



Councilmember Charles Allen



Councilmember Brooke Pinto

A BILL

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

To amend, on a temporary basis, Chapter 3 of Title 20 of the District of Columbia Official Code to amend the definition of abbreviated probate, to authorize the Register of Wills to refer proceedings to the Court to determine if one or more personal representatives should be appointed and the will be admitted to probate, and to strike the reference to will admission in transfers by affidavit; to amend the Strengthening Probate Amendment Act of 2024 to clarify that the act applies to estates for whom the decedent died on or after March 21, 2025; and to allow for notice of request for formal probate, notice from a foreign personal representative of a decedent who owned any property located in the District of Columbia, and notice of appointment to interested persons, creditors, and unknown heirs in a legal periodical or newspaper of general circulation in the District.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this act may be cited as the “Strengthening Probate Administration Temporary Amendment Act of 2026”.

Sec. 2. Chapter 3 of Title 20 of the District of Columbia Official Code is amended as follows:

(a) Section 20-311 is amended to read as follows:

“§ 20-311. Nature of proceeding.

“(a) An abbreviated probate proceeding is a proceeding for probate of a will or a determination of a decedent’s intestacy and for the appointment of a personal representative.

This proceeding is instituted when an interested person files a petition for an abbreviated probate

32 proceeding with the Court in accordance with the provisions of § 20-304. This proceeding may
33 be conducted without the prior notice required for formal probate under § 20-323.

34 “(b) The finality of abbreviated probate shall be governed by § 20-331.”.

35 (b) Section 20-312 is amended to read as follows:

36 “§ 20-312. Action on petition.

37 “(a) *General.* — Upon a request for abbreviated probate filed in accordance § 20-304, the
38 Court or the Register of Wills shall appoint one or more personal representatives, except as
39 provided in § 20-322. The appointment of a personal representative shall constitute an Order for
40 unsupervised administration, unless the Order specifically provides for supervised administration
41 as provided in § 20-402. In no event, however, shall the appointment of a personal representative
42 be delayed pending the Court’s decision with regard to whether the administration will be
43 supervised or unsupervised.

44 “(b) *Wills.* — In the case of a petition to admit a will to abbreviated probate, due
45 execution of the will shall be presumed and the Court or the Register of Wills may admit a will
46 to probate either: (1) if the will appears to have been duly executed and contains a recital by
47 attesting witnesses of facts constituting due execution; or (2) upon the verified statement of any
48 person with personal knowledge of the circumstances of execution, whether or not the person
49 was in fact an attesting witness, reciting facts showing due execution of the will.

50 “(c) *Additional Proof.* — The Register of Wills may require additional verified proof,
51 which shall be filed in the proceeding. If the Register of Wills requires additional proof, the

52 matter may be referred to the Court to determine if one or more personal representatives shall be
53 appointed and whether the will should be admitted to probate.”.

54 (c) Section 20-323(a) is amended by striking the phrase “legal periodical of general
55 circulation in the District” and inserting the phrase “legal periodical or newspaper of general
56 circulation in the District” in its place.

57 (d) Section 20-343(a) is amended by striking the phrase “legal periodical of general
58 circulation in the District” and inserting the phrase “legal periodical or newspaper of general
59 circulation in the District” in its place.

60 (e) Section 20-361(a)(4) is repealed.

61 (f) Section 20-704(a) is amended by striking the phrase “legal periodical of general
62 circulation in the District” and inserting the phrase “legal periodical or newspaper of general
63 circulation in the District” in its place.

64 Sec. 3. Section 7 of the Strengthening Probate Administration Amendment Act of 2024,
65 effective March 21, 2025 (D.C. Law 25-302; 72 DCR 780), is amended by adding a new
66 subsection (d) to read as follows:

67 “(d) This act shall apply to estates of decedents who died on or after March 21, 2025.”.

68 Sec. 4. Applicability.

69 This act shall apply as of May 14, 2026.

70 Sec. 5. Fiscal impact statement.

71 The Council adopts the fiscal impact statement of the Budget Director as the fiscal impact
72 statement required by section 4a of the General Legislative Procedures Act of 1975, approved
73 October 16, 2006 (120 Stat. 2038; D.C. Official Code § 1-301.47a).

74 Sec. 6. Effective date.

75 (a) This act shall take effect following approval by the Mayor (or in the event of veto by
76 the Mayor, action by the Council to override the veto) and a 30-day period of congressional
77 review as provided in section 602(c)(1) of the District of Columbia Home Rule Act, approved
78 December 24, 1973 (87 Stat. 813; D.C. Official Code § 1-206.02(c)(1)).

79 (b) This act shall expire after 225 days of its having taken effect.