

Inherited Home Owner's Guide

A practical Snohomish County guide to understanding your options, organizing the property, and planning a sale.



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A personal introduction

Hi, I'm Curt Simmons. I've helped Snohomish County buyers and sellers since 2003. Before real estate, I spent a decade working in residential and commercial construction, which gives me a practical perspective on home condition, repairs and preparation.

Inherited property can involve more than a real estate decision. You may be sorting out legal authority, belongings, repairs, family decisions and timing. I put this resource together to help you understand the choices and organize your next steps. I can help evaluate the property and plan a sale while qualified legal and tax professionals handle those specialized questions.

INSIDE THIS RESOURCE

Start with the right questions | Does every inherited home require probate? | Four common choices | The sale roadmap

When you are ready to discuss your property: Call or text 425-422-0563 or visit primelistingsgroup.net.

Start with the right questions

Who holds title today? Is there a will, trust, survivorship arrangement, transfer-on-death deed, or probate case?

Who has verified legal authority to enter a listing agreement and sign transfer documents? A name in a will alone does not establish signing authority.

Is the property occupied? Are there mortgages, unpaid taxes, liens, insurance or urgent maintenance issues?

Does every inherited home require probate?

No. Depending on how title was held and the estate documents, some properties pass through survivorship, a trust, a transfer-on-death deed, or other nonprobate arrangements. In other cases probate or another legal proceeding may be necessary.

Ask a Washington estate attorney and title company to review the deed, estate documents and expected transfer. Washington has specific documentation routes for inheritance-related REET exemptions, including certain nonprobate transfers.

Four common choices

Sell as-is: May limit upfront work, but property condition can affect buyer financing, pricing and offers.

Prepare and list: Clean, address important repairs, and market the property. Compare extra proceeds with costs, carrying time and effort.

Keep or rent: Evaluate financing, property condition, insurance, management obligations, income and taxes.

One heir buys out others: Obtain reliable value guidance and let qualified legal/lending professionals structure the transfer.

The sale roadmap

1. Confirm title and authority with estate counsel and title.
2. Identify mortgage balances, taxes, liens, utilities, occupancy and insurance.
3. Request a current comparative market analysis; discuss whether a date-of-death appraisal is needed for estate or tax purposes.
4. Compare as-is and prepared listing outcomes using itemized estimated expenses.
5. Coordinate access, personal property, cleaning, repairs and photography with authorized decision-makers.
6. List and negotiate only after legal authority has been confirmed; coordinate estate-specific paperwork with title and escrow.

Taxes and valuation: important distinctions

The IRS generally uses fair market value on the date of death as inherited-property basis, subject to exceptions and elections. A present-day CMA is not the same as a retrospective estate appraisal.

Washington generally exempts qualifying inheritance transfers from real estate excise tax, but a later sale to a third party is generally subject to REET. Review transaction specifics with a CPA and title company.

Helpful official resources

Washington DOR, inheritance REET exemptions: <https://dor.wa.gov/taxes-rates/other-taxes/real-estate-excise-tax/real-estate-excise-tax-exemptions-commonly-used>

IRS Publication 551 (basis of assets): <https://www.irs.gov/publications/p551>

Washington probate and trust law: <https://app.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=11>

Inherited home page: <https://curt-simmons.huzi.site/inherited-home-snohomish-county/>

Local help: 425-422-0563 | curt@primelistingsgroup.net | primelistingsgroup.net

Important: General educational information only; not legal, tax, financial, or title advice. Probate, authority to sell, exemptions and taxes vary. Consult a Washington estate attorney, title/escrow professional and tax adviser as appropriate. October 2026.