

ERIE COUNTY SURROGATE'S COURT INFORMATION FOR GENEALOGISTS

Erie County Surrogate's Court is located at 92 Franklin Street, Buffalo, New York 14202; phone number: 716-845-2560. It is open to the public Monday - Friday from 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Purchase of copies and other transactions must be completed by 4:45 p.m.

WHAT KINDS OF RECORDS ARE AVAILABLE?

- Wills of deceased persons and trust documents.
- Petitions for probate, administration, and judicial settlement.
- Miscellaneous documents in connection with estates, and some trusts.
- Access to Guardianships records is strictly limited.
- Although the court does maintain adoption records, they are sealed by New York State law and not available without court order.

HOW CAN I FIND OUT WHETHER THE COURT HAS RECORDS OF INTEREST TO ME?

- The court maintains a data base of all of its public estate records in its Main Office, Room # 211, Erie County Courthouse, 92 Franklin Street. It is a searchable index and available to the public.
- Information can be obtained by writing the court at the above address. There is a \$90.00 fee to search for records over 25 years old and a \$30.00 fee to search for records under 25 years old. The court does not accept personal checks. Money orders or bank checks should be made payable to "Erie County Surrogate's Court." Payment may also be made by cash, MasterCard or Visa. Please contact the court's main desk at 716-845-2599 for more information regarding credit card use.

HOW CAN I VIEW RECORDS?

- At the present time, estate records from 1970 - present are available for viewing in the court's Main Office. No appointment is necessary to view these records.
- Estate records older than 1970 are stored off-site. These records will be returned to the court, upon request, for viewing. Arrangements should be made ahead of time to view these records by calling 716-845-2585. Please allow several days for the retrieval of these records.
- The court's records are not available on-line at present.

HOW CAN I GET COPIES OF RECORDS?

- Photocopies of records are available in one of two ways. There is a public access photocopier in the court's Main Office, which charges 25¢ per page and takes coins and \$1.00 and \$5.00 bills; it does not accept credit cards. Copies may be made by individuals using this photocopier.
- Photocopies may also be requested from the court. The charge is 25¢ per page; payment must be made before copies will be provided by money order or bank check payable to "Erie County Surrogate's Court." Payment can also be made by cash, MasterCard or Visa; please contact the court's main desk at 716-845-2599 for more information about credit card use.