if ordered by 4pm
Gazette notice (s.27 Trustee Act 1925)	£115.86 inc VAT	Optional — protects the executor personally against unknown creditors

ITEM	HOW MANY, AND WHY	√	QTY ORDERED
Original will	One — the registry keeps it. Photocopy for your own file before sending	☐	
Certified death certificates	One per institution on your list, plus two — they do not share, £12.50 each	☐	
Sealed copies of the grant	One per institution holding an asset — £2 each with the application, £16 after	☐	
Valuation letters	Keep the originals; send copies if HMRC asks	☐	
IHT400 & schedules	Keep a full copy — you'll be answering questions on it for months	☐	
This checklist	One, kept with the file — it becomes the index to everything else	☐	

Sources: gov.uk/applying-for-probate/fees; Court and Tribunal Fees (Miscellaneous Amendments) Order 2026, SI 2026/642 art.3(2)(a), in force 13 July 2026 — checked 11 September 2026.

WHAT TO KEEP, AND WHERE THIS CAME FROM

How long a grant takes, on the measures that actually reconcile — and what stops an application before it's granted.

MEASURE	FIGURE	WHAT IT MEASURES
GOV.UK's published expectation	12 weeks	What applicants are told to expect
HMCTS average, digital	4.3 weeks	Measured average, to end-May 2026
HMCTS average, paper	≈16 weeks	Same measure, paper channel
Family Court Statistics Quarterly	5wk mean / 1wk median	All grants, Jan–Mar 2026
Stopped vs not stopped	14wk vs 2wk	The cost of one stop — 34% of applications are stopped at least once

gov.uk — applying for probate, valuing the estate, probate fees, if there's not a will read 11 Sep 2026

legislation.gov.uk — SI 2021/1167 (IHT205 abolition); Court and Tribunal Fees (Misc. Amendments) Order 2026, SI 2026/642 read 11 Sep 2026

Family Court Statistics Quarterly; Probate — HMCTS Reform Evaluation, Data Summary read 20 Aug - 26 Jun 2026

The Gazette — statutory creditor notice, s.27 Trustee Act 1925 read 8 Sep 2026

valoren.uk/resources/probate-documents-checklist

A blank checklist. Nothing here is prepared for your estate, and nothing is legal advice. Probate fees, IHT thresholds and HMRC's forms change — check at source before you rely on a figure. Scotland and Northern Ireland work differently.

If you are the named executor and want the whole role, not just this list — Executor's First Hour, £179 one-off — valoren.uk/executors-first-hour