WEST VIRGINIA CODE: §44-3A-24

§44-3A-24. Reports of delinquent filings.

(a) On the last day of December and June of each year every fiduciary commissioner and special fiduciary commissioner shall file with the fiduciary supervisor a list of all estates referred to him or her since the effective date of this section, either generally or for a limited purpose in which any appraisement or other document required to be filed with him or her in a specified time has not been timely filed, stating the document whose filing is delinquent and the date the document was due to be filed: *Provided*, That the commissioner shall omit from the list any estate and any document for whose filing a proper continuance has been granted.

(b) On January 5 and July 5 of each year the fiduciary supervisor shall file with the county commission a like list of estates referred to him or her since the effective date of this section in which the filing of any paper is delinquent, and embrace therein the lists required to be filed with him or her on the first day of the month by the various commissioners. In the report filed July 5 of each year the fiduciary supervisor shall further include in the report a list of all estates referred to him or her since the effective date of this section which have not been duly closed within a period of three years from the opening of such estate and in which no progress, or in his or her opinion, unsatisfactory progress, has been made toward settlement, for any cause, within the preceding 12 months.

(c) The county commission, after consultation with the fiduciary supervisor shall take care to require prompt disposition of all matters and causes reported to it by the semiannual reports required herein of delinquent and unprogressed estates; enter an order in the name of the county commission directing the appointed personal representative to file a statement to show cause why the county commission should not find the personal representative delinquent in his or her administration of the respective estate and should not remove the personal representative from office; administratively close the estate; or take such other action against the personal representative as may be proper.

(1) The order to show cause shall be mailed by the fiduciary supervisor to the personal representative at the last known address appearing in the records of the fiduciary supervisor. A copy of the order shall also be mailed to the heirs at law, beneficiaries under the will, any creditors who have filed claims which are not released, any surety on any bond, and any other person interested in the estate at their last known addresses appearing in the records of the fiduciary supervisor.

(2) The personal representative shall have 30 days after the mailing of the order to show cause to file properly any delinquent documents required for the administration of the estate or to file a verified statement, under oath, stating why he or she should not be found delinquent in the administration of the respective estate and should not be removed from office or the estate administratively closed.

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(3) If, within the 30-day time period, the personal representative fails to file properly the delinquent documents, or fails to file a verified statement, or files a verified statement which the fiduciary supervisor upon review finds and determines does not present good cause, the fiduciary supervisor shall give notice of the failure, delinquency, or finding to the county commission, the personal representative, the heirs at law, beneficiaries under the will, any creditors who have filed claims which are not released, any surety on any bond, and any other person interested in the estate and shall advise that the personal representative shall be removed from office and such other appropriate person appointed as personal representative as the county commission may determine or that the estate shall be administratively closed 30 days following the date of the notice at a hearing thereon to be held before the county commission at a date and time fixed for presentation. In addition, on the first Monday of the next month, the fiduciary supervisor shall publish a notice of this action as a Class I-0 legal advertisement.

(4) The personal representative or any person interested may file an objection at, or prior to, the time set by the notice for presentation to the county commission. The commission shall proceed to hear the presentation of the proposed removal or closing and findings and hear interested parties, if any appear, and may enter an appropriate order to approve, modify and approve, or refuse to approve, the proposed removal or closing and the findings of the fiduciary supervisor. Alternatively, the commission may refer the cause to a fiduciary commissioner generally for supervision or for the purpose of the resolution of any disputed matter. An appeal from the decision of the county commission may, without any formal bill of exceptions, be taken to the circuit court of the county by the personal representative or any interested party. The appeal shall be tried and heard in the circuit court, or before the judge thereof in vacation, on the record made before the fiduciary supervisor and the county commission.

(d) In addition, the fiduciary supervisor and the fiduciary commissioners, shall be empowered, and where appropriate, shall on their own motion, petition the circuit court to compel compliance with the provisions of this chapter, in the same manner and to the same extent heretofore provided in the case of commissioners of accounts, or by any other proper proceeding.

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