# Post-Death Trust Management

This playbook describes the actions a trustee must take to manage and distribute the assets within a trust after the death of the settlor. It outlines the procedural steps required to ensure legal compliance and the fulfillment of the settlor's wishes.

### Step 1: Notification

Notify all beneficiaries and relevant parties of the settlor's death promptly. This includes sending out formal notices and obtaining acknowledgment receipts where appropriate.

### Step 2: Document Review

Thoroughly review the trust documents to understand the terms, including distribution instructions and any specific duties imposed upon the trustee.

### Step 3: Inventory Assets

Create a detailed inventory of the trust's assets, including bank accounts, real estate, and personal property. Obtain appraisals for valuable items as necessary.

### Step 4: Valuation

Determine the date-of-death values of the trust’s assets. This may require professional appraisals and could be important for tax or distribution purposes.

### Step 5: Debt Settlement

Identify any debts or liabilities owed by the trust and follow procedures for notifying creditors, verifying claims, and paying valid debts.

### Step 6: Tax Compliance

Prepare and file any required trust income tax returns and the settlor's final personal income tax returns. Address estate taxes if applicable.

### Step 7: Asset Distribution

Distribute the trust assets to the beneficiaries in accordance with the terms of the trust document, which could involve transfers of title, creation of new sub-trusts, or liquidation of assets.

### Step 8: Final Accounting

Prepare a final accounting of the trust's administration, detailing all income, expenses, and distributions for review by beneficiaries or court if required.

### Step 9: Close Trust

Once all obligations have been satisfied and assets distributed, formally close the trust. This may involve filing documents with the court or recording deeds.

## General Notes

### Legal Advice

Consider obtaining legal advice to ensure all actions comply with trust documents, state laws, and fiduciary duties. Missteps in managing a trust can have legal and financial consequences.

### Beneficiary Communication

Maintain open and frequent communication with beneficiaries to keep them informed of the trust management process and reduce the likelihood of disputes.

### Record-Keeping

Keep meticulous records of all actions taken, communications sent and received, and any expenses incurred in the management of the trust.