

ESTATES CODE

TITLE 2. ESTATES OF DECEDENTS; DURABLE POWERS OF ATTORNEY

SUBTITLE I. INDEPENDENT ADMINISTRATION

CHAPTER 405. CLOSING AND DISTRIBUTIONS

Sec. 405.001. ACCOUNTING AND DISTRIBUTION. (a) In addition to or in lieu of the right to an accounting provided by Section 404.001, at any time after the expiration of two years after the date the court clerk first issues letters testamentary or of administration to any personal representative of an estate, a person interested in the estate then subject to independent administration may petition the court for an accounting and distribution. The court may order an accounting to be made with the court by the independent executor at such time as the court considers proper. The accounting shall include the information that the court considers necessary to determine whether any part of the estate should be distributed.

(b) On receipt of the accounting and, after notice to the independent executor and a hearing, unless the court finds a continued necessity for administration of the estate, the court shall order its distribution by the independent executor to the distributees entitled to the property. If the court finds there is a continued necessity for administration of the estate, the court shall order the distribution of any portion of the estate that the court finds should not be subject to further administration by the independent executor. If any portion of the estate that is ordered to be distributed is incapable of distribution without prior partition or sale, the court may:

(1) order partition and distribution, or sale, in the manner provided for the partition and distribution of property incapable of division in supervised estates; or

(2) order distribution of that portion of the estate incapable of distribution without prior partition or sale in undivided interests.

(c) If all the property in the estate is ordered distributed by the court and the estate is fully administered, the court may also order the independent executor to file a final account with the

court and may enter an order closing the administration and terminating the power of the independent executor to act as executor.

Added by Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 1338 (S.B. [1198](#)), Sec. 2.53, eff. January 1, 2014.

Amended by:

Acts 2013, 83rd Leg., R.S., Ch. 1136 (H.B. [2912](#)), Sec. 58, eff. January 1, 2014.

Sec. 405.0015. DISTRIBUTIONS GENERALLY. Unless the will, if any, or a court order provides otherwise, an independent executor may, in distributing property not specifically devised that the independent executor is authorized to sell:

(1) make distributions in divided or undivided interests;

(2) allocate particular assets in proportionate or disproportionate shares;

(3) value the estate property for the purposes of acting under Subdivision (1) or (2); and

(4) adjust the distribution, division, or termination for resulting differences in valuation.

Added by Acts 2017, 85th Leg., R.S., Ch. 844 (H.B. [2271](#)), Sec. 33, eff. September 1, 2017.

Sec. 405.002. RECEIPTS AND RELEASES FOR DISTRIBUTIONS BY INDEPENDENT EXECUTOR. (a) An independent executor may not be required to deliver tangible or intangible personal property to a distributee unless the independent executor receives, at or before the time of delivery of the property, a signed receipt or other proof of delivery of the property to the distributee.

(b) An independent executor may not require a waiver or release from the distributee as a condition of delivery of property to a distributee.

Added by Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 1338 (S.B. [1198](#)), Sec. 2.53, eff. January 1, 2014.

Sec. 405.003. JUDICIAL DISCHARGE OF INDEPENDENT EXECUTOR.

(a) After an estate has been administered and if there is no further need for an independent administration of the estate, the independent executor of the estate may file an action for declaratory judgment under Chapter 37, Civil Practice and Remedies Code, seeking to discharge the independent executor from any liability involving matters relating to the past administration of the estate that have been fully and fairly disclosed.

(b) On the filing of an action under this section, each distributee of the estate shall be personally served with citation, except for a distributee who has waived the issuance and service of citation.

(c) In a proceeding under this section, the court may require the independent executor to file a final account that includes any information the court considers necessary to adjudicate the independent executor's request for a discharge of liability. The court may audit, settle, or approve a final account filed under this subsection.

(d) On or before filing an action under this section, the independent executor must distribute to the distributees of the estate any of the remaining assets or property of the estate that remains in the independent executor's possession after all of the estate's debts have been paid, except for a reasonable reserve of assets that the independent executor may retain in a fiduciary capacity pending court approval of the final account. The court may review the amount of assets on reserve and may order the independent executor to make further distributions under this section.

(e) Except as ordered by the court, the independent executor is entitled to pay from the estate legal fees, expenses, or other costs incurred in relation to a proceeding for judicial discharge filed under this section. The independent executor shall be personally liable to refund any amount of such fees, expenses, or other costs not approved by the court as a proper charge against the estate.

Added by Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 1338 (S.B. 1198), Sec. 2.53, eff. January 1, 2014.

Amended by:

Acts 2017, 85th Leg., R.S., Ch. 844 (H.B. [2271](#)), Sec. 34, eff. September 1, 2017.

Sec. 405.004. CLOSING INDEPENDENT ADMINISTRATION BY CLOSING REPORT OR NOTICE OF CLOSING ESTATE. When all of the debts known to exist against the estate have been paid, or when they have been paid so far as the assets in the independent executor's possession will permit, when there is no pending litigation, and when the independent executor has distributed to the distributees entitled to the estate all assets of the estate, if any, remaining after payment of debts, the independent executor may file with the court a closing report or a notice of closing of the estate.

Added by Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 1338 (S.B. [1198](#)), Sec. 2.53, eff. January 1, 2014.

Sec. 405.005. CLOSING REPORT. An independent executor may file a closing report verified by affidavit that:

(1) shows:

(A) the property of the estate that came into the independent executor's possession;

(B) the debts that have been paid;

(C) the debts, if any, still owing by the estate;

(D) the property of the estate, if any, remaining on hand after payment of debts; and

(E) the names and addresses of the distributees to whom the property of the estate, if any, remaining on hand after payment of debts has been distributed; and

(2) includes signed receipts or other proof of delivery of property to the distributees named in the closing report if the closing report reflects that there was property remaining on hand after payment of debts.

Added by Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 1338 (S.B. [1198](#)), Sec. 2.53, eff. January 1, 2014.

Sec. 405.006. NOTICE OF CLOSING ESTATE. (a) Instead of filing a closing report under Section [405.005](#), an independent executor may file a notice of closing estate verified by affidavit

that states:

(1) that all debts known to exist against the estate have been paid or have been paid to the extent permitted by the assets in the independent executor's possession;

(2) that all remaining assets of the estate, if any, have been distributed; and

(3) the names and addresses of the distributees to whom the property of the estate, if any, remaining on hand after payment of debts has been distributed.

(b) Before filing the notice, the independent executor shall provide to each distributee of the estate a copy of the notice of closing estate. The notice of closing estate filed by the independent executor must include signed receipts or other proof that all distributees have received a copy of the notice of closing estate.

Added by Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 1338 (S.B. 1198), Sec. 2.53, eff. January 1, 2014.

Sec. 405.007. EFFECT OF FILING CLOSING REPORT OR NOTICE OF CLOSING ESTATE. (a) The independent administration of an estate is considered closed 30 days after the date of the filing of a closing report or notice of closing estate unless an interested person files an objection with the court within that time. If an interested person files an objection within the 30-day period, the independent administration of the estate is closed when the objection has been disposed of or the court signs an order closing the estate.

(b) The closing of an independent administration by filing of a closing report or notice of closing estate terminates the power and authority of the independent executor, but does not relieve the independent executor from liability for any mismanagement of the estate or from liability for any false statements contained in the report or notice.

(c) When a closing report or notice of closing estate has been filed, persons dealing with properties of the estate, or with claims against the estate, shall deal directly with the distributees of the estate; and the acts of the distributees with

respect to the properties or claims shall in all ways be valid and binding as regards the persons with whom they deal, notwithstanding any false statements made by the independent executor in the report or notice.

(d) If the independent executor is required to give bond, the independent executor's filing of the closing report and proof of delivery, if required, automatically releases the sureties on the bond from all liability for the future acts of the principal. The filing of a notice of closing estate does not release the sureties on the bond of an independent executor.

(e) An independent executor's closing report or notice of closing estate shall constitute sufficient legal authority to all persons owing any money, having custody of any property, or acting as registrar or transfer agent or trustee of any evidence of interest, indebtedness, property, or right that belongs to the estate, for payment or transfer without additional administration to the distributees described in the will as entitled to receive the particular asset or who as heirs at law are entitled to receive the asset. The distributees described in the will as entitled to receive the particular asset or the heirs at law entitled to receive the asset may enforce their right to the payment or transfer by suit.

Added by Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 1338 (S.B. [1198](#)), Sec. 2.53, eff. January 1, 2014.

Sec. 405.008. PARTITION AND DISTRIBUTION OR SALE OF PROPERTY INCAPABLE OF DIVISION. If the will does not distribute the entire estate of the testator or provide a means for partition of the estate, or if no will was probated, the independent executor may, but may not be required to, petition the probate court for either a partition and distribution of the estate or an order of sale of any portion of the estate alleged by the independent executor and found by the court to be incapable of a fair and equal partition and distribution, or both. The estate or portion of the estate shall either be partitioned and distributed or sold, or both, in the manner provided for the partition and distribution of property and the sale of property incapable of division in

supervised estates.

Added by Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 1338 (S.B. 1198), Sec. 2.53, eff. January 1, 2014.

Sec. 405.009. CLOSING INDEPENDENT ADMINISTRATION ON APPLICATION BY DISTRIBUTE. (a) At any time after an estate has been fully administered and there is no further need for an independent administration of the estate, any distributee may file an application to close the administration; and, after citation on the independent executor, and on hearing, the court may enter an order:

(1) requiring the independent executor to file a closing report meeting the requirements of Section 405.005;

(2) closing the administration;

(3) terminating the power of the independent executor to act as independent executor; and

(4) releasing the sureties on any bond the independent executor was required to give from all liability for the future acts of the principal.

(b) The order of the court closing the independent administration shall constitute sufficient legal authority to all persons owing any money, having custody of any property, or acting as registrar or transfer agent or trustee of any evidence of interest, indebtedness, property, or right that belongs to the estate, for payment or transfer without additional administration to the distributees described in the will as entitled to receive the particular asset or who as heirs at law are entitled to receive the asset. The distributees described in the will as entitled to receive the particular asset or the heirs at law entitled to receive the asset may enforce their right to the payment or transfer by suit.

Added by Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 1338 (S.B. 1198), Sec. 2.53, eff. January 1, 2014.

Sec. 405.010. ISSUANCE OF LETTERS. At any time before the authority of an independent executor has been terminated in the manner set forth in this subtitle, the clerk shall issue such number

of letters testamentary as the independent executor shall request.
Added by Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 1338 (S.B. 1198), Sec.
2.53, eff. January 1, 2014.

Sec. 405.011. RIGHTS AND REMEDIES CUMULATIVE. The rights
and remedies conferred by this chapter are cumulative of other
rights and remedies to which a person interested in the estate may
be entitled under law.

Added by Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 1338 (S.B. 1198), Sec.
2.53, eff. January 1, 2014.

Sec. 405.012. CLOSING PROCEDURES NOT REQUIRED. An
independent executor is not required to close the independent
administration of an estate under Section 405.003 or Sections
405.004 through 405.007.

Added by Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 1338 (S.B. 1198), Sec.
2.53, eff. January 1, 2014.