February 24, 2020

Study L-4130.3

#### Memorandum 2020-18

#### Disposition of Estate Without Administration (Draft Recommendation)

In July 2019, the Commission<sup>1</sup> released a tentative recommendation that proposes reforms to two existing statutory procedures that permit the disposition of a decedent's property without administration (i.e., they allow the transfer of a decedent's property outside of the probate process).<sup>2</sup> Those statutes govern the following types of property:

- (1) Personal property in an estate of small value.
- (2) Real property of small value.

The reforms proposed in the tentative recommendation were focused on the rules that govern the liability of a person who takes property under those procedures (the "transferee").

The Commission received comment on the tentative recommendation from the Executive Committee of the Trusts and Estates Section of the California Lawyers Association (hereafter "TEXCOM"). After considering those comments, the Commission decided to make some changes to its tentative recommendation. The staff was directed to prepare a draft recommendation that includes the changes. That draft is attached.

The Commission now needs to decide whether to approve that draft as a final recommendation, for submission to the Governor and Legislature.

Unless otherwise indicated, all statutory references in this memorandum are to the Probate Code.

<sup>1.</sup> Any California Law Revision Commission document referred to in this memorandum can be obtained from the Commission. Recent materials can be downloaded from the Commission's website (www.clrc.ca.gov). Other materials can be obtained by contacting the Commission's staff, through the website or otherwise.

The Commission welcomes written comments at any time during its study process. Any comments received will be a part of the public record and may be considered at a public meeting. However, comments that are received less than five business days prior to a Commission meeting may be presented without staff analysis.

<sup>2.</sup> See Tentative Recommendation on *Disposition of Estate Without Administration: Liability* (July 2019) (hereafter "tentative recommendation").

#### REVISIONS MADE IN ATTACHED DRAFT

To make it easier to evaluate the staff's implementation of the Commission's decisions, those revisions are listed below:

- The term "transferee" was used in place of "designated successor" throughout the proposed law.
- Proposed Sections 13100.5(c) and 13202.5(c) were added to provide that the transferee's liability for the decedent's unsecured debts includes funeral expenses, expenses of last illness, and wage claims.
- Proposed Sections 13109.5(b)(2) and 13204.5(b)(2), which provided that transferred property be valued at the date of transfer when calculating the transferee's share of liability for the decedent's unsecured debts, were deleted.
- Sections 13110(a)(2) and 13205(a)(2) were revised to provide a more nuanced treatment of income received from transferred property.
- Sections 13111(b) and 13206(b) were revised to provide that treble damages for fraud in a proceeding brought under those sections should first be used to reimburse the estate for the cost of the proceeding, with the remainder going to the person with a superior right to the fraudulently taken property.
- Proposed Sections 13114 and 13209 were added to make clear that property returned to the decedent's estate should be included in the overall value of the estate.
- Proposed Sections 13112 and 13207 were renumbered as Sections 13113 and 13208, respectively.

#### CONCLUSION

The Commission needs to decide whether to approve the attached draft as a final recommendation, with or without changes.

Respectfully submitted,

Brian Hebert Executive Director STATE OF CALIFORNIA

# CALIFORNIA LAW REVISION COMMISSION

## STAFF DRAFT

RECOMMENDATION

Disposition of Estate Without Administration: Liability

March 2020

California Law Revision Commission c/o King Hall Law School Davis, CA 95616 530-752-3620 <commission@clrc.ca.gov>

#### SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATION

The Probate Code includes procedures that allow a person to receive property from a decedent's estate without probate administration. This recommendation focuses on two of those procedures, which allow the decedent's devisee or heir to (1) take personal property from a small estate or (2) take real property of small value.

Under those procedures, the transferee is personally liable for the decedent's unsecured debts and is also liable if another person has a "superior right" to the property (i.e., the transferee was not actually the decedent's devisee or heir with respect to the property taken). In addition, if the decedent's estate is being administered, the personal representative can require that transferred property be returned to the estate for use in paying the decedent's obligations or for transfer to a person with a superior right. If the property was taken fraudulently, the transferee is liable for three times the value of the property taken.

This recommendation proposes improvements to those liability rules, including revisions to do the following:

- Eliminate the personal representative's authority to require the return of transferred property to pay the decedent's unsecured debts.
- Replace the property return rule with a provision that makes the transferee personally liable to the decedent's estate for a calculated share of the decedent's unsecured debts.
- Make clear that a transferee's liability for the decedent's unsecured debts includes the decedent's funeral expenses and expenses of last illness, as well as any wage claims made against the decedent's estate.
- Expressly authorize a transferee to voluntarily return transferred property to the estate for administration.
- If the personal representative requires the return of transferred property because there is a person with a superior right, any treble damage award for fraud would go to the person with a superior right to the property, rather than to the estate generally. However, the award would first be used to reimburse the estate for the cost of the proceeding to recover the property.
- Existing rules provide for adjustments to the value of transferred property that is returned to the decedent's estate. Those rules would be standardized and generalized.

This recommendation was prepared pursuant to Resolution Chapter 158 of the Statutes of 2018.

### DISPOSITION OF ESTATE WITHOUT ADMINISTRATION: LIABILITY

#### BACKGROUND

Ordinarily, a decedent's estate must be administered before estate property can pass to a devisee or heir. As part of administration, the decedent's property is used to pay the decedent's debts and other obligations.

5 However, there are procedures that allow a decedent's property to pass to a devisee or 6 heir without administration, in limited circumstances. One allows the devisee or heir to 7 take personal property from a small estate.<sup>1</sup> Another allows the devisee or heir to take 8 real property of small value.<sup>2</sup>

9 In both cases, the person who takes the property (hereafter the "transferee") is personally liable for the decedent's unsecured debts, up to the value of the property taken. 10 In addition, the transferee is personally liable to a person with a "superior right" (i.e., if 11 the transferee was not actually the decedent's devisee or heir with regard to the property, 12 then the actual devisee or heir has a superior right to that property). In addition, if the 13 decedent's estate is being administered, the transferee is liable to the decedent's estate for 14 restitution of the property received (to the extent required to satisfy the decedent's debts 15 or superior right claims). 16

17 This recommendation proposes improvements to those liability rules.

#### 18

1

#### **RESTITUTION LIABILITY**

19 Under existing law, if a decedent's estate is being administered, the personal 20 representative can require that property transferred under one of the procedures discussed 21 above be returned to the estate for use in paying the decedent's obligations.<sup>3</sup> Return can 22 also be required where another person has a superior right to the property at issue.<sup>4</sup>

When this liability is enforced for the payment of debts, its effect can be unduly burdensome. If a transferee is required to return a tangible asset to the estate, rather than a pecuniary gift, that asset would need to be sold in order to use its value in paying the estate's debts. That would deprive the transferee of ownership, which could be undesirable and contrary to the decedent's intentions, particularly if the gift has sentimental or heirloom value.

That problem would be especially acute where the transferee has sufficient funds to simply pay an appropriate share of liability for decedent debts and is willing to do so. Existing law does not expressly authorize that alternative

31 Existing law does not expressly authorize that alternative.

4. *Id*.

<sup>1.</sup> See generally Prob. Code §§ 13100-13116.

<sup>2.</sup> See generally Prob. Code §§ 13200-13210.

<sup>3.</sup> See Prob. Code §§ 13111 (transfer of personal property), 13206 (transfer of real property).

1 The Commission recommends that the existing procedures be revised to address that

- 2 issue. The proposed reform would have three parts:
- 3 Limit Scope of Restitution Liability

The proposed law would revise the restitution provisions to make them inapplicable to the payment of decedent debt.<sup>5</sup>

6 The restitution remedy would remain applicable to address a claim by a person with a 7 superior right to the property.<sup>6</sup> In the latter case, restitution is the best way to effectuate 8 the decedent's intentions, because it would ensure that an item of tangible property with

9 sentimental or heirloom value goes to the right person.

#### 10 **Personal Liability to Estate**

11 If the restitution provision is made unavailable for use in paying the decedent's debts, it 12 would be necessary to provide a replacement, so that the transferee does not entirely 13 escape liability to the estate for a share of the decedent's debts.

The proposed law would provide such a replacement. It would add a provision that 14 establishes a transferee's personal liability to the estate for a share of the decedent's 15 unsecured debts.<sup>7</sup> The share would be calculated by applying the existing rules of 16 abatement (which establish rules for determining the order in which gifts are consumed 17 for the payment of a decedent's obligations).<sup>8</sup> Payment of that share would eliminate the 18 transferee's direct personal liability to a decedent's unsecured creditors.<sup>9</sup> If the transferee 19 had previously made any direct payments to creditors, those payments would be credited 20 against the transferee's liability.<sup>10</sup> 21

<sup>5.</sup> See proposed amendments to Prob. Code §§ 13111 (transfer of personal property), 13206 (transfer of real property) *infra*.

<sup>6.</sup> *Id*.

<sup>7.</sup> See proposed Prob. Code §§ 13109.5 (transfer of personal property), 13204.5 (transfer of real property) *infra*.

<sup>8.</sup> See proposed Prob. Code §§ 13109.5(b) (transfer of personal property), 13204.5(b) (transfer of real property) *infra*. The cost of making this calculation would be borne by the transferee. See proposed Prob. Code §§ 13109.5(e) (transfer of personal property), 13204.5(e) (transfer of real property) *infra*.

<sup>9.</sup> See proposed Prob. Code §§ 13109(c) (transfer of personal property), 13204(c) (transfer of real property) *infra*.

<sup>10.</sup> See proposed Prob. Code §§ 13109.5(d), second sentence (transfer of personal property), 13204.5(d), second sentence (transfer of real property) *infra*. If the amount paid were to exceed the transferee's share of liability, the difference would be reimbursed. That reimbursement would be given a higher payment priority than the decedent's unsecured debts. See proposed Prob. Code §§ 13109.5(d), third and fourth sentences (transfer of personal property), 13204.5(d), third and fourth sentences (transfer of real property), 13204.5(d), third and fourth sentences (transfer of real property) *infra*.

#### 1 Voluntary Property Return

Finally, a provision would be added that would permit a transferee to voluntarily return transferred property to the estate for administration.<sup>11</sup> That would not be an attractive option in many cases, because it would subject the property to the added cost and delay associated with administration. However, there might be circumstances where simply returning the property would be the best solution (especially if the transferee lacks sufficient funds to pay the estate the transferee's share of liability and does not want the burden of liquidating the transferred property).

9

#### SCOPE OF TRANSFEREE LIABILITY

Under existing law, a transferee is liable for the decedent's "unsecured debts."<sup>12</sup> However, it is not entirely clear whether that liability extends to the decedent's funeral expenses, expenses of last illness, and wage claims. Under existing law, those specific types of obligations are treated differently than the decedent's "general debts."<sup>13</sup>

The Commission found no good policy reason to exclude the listed obligations from the transferee's liability for the decedent's debts. The Commission recommends revising the statute to make clear that a transferee's liability includes funeral expenses, expenses of last illness, and wage claims.<sup>14</sup>

18 However, the Commission does not recommend that a transferee be made liable for a 19 share of the general costs of estate administration. One of the main purposes of the 20 procedures at issue here is to spare the transferee the cost of probate.

#### 21

#### TREBLE DAMAGES FOR FRAUD

Under the existing procedures, a transferee who fraudulently takes property from the decedent's estate is liable for an additional penalty of three times the value of the transferred property.<sup>15</sup> Liability for treble damages can be imposed in two different scenarios:

- (1) It can be imposed as part of the transferee's personal liability to a person with a superior right to the transferred property. In that scenario, the penalty is paid to the person with the superior right.<sup>16</sup>
- It can be imposed when the transferred property is returned to the estate.<sup>17</sup> In
   that scenario, the penalty is paid to the decedent's estate.

- 12. See Prob. Code §§ 13109, 13204.
- 13. See, e.g., Prob. Code § 11420.
- 14. See proposed Prob. Code §§ 13100.5(c), 13202.5(c) infra.
- 15. See Prob. Code §§ 13110(b), 13111(b), 13205(b), 13206(b).
- 16. Prob. Code §§ 13110(b), 13205(b).
- 17. Prob. Code §§ 13111(b), 13206(b).

<sup>11.</sup> See proposed Prob. Code §§ 13110.5 (transfer of personal property), 13205.5 (transfer of real property) *infra*.

The proposed legislation would add language stating expressly that the penalty can only be applied once per incident of fraud. If the liability for an act of fraud is imposed in one of the scenarios described above, it could not be imposed in the other.<sup>18</sup>

In addition, the proposed legislation would change the recipient of the treble damages 4 when imposed in an action brought by the estate for the return of the transferred 5 property.<sup>19</sup> Under existing law, that restitution is paid to the estate generally. The 6 proposed legislation would instead provide for payment of treble damages to the person 7 with a superior right to the transferred property (after reimbursing the estate's costs in 8 bringing the action). The Commission believes that the treble damages should be paid to 9 the person who was most directly harmed by the transferee's fraud, the person with the 10 superior right to the property that was fraudulently taken. That result would be more fair 11 than paying the award to the estate generally, where it would often be distributed to the 12 decedent's residuary beneficiaries. 13

14

#### ADJUSTMENTS TO VALUE OF RETURNED PROPERTY

Under the existing restitution provisions, the value of the property to be returned to the estate can be adjusted, up or down, based on events that occurred after the property was transferred. For example, if the transferee improved real property, the transferee may be entitled to reimbursement for any increase in the property's fair market value.<sup>20</sup> Conversely, if the transferee extracted income from the property before its return, the transferee could be liable for restitution of that income, along with the property that generated it.<sup>21</sup>

The provisions that govern restitution of transferred property apply to a number of different situations. The statutes differentiate between cases where the transferee does or does not still possess the property,<sup>22</sup> as well as cases where the property has or has not been improved by the transferee.<sup>23</sup> The adjustment rules are not applied consistently across those different situations.<sup>24</sup> The Commission sees no policy reason for that

<sup>18.</sup> See proposed Prob. Code §§ 13110(b), 13111(b), 13205(b), 13206(b) infra.

<sup>19.</sup> See proposed Prob. Code §§ 13111(b), 13206(b) infra.

<sup>20.</sup> See Prob. Code § 13206(c).

<sup>21.</sup> See Prob. Code §§ 13111(a)(1) (transfer of personal property), 13206(a)(1) (transfer of real property).

<sup>22.</sup> See Prob. Code §§ 13111(a)(1) & (2) (transfer of personal property); 13206(a)(1) & (2) (transfer of real property).

<sup>23.</sup> See Prob. Code § 13206(c) (transfer of real property).

<sup>24.</sup> For example, if a transferee is required to return real property that has been significantly improved, the transferee is entitled to reimbursement for having made a payment on any liens or encumbrances that were on the property when it was received. See Prob. Code \$\$13206(c)(1)(B). If the transferee is required to return real property that was not significantly improved, the statute does not provide for any such reimbursement. See Prob. Code \$\$13206(a)(1).

inconsistent treatment. It recommends that the adjustment rules be standardized so that
 they apply consistently in all cases.<sup>25</sup>

The Commission also recommends that the rules requiring restitution of income derived from transferred property be limited to income that would have been received by the estate if it had retained possession and control of the property.<sup>26</sup> This differentiates between income that is an innate part of an asset (e.g., dividends paid to shares of stock) from income that was created by the transferee's own initiative (e.g., income derived from using the property as part of the transferee's business). The former should be returned to the estate; the latter should not.

Finally, the Commission proposes that the basic principles underlying the adjustment rules be generalized, rather than relying on a set of specific rules.<sup>27</sup> This would allow for an appropriate adjustment to be made in circumstances that are not directly addressed by the existing rules.

14 If the decedent's personal representative and the transferee cannot agree on the 15 adjustments to be made, either party could petition the court for a determination. In 16 making that determination the court would consider whether the parties acted in good 17 faith and whether a particular adjustment would impose an unfair burden.<sup>28</sup>

18

#### MINOR SUBSTANTIVE AND TECHNICAL CHANGES

19 The proposed law would also make a minor substantive change and a small number of 20 technical changes to the statutes affected by the reforms described above.<sup>29</sup>

The minor substantive change involves the existing provisions that prescribe the scope 21 of a transferee's aggregate personal liability to the decedent's creditors.<sup>30</sup> Under those 22 provisions, the transferee's liability cannot exceed the fair market value of the property at 23 the time it was received, plus net income derived from the property, and if the transferee 24 no longer possesses the property, interest on the fair market value of the property from 25 the date of disposition.<sup>31</sup> The Commission sees no good policy reason to make the 26 transferee liable to the decedent's creditors for income or interest that accrued after the 27 transferee received the property. Creditors have no interest in estate property after it has 28 been distributed. For that reason, the proposed law would delete the income and interest 29 provisions from the rule that determines a transferee's aggregate liability to the 30 decedent's creditors.32 31

- 30. See Prob. Code §§ 13113, 13208 infra.
- 31. See Prob. Code §§ 13113(b), 13208(b) (transfer of real property) *infra*.
- 32. See proposed Prob. Code §§ 13109(b), 13109.5(b)(2) 13204(b), 13204.5(b)(2) infra.

<sup>25.</sup> See proposed Prob. Code §§ 13111(c), 13206(d) infra.

<sup>26.</sup> See proposed Prob. Code §§ 13110(a)(2), 13113(b)(2), 13205(a)(2), 13208(b)(2) infra.

<sup>27.</sup> See proposed Prob. Code §§ 13111(c), 13113, 13206(d), 13208 infra.

<sup>28.</sup> See proposed Prob. Code §§ 13113(e), 13208(e) infra.

<sup>29.</sup> The technical changes are noted in the Comments that follow the affected sections, *infra*.

1 The same considerations do not apply to a transferee's liability to a person with a

2 superior right to the property. In that instance, the transferee had no right to receive the

3 property in the first place. It should have gone to the person with the superior right. For

4 that reason, the transferee should be made to return not just the transferred property, but

5 any value that would have accrued to that property.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>33.</sup> See proposed Prob. Code §§ 13110(a)(2), 13110(a)(3), 13111(a)(2), 13111(c), 13113(b)(2) (transfer of personal property); 13205(a)(2), 13205(a)(3), 13206(a)(2), 13206(d), 13208(b)(2) (transfer of real property) *infra*.

## Contents

#### PART 1. COLLECTION OR TRANSFER OF SMALL ESTATE WITHOUT

ADMINISTRATION	9
CHAPTER 3. AFFIDAVIT PROCEDURE FOR COLLECTION OR TRANSFER OF PERSONAL PROPERTY	9
Prob. Code § 13100.5 (added). Definitions	9
Prob. Code § 13109 (amended). Personal liability for decedent's unsecured debts	9
Prob. Code § 13109.5 (added). Liability to estate for decedent's unsecured debts	10
Prob. Code § 13110 (amended). Personal liability to person with superior right	10
Prob. Code § 13110.5 (added). Voluntary return of transferred property to the estate	11
Prob. Code § 13111 (amended). Liability for return of transferred property to estate	12
Prob. Code § 13112 (repealed). Scope of personal liability under Sections 13109 and 13110	13
Prob. Code § 13113 (added). Adjustment to liability under Section 13110.5 or 13111	13
Prob. Code § 13114 (added). Value of returned property included in value of estate	14
CHAPTER 5. AFFIDAVIT PROCEDURE FOR REAL PROPERTY OF SMALL VALUE	15
Prob. Code § 13202.5 (added). Definitions	15
Prob. Code § 13204 (amended). Personal liability for decedent's unsecured debts	15
Prob. Code § 13204.5 (added). Liability to estate for decedent's unsecured debts	16
Prob. Code § 13205 (amended). Personal liability to person with superior right	16
Prob. Code § 13205.5 (added). Voluntary return of transferred property to the estate	
Prob. Code § 13206 (amended). Liability for return of transferred property to estate	
Prob. Code § 13207 (repealed). Scope of personal liability under Sections 13204 and 13205	19
Prob. Code § 13208 (added). Adjustment to liability under Section 13205.5 or 13206	20
Prob. Code § 13209 (added). Value of returned property included in value of estate	20

## PROPOSED LEGISLATION

1	PART 1. COLLECTION OR TRANSFER OF SMALL
2	ESTATE WITHOUT ADMINISTRATION
3	CHAPTER 3. AFFIDAVIT PROCEDURE FOR COLLECTION OR
4	TRANSFER OF PERSONAL PROPERTY
5	Prob. Code § 13100.5 (added). Definitions
6	SEC Section 13100.5 is added to the Probate Code, to read:
7	13100.5. For the purposes of this chapter, the following terms have the following
8	meanings:
9	(a) "Transferee" means a person to whom payment, delivery, or transfer of property is
10	made under this chapter.
11	(b) "Transferred property" means property that is paid, delivered, or transferred
12	pursuant to an affidavit or declaration executed under Section 13101.
13	(c) "Unsecured debts" includes, but is not limited to, a decedent's funeral expenses,
14	expenses of a decedent's last illness, and wage claims.
15	Comment. Section 13100.5 is new.
16	Subdivisions (a) and (b) are nonsubstantive. They are added for drafting convenience.
17	Subdivision (c) clarifies the scope of a transferee's liability for a decedent's obligations.
18	Prob. Code § 13109 (amended). Personal liability for decedent's unsecured debts
18 19	<b>Prob. Code § 13109 (amended). Personal liability for decedent's unsecured debts</b> SEC Section 13109 of the Probate Code is amended to read:
19	SEC Section 13109 of the Probate Code is amended to read:
19 20	SEC Section 13109 of the Probate Code is amended to read: 13109. (a) A person to whom payment, delivery, or transfer of the decedent's property
19 20 21	SEC Section 13109 of the Probate Code is amended to read: 13109. (a) A person to whom payment, delivery, or transfer of the decedent's property is made under this chapter <u>A transferee</u> is personally liable to the extent provided in
19 20 21 22	SEC Section 13109 of the Probate Code is amended to read: 13109. (a) A person to whom payment, delivery, or transfer of the decedent's property is made under this chapter A transferee is personally liable to the extent provided in Section 13112, this section for the unsecured debts of the decedent. Any such That debt may be enforced against the person transferee in the same manner as it could have been enforced against the decedent if the decedent had not died. In any action based upon the
19 20 21 22 23	SEC Section 13109 of the Probate Code is amended to read: 13109. (a) A person to whom payment, delivery, or transfer of the decedent's property is made under this chapter <u>A transferee</u> is personally liable to the extent provided in Section 13112, this section for the unsecured debts of the decedent. Any such That debt may be enforced against the person transferee in the same manner as it could have been
<ol> <li>19</li> <li>20</li> <li>21</li> <li>22</li> <li>23</li> <li>24</li> </ol>	SEC Section 13109 of the Probate Code is amended to read: 13109. (a) A person to whom payment, delivery, or transfer of the decedent's property is made under this chapter A transferee is personally liable to the extent provided in Section 13112, this section for the unsecured debts of the decedent. Any such That debt may be enforced against the person transferee in the same manner as it could have been enforced against the decedent if the decedent had not died. In any action based upon the
<ol> <li>19</li> <li>20</li> <li>21</li> <li>22</li> <li>23</li> <li>24</li> <li>25</li> </ol>	SEC Section 13109 of the Probate Code is amended to read: 13109. (a) A person to whom payment, delivery, or transfer of the decedent's property is made under this chapter A transferee is personally liable to the extent provided in Section 13112, this section for the unsecured debts of the decedent. Any such That debt may be enforced against the person transferee in the same manner as it could have been enforced against the decedent if the decedent had not died. In any action based upon the debt, the person transferee may assert any defenses, cross-complaints, or setoffs defense, cross-complaint, or setoff that would have been available to the decedent if the decedent had not died. Nothing in this section permits enforcement of a claim that is barred under
<ol> <li>19</li> <li>20</li> <li>21</li> <li>22</li> <li>23</li> <li>24</li> <li>25</li> <li>26</li> </ol>	SEC Section 13109 of the Probate Code is amended to read: 13109. (a) A person to whom payment, delivery, or transfer of the decedent's property is made under this chapter A transferee is personally liable to the extent provided in Section 13112, this section for the unsecured debts of the decedent. Any such That debt may be enforced against the person transferee in the same manner as it could have been enforced against the decedent if the decedent had not died. In any action based upon the debt, the person transferee may assert any defenses, cross-complaints, or setoffs defense, cross-complaint, or setoff that would have been available to the decedent if the decedent had not died. Nothing in this section permits enforcement of a claim that is barred under Part 4 (commencing with Section 9000) of Division 7. Section 366.2 of the Code of Civil
19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27	SEC Section 13109 of the Probate Code is amended to read: 13109. (a) A person to whom payment, delivery, or transfer of the decedent's property is made under this chapter <u>A transferee</u> is personally liable to the extent provided in Section 13112, this section for the unsecured debts of the decedent. Any such That debt may be enforced against the person transferee in the same manner as it could have been enforced against the decedent if the decedent had not died. In any action based upon the debt, the person transferee may assert any defenses, cross-complaints, or setoffs defense, cross-complaint, or setoff that would have been available to the decedent if the decedent had not died. Nothing in this section permits enforcement of a claim that is barred under Part 4 (commencing with Section 9000) of Division 7. Section 366.2 of the Code of Civil Procedure applies in an action under this section.
<ol> <li>19</li> <li>20</li> <li>21</li> <li>22</li> <li>23</li> <li>24</li> <li>25</li> <li>26</li> <li>27</li> <li>28</li> </ol>	SEC Section 13109 of the Probate Code is amended to read: 13109. (a) A person to whom payment, delivery, or transfer of the decedent's property is made under this chapter A transferee is personally liable to the extent provided in Section 13112, this section for the unsecured debts of the decedent. Any such That debt may be enforced against the person transferee in the same manner as it could have been enforced against the decedent if the decedent had not died. In any action based upon the debt, the person transferee may assert any defenses, cross-complaints, or setoffs defense, cross-complaint, or setoff that would have been available to the decedent if the decedent had not died. Nothing in this section permits enforcement of a claim that is barred under Part 4 (commencing with Section 9000) of Division 7. Section 366.2 of the Code of Civil Procedure applies in an action under this section. (b) The personal liability under subdivision (a) shall not exceed the fair market value of
<ol> <li>19</li> <li>20</li> <li>21</li> <li>22</li> <li>23</li> <li>24</li> <li>25</li> <li>26</li> <li>27</li> <li>28</li> <li>29</li> <li>30</li> <li>31</li> </ol>	<ul> <li>SEC Section 13109 of the Probate Code is amended to read:</li> <li>13109. (a) A person to whom payment, delivery, or transfer of the decedent's property is made under this chapter <u>A transferee</u> is personally liable to the extent provided in Section 13112, this section for the unsecured debts of the decedent. Any such That debt may be enforced against the person transferee in the same manner as it could have been enforced against the decedent if the decedent had not died. In any action based upon the debt, the person transferee may assert any defenses, cross-complaints, or setoffs defense, cross-complaint, or setoff that would have been available to the decedent if the decedent had not died. Nothing in this section permits enforcement of a claim that is barred under Part 4 (commencing with Section 9000) of Division 7. Section 366.2 of the Code of Civil Procedure applies in an action under this section.</li> <li>(b) The personal liability under subdivision (a) shall not exceed the fair market value of the transferred property at the time the affidavit or declaration is presented under this</li> </ul>
<ol> <li>19</li> <li>20</li> <li>21</li> <li>22</li> <li>23</li> <li>24</li> <li>25</li> <li>26</li> <li>27</li> <li>28</li> <li>29</li> <li>30</li> <li>31</li> <li>32</li> </ol>	<ul> <li>SEC Section 13109 of the Probate Code is amended to read:</li> <li>13109. (a) A person to whom payment, delivery, or transfer of the decedent's property is made under this chapter A transferee is personally liable to the extent provided in Section 13112, this section for the unsecured debts of the decedent. Any such That debt may be enforced against the person transferee in the same manner as it could have been enforced against the decedent if the decedent had not died. In any action based upon the debt, the person transferee may assert any defenses, cross-complaints, or setoffs defense, cross-complaint, or setoff that would have been available to the decedent if the decedent had not died. Nothing in this section permits enforcement of a claim that is barred under Part 4 (commencing with Section 9000) of Division 7. Section 366.2 of the Code of Civil Procedure applies in an action under this section.</li> <li>(b) The personal liability under subdivision (a) shall not exceed the fair market value of the transferred property at the time the affidavit or declaration is presented under this chapter, less the amount of any liens and encumbrances on the transferred property at that</li> </ul>
<ol> <li>19</li> <li>20</li> <li>21</li> <li>22</li> <li>23</li> <li>24</li> <li>25</li> <li>26</li> <li>27</li> <li>28</li> <li>29</li> <li>30</li> <li>31</li> <li>32</li> <li>33</li> </ol>	<ul> <li>SEC Section 13109 of the Probate Code is amended to read:</li> <li>13109. (a) A person to whom payment, delivery, or transfer of the decedent's property is made under this chapter A transferee is personally liable to the extent provided in Section 13112, this section for the unsecured debts of the decedent. Any such That debt may be enforced against the person transferee in the same manner as it could have been enforced against the decedent if the decedent had not died. In any action based upon the debt, the person transferee may assert any defenses, cross-complaints, or setoffs defense, cross-complaint, or setoff that would have been available to the decedent if the decedent had not died. Nothing in this section permits enforcement of a claim that is barred under Part 4 (commencing with Section 9000) of Division 7. Section 366.2 of the Code of Civil Procedure applies in an action under this section.</li> <li>(b) The personal liability under subdivision (a) shall not exceed the fair market value of the transferred property at the time the affidavit or declaration is presented under this chapter, less the amount of any payment made pursuant to subdivision (a) of Section</li> </ul>
<ol> <li>19</li> <li>20</li> <li>21</li> <li>22</li> <li>23</li> <li>24</li> <li>25</li> <li>26</li> <li>27</li> <li>28</li> <li>29</li> <li>30</li> <li>31</li> <li>32</li> <li>33</li> <li>34</li> </ol>	<ul> <li>SEC Section 13109 of the Probate Code is amended to read:</li> <li>13109. (a) A person to whom payment, delivery, or transfer of the decedent's property is made under this chapter A transferee is personally liable to the extent provided in Section 13112, this section for the unsecured debts of the decedent. Any such That debt may be enforced against the person transferee in the same manner as it could have been enforced against the decedent if the decedent had not died. In any action based upon the debt, the person transferee may assert any defenses, cross-complaints, or setoffs defense, cross-complaint, or setoff that would have been available to the decedent if the decedent had not died. Nothing in this section permits enforcement of a claim that is barred under Part 4 (commencing with Section 9000) of Division 7. Section 366.2 of the Code of Civil Procedure applies in an action under this section.</li> <li>(b) The personal liability under subdivision (a) shall not exceed the fair market value of the transferred property at the time the affidavit or declaration is presented under this chapter, less the amount of any liens and encumbrances on the transferred property at that time, and less the amount of any payment made pursuant to subdivision (a) of Section 13110.</li> </ul>
<ol> <li>19</li> <li>20</li> <li>21</li> <li>22</li> <li>23</li> <li>24</li> <li>25</li> <li>26</li> <li>27</li> <li>28</li> <li>29</li> <li>30</li> <li>31</li> <li>32</li> <li>33</li> </ol>	<ul> <li>SEC Section 13109 of the Probate Code is amended to read:</li> <li>13109. (a) A person to whom payment, delivery, or transfer of the decedent's property is made under this chapter A transferee is personally liable to the extent provided in Section 13112, this section for the unsecured debts of the decedent. Any such That debt may be enforced against the person transferee in the same manner as it could have been enforced against the decedent if the decedent had not died. In any action based upon the debt, the person transferee may assert any defenses, cross-complaints, or setoffs defense, cross-complaint, or setoff that would have been available to the decedent if the decedent had not died. Nothing in this section permits enforcement of a claim that is barred under Part 4 (commencing with Section 9000) of Division 7. Section 366.2 of the Code of Civil Procedure applies in an action under this section.</li> <li>(b) The personal liability under subdivision (a) shall not exceed the fair market value of the transferred property at the time the affidavit or declaration is presented under this chapter, less the amount of any payment made pursuant to subdivision (a) of Section</li> </ul>

**Comment**. Subdivision (a) of Section 13109 is amended to make technical revisions. 1 2 Subdivision (b) is drawn from former Section 13112(b), except that it does not include the net income or interest elements of that provision. See also Section 13110(a). 3 4 Subdivision (c) is added to state the relationship between Section 13109 and Sections 13109.5, 13110.5, and 13111. It is drawn in part from former Section 13112(a). 5 See also Section 13100.5(a) ("transferee"), Section 13100.5(b) ("transferred property"). 6 7 Prob. Code § 13109.5 (added). Liability to estate for decedent's unsecured debts SEC. . Section 13109.5 is added to the Probate Code, to read: 8 9 13109.5. (a) If proceedings for the administration of the decedent's estate are commenced, a transferee is personally liable to the estate for a share of the decedent's 10 unsecured debts. 11 (b) In calculating the transferee's share of liability under subdivision (a), the abatement 12 rules provided in Part 4 (commencing with Section 21400) of Division 11 shall be 13 applied, using all of the following assumptions: 14 (1) Transferred property shall be treated as if it had remained in the estate for 15 administration. 16 (2) Any unsecured debts of the decedent that were paid by the transferee pursuant to 17 Section 13109 shall be treated as if they were claims made against the decedent's estate. 18 (c) The personal representative shall provide a written statement of liability to the 19 transferee, which specifies the amount that must be paid to the estate. 20 (d) The transferee is personally liable to the estate for the amount specified in the 21 statement of liability. Any amount that the transferee paid pursuant to Section 13109 or 22 13110 shall be credited against the amount that the transferee owes the estate under this 23 subdivision. If the amount that the transferee paid pursuant to Section 13109 or 13110 24 exceeds the amount specified in the written statement of liability, the estate shall 25 reimburse the difference to the transferee. For the purposes of Section 11420, that 26 reimbursement shall be deemed an expense of administration. 27 (e) The reasonable cost of proceeding under this section shall be reimbursed as an 28 extraordinary service under Sections 10801 and 10811. The transferee is liable for the 29 payment of that cost, which shall be separately identified in the statement of liability. 30 (f) A transferee is not liable under this section if the transferee has satisfied the 31 requirements of Section 13110.5 or 13111. 32 Comment. Section 13109.5 is new. 33 Subdivision (f) is similar to former Section 13112(a). 34 35 See also Section 13100.5(a) ("transferee"), Section 13100.5(b) ("transferred property"). Prob. Code § 13110 (amended). Personal liability to person with superior right 36 37 SEC. . Section 13110 of the Probate Code is amended to read: 13110. (a) Except as provided in subdivision (b), each person to whom payment, 38 39 delivery, or transfer of the decedent's property is made under this chapter a transferee is 40 personally liable to the extent provided in Section 13112 to any person having a superior 41 right to transferred property by testate or intestate succession from the decedent. Except as provided in subdivision (b), the personal liability established by this subdivision shall 42

not exceed the sum of the following, less the amount of any payment made pursuant to
 Section 13109 or Section 13109.5:

3 (1) The fair market value of the transferred property at the time the affidavit or

4 <u>declaration is presented under this chapter, less the amount of any liens and</u> 5 <u>encumbrances on the transferred property at that time.</u>

6 (2) Income received from the property, if that income would have accrued to the estate 7 had the property not been transferred to the transferee.

8 (3) If the property has been disposed of, interest on the fair market value of the 9 transferred property from the date of disposition at the rate payable on a money 10 judgment. For the purposes of this paragraph, "fair market value of the transferred

property" means the fair market value of the transferred property, determined as of the

time of the disposition of the property, less the amount of any liens and encumbrances on

13 the property at the time the property was paid, delivered, or transferred to the transferee.

(b) In addition to any other liability the <u>person transferee</u> has under this section and Sections 13109, 13109.5, 13111, and <del>13112</del> 13113, any person who fraudulently secures

the payment, delivery, or transfer of the decedent's property under this chapter is liable to the person having such a superior right to that property by testate or intestate succession

18 from the decedent for three times the fair market value of the property. For the purposes 19 of this subdivision, the "fair market value of the property" is the fair market value of the 20 property paid, delivered, or transferred to the person liable under this subdivision, valued 21 as of the time the person liable under this subdivision presents the affidavit or declaration 22 under this chapter to the holder of the decedent's property, less any liens and

encumbrances on that property at that time.

(c) An action to impose liability under this section is forever barred three years after
 the affidavit or declaration is presented under this chapter to the holder of the decedent's
 property, or three years after the discovery of the fraud, whichever is later. The three-year
 period specified in this subdivision is not tolled for any reason.

(d) A transferee is not liable under subdivision (a) if the transferee has satisfied the
 requirements of Section 13110.5 or 13111.

Comment. Subdivision (a) of Section 13110 is amended to continue a rule drawn from former
 Section 13112(b) (scope of liability). See also Section 13109(b). Subdivision (a) is also amended
 to make technical revisions.

Subdivision (b) is amended to provide that income received from the property need only be returned if it would have accrued to the estate had the property remained in the estate. The subdivision is also amended to add a reference to Section 13109.5 and to make technical revisions.

Subdivision (d) is added to state the relationship between this section and Sections 13110.5 and
13111. It is drawn in part from former Section 13112(a).

39 See also Section 13100.5(a) ("transferee"), (b) ("transferred property").

### 40 **Prob. Code § 13110.5 (added). Voluntary return of transferred property to the estate**

41 SEC. \_\_\_\_. Section 13110.5 is added to the Probate Code, to read:

42 13110.5. (a) If proceedings for the administration of a decedent's estate are
43 commenced, a transferee may voluntarily return transferred property to the decedent's
44 estate for administration.

(b) The property to be restored to the estate under this section shall be reduced or 1 increased as provided in Section 13113. 2 Comment. Section 13110.5 is new. 3 See also Sections 13100.5(a) ("transferee"), 13100.5(b) "transferred property"). 4 Prob. Code § 13111 (amended). Liability for return of transferred property to estate 5 SEC. . Section 13111 of the Probate Code is amended to read: 6 13111. (a) Subject to the provisions of this section, if proceedings for the 7 administration of the decedent's estate are commenced in this state, or if the decedent's 8 personal representative has consented to the payment, transfer, or delivery of the 9 decedent's property under this chapter and the personal representative later requests that 10 the property be restored to the estate, each person to whom payment, delivery, or transfer 11 of the decedent's property is made under this chapter is liable for: 12 If property is paid, delivered, or transferred to a transferee under this chapter, and the 13 decedent's personal representative determines that another person has a superior right to 14 the property by testate or intestate succession from the decedent, the personal 15 representative may request that the transferred property be restored to the estate. Subject 16 to subdivisions (b), (c), (d), (e), and (g) if the personal representative makes that request, 17 the transferee is liable for all of the following: 18 (1) The If the transferee still has the transferred property, restitution of the transferred 19 property to the decedent's estate if the person still has the property, together with (A) the 20 net income the person received from the property and (B) if the person encumbered the 21 property after it was delivered or transferred to the person, the amount necessary to 22 satisfy the balance of the encumbrance as of the date the property is restored to the estate. 23 (2) The If the transferee no longer has the transferred property, restitution to the 24 decedent's estate of the fair market value of the transferred property if the person no 25 longer has the property, together with (A) the net income the person received from the 26 property and (B) plus interest from the date of disposition at the rate payable on a money 27 judgment on the fair market value of the transferred property. For the purposes of this 28 subdivision paragraph, the "fair market value of the transferred property" is the fair 29 market value of the transferred property, determined as of the time of the disposition of 30 the transferred property, of the property paid, delivered, or transferred to the person under 31 this chapter, less the amount of any liens and encumbrances on the transferred property at 32 that the time the property was paid, delivered, or transferred to the person under this 33 chapter. 34 (b) Subject to subdivision (c) and subject to any additional liability the person 35

(b) Subject to subdivision (c) and subject to any additional liability the person transferee has under Sections 13109 to 13112 13113, inclusive, if the person transferee fraudulently secured the payment, delivery, or transfer of the decedent's property under this chapter, the person transferee is liable under this section for restitution to the decedent's estate of three times the fair market value of the transferred property. For the purposes of this subdivision, the "fair market value of the transferred property" is the fair market value of the transferred property, determined as of the time the person liable under this subdivision presents the affidavit or declaration under this chapter, of the

property paid, delivered, or transferred to the person under this chapter, less the amount 1 of any liens and encumbrances on the property at that time. Restitution provided under 2 this subdivision shall first be used to pay the estate's cost of proceeding under this 3 section, with the remainder paid to the person who has a superior right to the property by 4 testate or intestate succession. 5 (c) The property and amount required to be restored to the estate under this section 6 shall be reduced by any property or amount paid by the person to satisfy a liability under 7 Section 13109 or 13110 or increased as provided in Section 13113. 8 (d) An action to enforce the liability under this section may be brought only by the 9 personal representative of the estate of the decedent. Whether or not the personal 10 representative brings an action under this section, the personal representative may enforce 11 the liability only to the extent necessary to protect the interests of the heirs, devisees, and 12 creditors of the decedent. 13 (e) An action to enforce the liability under this section is forever barred three years 14 after presentation of the affidavit or declaration under this chapter to the holder of the 15 decedent's property, or three years after the discovery of the fraud, whichever is later. 16 The three-year period specified in this subdivision is not tolled for any reason. 17 (f) In the case of a nondomiciliary decedent, restitution under this section shall be made 18 to the estate in an ancillary administration proceeding. 19 (g) A transferee is not liable under subdivision (a) if the transferred property was 20 returned to the estate under Section 13110.5. 21 **Comment**. Section 13111 is amended to limit the application of the provision to claims by a 22 person with a superior right, to delete language that is continued and generalized in Section 23 24 13113, and to make technical revisions. Subdivision (b) is amended to change the disposition of treble damages awarded under the 25 26 subdivision. 27 Subdivision (d) is amended to delete the second sentence. With the section limited to preclude its application to creditor claims, the deleted sentence became superfluous. 28 29 Subdivision (g) is added to state the relationship between this section and Section 13110.5. See also Sections 13110.5(a) ("transferee"), 13110.5(b) "transferred property"). 30 Prob. Code § 13112 (repealed). Scope of personal liability under Sections 13109 and 13110 31 SEC. . Section 13112 of the Probate Code is repealed. 32 **Comment.** Section 13112 is repealed. The substance of former Section 13112(a) is continued 33 in Sections 13109(c) and 13110(d). For a similar rule, see Section 13109.5(f), 34 35 The substance of former Section 13112(b) is continued in Sections 13109(b) and 13110(a), except that Section 13109(b) does not continue the part of former Section 13112(b) that related to 36 37 income and interest. Prob. Code § 13113 (added). Adjustment to liability under Section 13110.5 or 13111 38 SEC. . Section 13113 is added to the Probate Code, to read: 39 13113. (a) If the transferee's action or inaction increased the value of property returned 40

41 to the estate or decreased the estate's obligations, the personal representative shall

42 reimburse the transferee by the same amount. Actions or inaction that increase the value

of returned property or decrease the estate's obligations include, but are not necessarily
 limited to, the following actions:

- 3 (1) A payment toward an unsecured debt of the decedent.
- 4 (2) A payment toward a debt secured against the returned property.

5 (3) A significant improvement of the returned property that increased the fair market 6 value of the property.

(b) If the transferee's action or inaction decreased the value of property returned to the
estate or increased the estate's obligations, the transferee is personally liable to the estate
for that amount. Actions or inaction that decrease the value of the returned property or
increase the estate's obligations include, but are not necessarily limited to, the following
actions or inaction:

(1) An action or inaction that resulted in a lien or encumbrance being recorded againstthe property.

14 (2) The receipt of income from the property, if that income would have accrued to the 15 estate had the property not been transferred to the transferee.

16 (c) The personal representative shall provide the transferee a written statement of any 17 reimbursement or liability under this section, along with a statement of the reasons for the 18 reimbursement or liability.

(d) For the purposes of Section 11420, reimbursement of the transferee undersubdivision (a) shall be deemed an expense of administration.

(e) In the event that the transferee and the personal representative cannot agree on the reimbursement or liability due under this section, the transferee or personal representative may petition the court for an order determining the amount of the reimbursement or liability. In making a decision under this subdivision, the court should consider the surrounding circumstances, including whether the parties acted in good faith and whether a particular result would impose an unfair burden on the transferee or the estate.

Comment. Section 13113 is new. It generalizes language that was deleted from Section
 13111(a) and provides a procedure for determining the adjustments to be made under Sections
 13110.5 and 13111(c).

30 See also Sections 13100.5(a) ("transferee").

### 31 Prob. Code § 13114 (added). Value of returned property included in value of estate

32 SEC. \_\_\_\_. Section 13114 is added to the Probate Code, to read:

33 13114. If transferred property is returned to the estate under Sections 13110.5 or

13111, the value of that property shall be included in the total value of the estate, for all

35 purposes.

36 **Comment**. Section 13114 is new.

37 See also Sections 13100.5(b) ("transferred property").

#### CHAPTER 5. AFFIDAVIT PROCEDURE FOR REAL PROPERTY OF SMALL VALUE 1

#### 2 Prob. Code § 13202.5 (added). Definitions

SEC. . Section 13202.5 is added to the Probate Code, to read: 3

13202.5. For the purposes of this chapter, the following terms have the following 4 meanings: 5

(a) "Transferee" means a person designated as a successor of the decedent in a certified 6 copy of an affidavit issued under Section 13202. 7

- (b) "Transferred property" means property transferred to a transferee pursuant to a 8 certified copy of an affidavit issued under Section 13202. 9
- (c) "Unsecured debts" includes, but is not limited to, a decedent's funeral expenses, 10 expenses of a decedent's last illness, and wage claims. 11
- Comment. Section 13202.5 is new. 12
- Subdivisions (a) and (b) are nonsubstantive. They are added for drafting convenience. 13
- Subdivision (c) clarifies the scope of a transferee's liability for a decedent's obligations. 14
- See also Section 13006 ("successor of the decedent"). 15

#### Prob. Code § 13204 (amended). Personal liability for decedent's unsecured debts 16

SEC. . Section 13204 of the Probate Code is amended to read: 17

13204. (a) Each person who is designated as a successor of the decedent in a certified 18 copy of an affidavit issued under Section 13202 A transferee is personally liable to the 19 extent provided in Section 13207 this section for the unsecured debts of the decedent. 20 Any such That debt may be enforced against the person transferee in the same manner as 21 it could have been enforced against the decedent if the decedent had not died. In any 22 action based upon the debt, the person transferee may assert any defense, cross-23 complaint, or setoff that would have been available to the decedent if the decedent had 24 not died. Nothing in this section permits enforcement of a claim that is barred under Part 25 4 (commencing with Section 9000) of Division 7. Section 366.2 of the Code of Civil 26 Procedure applies in an action under this section. 27

- (b) The personal liability under subdivision (a) shall not exceed the fair market value of 28
- the transferred property at the time of the issuance of the certified copy of the affidavit 29
- under Section 13202, less the amount of any liens and encumbrances on the transferred 30
- property at that time, and less the amount of any payment made pursuant to subdivision 31 (a) of Section 13205. 32
- (c) The transferee is not liable under this section if the transferee has satisfied the 33 requirements of Section 13204.5, 13205.5, or 13206. 34
- 35 **Comment.** Subdivision (a) of Section 13204 is amended to make technical revisions.
- Subdivision (b) is drawn from former Section 13207(b), except that it does not include the net 36 income or interest elements of that provision. See also Section 13205(a). 37
- Subdivision (c) is added to state the relationship between Section 13204 and Sections 13204.5. 38
- 39 13205.5, or 13206. It is drawn in part from former Section 13207(a).
- See also Section 13202.5(a) ("transferee"), 13202.5(b) ("transferred property"). 40

Prob. Code § 13204.5 (added). Liability to estate for decedent's unsecured debts 1 SEC. . Section 13204.5 is added to the Probate Code, to read: 2 13204.5. (a) If proceedings for the administration of the decedent's estate are 3 commenced, a transferee is personally liable to the estate for a share of the decedent's 4 unsecured debts. 5 (b) In calculating the transferee's share of liability under subdivision (a), the abatement 6 rules provided in Part 4 (commencing with Section 21400) of Division 11 shall be 7 applied, using all of the following assumptions: 8 (1) Transferred property under this chapter shall be treated as if it had remained in the 9 estate for administration. 10 (2) Any unsecured debts of the decedent that were paid by the transferee pursuant to 11 Section 13204 shall be treated as if they were claims made against the decedent's estate. 12 (c) The personal representative shall provide a written statement of liability to the 13 transferee, which specifies the amount that must be paid to the estate. 14 (d) The transferee is personally liable to the estate for the amount specified in the 15 statement of liability. Any amount that the transferee paid pursuant to Section 13204 or 16 13205 shall be credited against the amount that the transferee owes the estate under this 17 subdivision. If the amount that the transferee paid pursuant to Section 13204 or 13205 18 exceeds the amount specified in the written statement of liability, the estate shall 19 reimburse the difference to the transferee. For the purposes of Section 11420, that 20 reimbursement shall be deemed an expense of administration. 21 (e) The reasonable cost of proceeding under this section shall be reimbursed as an 22 extraordinary service under Sections 10801 and 10811. The transferee is liable for the 23 payment of that cost, which shall be separately identified in the statement of liability. 24 (f) The transferee is not liable under this section if the transferee has satisfied the 25 requirements of Section 13205.5 or 13206. 26 27 Comment. Section 13204.5 is new. 28 Subdivision (f) is similar to former Section 13207(a). See also Section 13202.5(a) ("transferee"), 13202.5(b) ("transferred property"). 29 Prob. Code § 13205 (amended). Personal liability to person with superior right 30 SEC. . Section 13205 of the Probate Code is amended to read: 31 32 13205. (a) Except as provided in subdivision (b), each person who is designated as a successor of the decedent in a certified copy of any affidavit issued under Section 13202 33 A transferee is personally liable to the extent provided in Section 13207 to any person 34 having a superior right to transferred property by testate or intestate succession from the 35 decedent. Except as provided in subdivision (d), the personal liability established by this 36 subdivision shall not exceed the sum of the following, less the amount of any payment 37 made pursuant to Section 13204 or Section 13204.5: 38 (1) The fair market value at the time of the issuance of the certified copy of the 39 affidavit under Section 13202 of the transferred property, less the amount of any liens 40 and encumbrances on the transferred property at that time. 41

1 (2) Income received from the property, if that income would have accrued to the estate 2 had the property not been transferred to the transferee.

3 (3) If the property has been disposed of, interest on the fair market value of the 4 transferred property from the date of disposition at the rate payable on a money 5 judgment. For the purposes of this paragraph, "fair market value of the transferred 6 property" means the fair market value of the transferred property, determined as of the 7 time of the disposition of the property, less the amount of any liens and encumbrances on 8 the property at the time the certified copy of the affidavit was issued.

- (b) In addition to any other liability the person transferee has under this section and 9 Sections 13204, 13204.5, 13206, and 13207 13208, if the person transferee fraudulently 10 executed or filed the affidavit under this chapter, the person transferee is liable to the 11 person having a superior right to that property by testate or intestate succession from the 12 decedent for three times the fair market value of the transferred property. For the 13 purposes of this subdivision, the "fair market value of the transferred property" is the fair 14 market value of the transferred property, determined as of the time the certified copy of 15 the affidavit was issued under Section 13202, of the property the person liable took under 16 the certified copy of the affidavit to which the other person has a superior right, less any 17 liens and encumbrances on the transferred property at that time. 18
- 19 (c) An action to impose liability under this section is forever barred three years after 20 the certified copy of the affidavit is issued under Section 13202, or three years after the 21 discovery of the fraud, whichever is later. The three-year period specified in this 22 subdivision is not tolled for any reason.

(d) The transferee is not liable under this section if the transferee has satisfied the
 requirements of Section 13205.5 or 13206.

- Comment. Subdivision (a) of Section 13205 is amended to continue a rule drawn from former
   Section 13207(b). Subdivision (a) is also amended to make technical revisions.
- Subdivision (b) is amended to provide that income received from the property need only be returned if it would have accrued to the estate had the property remained in the estate. The subdivision is also amended add a reference to Section 13204.5 and to make technical revisions.
- Subdivision (d) is added to state the relationship between this section and Sections 13205.5 and 13206. It is drawn in part from former Section 13207(a).
- 32 See also Section 13202.5(a) ("transferee"), 13202.5(b) ("transferred property").

#### 33 Prob. Code § 13205.5 (added). Voluntary return of transferred property to the estate

- 34 SEC. \_\_\_\_. Section 13205.5 is added to the Probate Code, to read:
- 13205.5. (a) If proceedings for the administration of the decedent's estate are
   commenced, a transferee may voluntarily return transferred property to the decedent's
   estate for administration.
- 38 (b) The property to be restored to the estate under this section shall be reduced or 39 increased as provided in Section 13208.
- 40 **Comment**. Section 13205.5 is new.
- 41 See also Section 13202.5(a) ("transferee"), 13202.5(b) ("transferred property").

Prob. Code § 13206 (amended). Liability for return of transferred property to estate 1 SEC. . Section 13206 of the Probate Code is amended to read: 2 (a) Subject to subdivisions (b), (c), (d), and (e), if proceedings for the administration of 3 the decedent's estate are commenced, or if the decedent's personal representative has 4 consented to use of the procedure provided by this chapter and the personal 5 representative later requests that the property be restored to the estate, each person who is 6 designated as a successor of the decedent in a certified copy of an affidavit issued under 7 Section 13202 is liable for: 8 If property is transferred to a transferee under this chapter, and the decedent's personal 9 representative later determines that another person has a superior right to the property by 10 testate or intestate succession from the decedent, the personal representative may request 11 that the transferred property be restored to the estate. Subject to subdivisions (b), (c), (d), 12 (e), and (g) if the personal representative makes that request, the transferee is liable for all 13 of the following: 14 15 (1) The If the transferee still has the transferred property, restitution of the transferred property to the decedent's estate of the property the person took under the certified copy 16 of the affidavit if the person still has the property, together with (A) the net income the 17

person received from the property and (B) if the person encumbered the property after the certified copy of the affidavit was issued, the amount necessary to satisfy the balance of the encumbrance as of the date the property is restored to the estate.

(2) The If the transferee no longer has the transferred property, restitution to the 21 decedent's estate of the fair market value of the transferred property if the person no 22 longer has the property together with (A) the net income the person received from the 23 property prior to disposing of it and (B) plus interest from the date of disposition at the 24 rate payable on a money judgment on the fair market value of the transferred property. 25 For the purposes of this paragraph, the "fair market value of the transferred property" is 26 the fair market value of the transferred property, determined as of the time of the 27 disposition of the transferred property, of the property the person took under the certified 28 copy of the affidavit, less the amount of any liens and encumbrances on the transferred 29 property at the time the certified copy of the affidavit was issued. 30

(b) Subject to subdivision (d), if the person transferee fraudulently executed or filed the 31 affidavit under this chapter, the person transferee is liable under this section for 32 restitution to the decedent's estate of three times the fair market value of the transferred 33 property. For the purposes of this subdivision, the "fair market value of the transferred 34 property" is the fair market value of the transferred property, determined as of the time 35 the certified copy of the affidavit was issued, of the property the person took under the 36 certified copy of the affidavit, less the amount of any liens and encumbrances on the 37 property at that time. Restitution provided under this subdivision shall first be used to pay 38 the estate's cost of proceeding under this section, with the remainder paid to the person 39 who has a superior right to the property by testate or intestate succession. 40

41 (c) Subject to subdivision (d), if proceedings for the administration of the decedent's
42 estate are commenced and a person designated as a successor of the decedent in a
43 certified copy of an affidavit issued under Section 13202 the transferee made a significant

1 improvement to the <u>transferred</u> property taken by the person under the certified copy of

2 the affidavit in the good faith belief that the person transferee was the successor of the 3 decedent to that property, the person transferee is liable for whichever of the following

4 the decedent's estate elects:

5 (1) The restitution of the <u>transferred</u> property<del>, as improved,</del> to the estate of the decedent 6 upon the condition that the estate reimburse the person making restitution for (A) the 7 amount by which the improvement increases the fair market value of the property 8 restored, determined as of the time of restitution, and (B) the amount paid by the person 9 for principal and interest on any liens or encumbrances that were on the property at the 10 time the certified copy of the affidavit was issued.

11 (2) The restoration to the decedent's estate of the fair market value of the <u>transferred</u> 12 property, determined as of the time of the issuance of the certified copy of the affidavit 13 under Section 13202, less the amount of any liens and encumbrances on the <u>transferred</u> 14 property at that time, together with interest on the net amount at the rate payable on a 15 money judgment running from the date of the issuance of the certified copy of the 16 affidavit.

(d) The property and amount required to be restored to the estate under this section
 shall be reduced by any property or amount paid by the person to satisfy a liability under
 Section 13204 or 13205 or increased as provided in Section 13208.

(e) An action to enforce the liability under this section may be brought only by the
 personal representative of the estate of the decedent. Whether or not the personal
 representative brings an action under this section, the personal representative may enforce
 the liability only to the extent necessary to protect the interests of the heirs, devisees, and
 creditors of the decedent.

(f) An action to enforce the liability under this section is forever barred three years after the certified copy of the affidavit is issued under Section 13202, or three years after the discovery of the fraud, whichever is later. The three-year period specified in this subdivision is not tolled for any reason.

(g) The transferee is not liable under subdivision (a) if the transferred property was
 returned to the estate under Section 13205.5.

31 **Comment.** Section 13206 is amended to limit the application of the section to claims by a 32 person with a superior right, to delete language that is continued and generalized in Section 33 13208, and to make technical revisions.

34 Subdivision (b) is amended to change the disposition of treble damages awarded under the 35 subdivision.

36 Subdivision (d) is amended to delete the second sentence. With the section limited to preclude 37 its application to creditor claims, the deleted sentence became superfluous.

38 Subdivision (g) is added to state the relationship between this section and Section 13205.5.

39 See also Section 13202.5(a) ("transferee"), 13202.5(b) ("transferred property").

#### 40 Prob. Code § 13207 (repealed). Scope of personal liability under Sections 13204 and 13205

41 SEC. \_\_\_\_. Section 13207 of the Probate Code is repealed.

42 **Comment.** Section 13207 is repealed. The substance of former Section 13207(a) is continued

43 in Sections 13204(c) and 13205(d).

1 The substance of former Section 13207(b) is continued in Sections 13204(b) and 13205(a),

except that Section 13204(b) does not continue the part of former Section 13207(b) that related to
 income and interest.

3 income and interest

4 Prob. Code § 13208 (added). Adjustment to liability under Section 13205.5 or 13206

5 SEC. \_\_\_\_. Section 13208 is added to the Probate Code, to read:

6 13208. (a) If the transferee's action or inaction increased the value of property returned 7 to the estate or decreased the estate's obligations, the personal representative shall 8 reimburse the transferee by the same amount. Actions or inaction that increase the value 9 of returned property or decrease the estate's obligations include, but are not necessarily 10 limited to, the following actions:

11 (1) A payment toward an unsecured debt of the decedent.

12 (2) A payment toward a debt secured against the returned property.

(3) A significant improvement of the returned property that increased the fair marketvalue of the property.

(b) If the transferee's action or inaction decreased the value of property returned to the estate or increased the estate's obligations, the transferee is personally liable to the estate for that amount. Actions or inaction that decrease the value of the returned property or increase the estate's obligations include, but are not necessarily limited to, the following actions or inaction:

(1) An action or inaction that resulted in a lien or encumbrance being recorded againstthe property.

(2) The receipt of income from the property, if that income would have accrued to theestate had the property not been transferred to the transferee.

(c) The personal representative shall provide the transferee a written statement of any
 reimbursement or liability under this section, along with a statement of the reasons for the
 reimbursement or liability.

(d) For the purposes of Section 11420, reimbursement of the transferee undersubdivision (a) shall be deemed an expense of administration.

(e) In the event that the transferee and the personal representative cannot agree on the
reimbursement or liability due under this section, the transferee or personal representative
may petition the court for an order determining the amount of the reimbursement or
liability. In making a decision under this subdivision, the court should consider the
surrounding circumstances, including whether the parties acted in good faith and whether
a particular result would impose an unfair burden on the transferee or the estate.

Comment. Section 13208 is new. It generalizes language that was deleted from Section 13206(a) and (c) and provides a procedure for determining the adjustments to be made under Sections 13205.5 and 13206(d).

38 See also Section 13202.5(a) ("transferee").

### 39 Prob. Code § 13209 (added). Value of returned property included in value of estate

40 SEC. \_\_\_\_. Section 13209 is added to the Probate Code, to read:

1 13209. If transferred property is returned to the estate under Sections 13205.5 or

13206, the value of that property shall be included in the total value of the estate, for all
purposes.

- 4 **Comment**. Section 13209 is new.
- 5 See also Sections 13205.5(b) ("transferred property").