

RULE 5.346. FIDUCIARY ACCOUNTING

(a) **Contents.** A fiduciary accounting shall include:

(1) all cash and property transactions since the date of the last accounting or, if none, from the commencement of administration, and

(2) a schedule of assets at the end of the accounting period.

(b) Accounting Standards. The following standards are required for the accounting of all transactions occurring on or after January 1, 1994:

(1) Accountings shall be stated in a manner that is understandable to persons who are not familiar with practices and terminology peculiar to the administration of estates and trusts.

(2) The accounting shall begin with a concise summary of its purpose and content.

(3) The accounting shall contain sufficient information to put interested persons on notice as to all significant transactions affecting administration during the accounting period.

(4) The accounting shall contain 2 values in the schedule of assets at the end of the accounting period, the asset acquisition value or carrying value, and estimated current value.

(5) Gains and losses incurred during the accounting period shall be shown separately in the same schedule.

(6) The accounting shall show significant transactions that do not affect the amount for which the fiduciary is accountable.

(c) Accounting Format. A model format for an accounting is attached to this rule as Appendix A.

(d) Verification. All accountings shall be verified by the fiduciary filing the accounting.

Committee Notes

This rule substantially adopts the Uniform Fiduciary Accounting Principles and Model Formats adopted by the Committee on National Fiduciary Accounting Standards of the American Bar Association: Section of Real Property, Probate and Trust Law, the American College of Probate Counsel, the American Bankers Association: Trust Division, and other organizations.

Accountings shall also comply with the Florida principal and income law, chapter 738, Florida Statutes.

Attached as Appendix B to this rule are an explanation and commentary for each of the foregoing standards, which shall be considered as a Committee Note to this rule.

Accountings that substantially conform to the model formats are acceptable. The model accounting format included in Appendix A is only a suggested form.

Rule History

1988 Revision: New rule.

1992 Revision: Editorial changes throughout. Rule changed to require compliance with the Uniform Fiduciary Accounting Principles and Model Formats for accounting of all transactions occurring on or after January 1, 1994. Committee notes revised. Citation form changes in committee notes.

1996 Revision: Committee notes revised.

1999 Revision: Committee notes revised to correct rule reference and to reflect formatting changes in accounting formats.

2002 Revision: Subdivisions (a) and (b) amended to clarify contents of accounting. Committee notes revised.

2003 Revision: Committee notes revised.

2005 Revision: Verification requirement added as new (d). Committee notes revised.

2007 Revision: Committee notes revised.

2010 Revision: Committee notes revised.

Statutory References

§ 733.501, Fla. Stat. Curators.

§ 733.5036, Fla. Stat. Accounting and discharge following resignation.

§ 733.508, Fla. Stat. Accounting and discharge of removed personal representatives upon removal.

§ 733.602(1), Fla. Stat. General duties.

§ 733.612(18), Fla. Stat. Transactions authorized for the personal representative; exceptions.

ch. 738, Fla. Stat. Principal and income.

Rule References

Fla. Prob. R. 5.020 Pleadings; verification; motions.

Fla. Prob. R. 5.040 Notice.

Fla. Prob. R. 5.122 Curators.

Fla. Prob. R. 5.180 Waiver and consent.

Fla. Prob. R. 5.330 Execution by personal representative.

Fla. Prob. R. 5.345 Accountings other than personal representatives' final accountings.

Fla. Prob. R. 5.400 Distribution and discharge.

Fla. Prob. R. 5.430 Resignation of personal representative.

Fla. Prob. R. 5.440 Proceedings for removal.

APPENDIX A

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR _____ COUNTY, FLORIDA

IN RE: ESTATE OF

PROBATE DIVISION

File Number _____

Deceased.

Division _____

_____ ACCOUNTING OF PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE(S)

From: _____, _____, Through: _____, _____

The purpose of this accounting is to acquaint all interested persons with the transactions that have occurred during the period covered by the accounting and the assets that remain on hand. It consists of a SUMMARY sheet and Schedule A showing all Receipts, Schedule B showing all Disbursements, Schedule C showing all Distributions, Schedule D showing all Capital Transactions and Adjustments (the effect of which are also reflected in other schedules, if appropriate), and Schedule E showing assets on hand at the end of the accounting period.

It is important that this accounting be carefully examined. Requests for additional information and any questions should be addressed to the personal representative(s) or the attorneys for the personal representative(s), the names and addresses of whom are set forth below.

Under penalties of perjury, the undersigned personal representative(s) declare(s) that I (we) have read and examined this accounting and that the facts and figures set forth in the Summary and the attached Schedules are true, to the best of my (our) knowledge and belief, and that it is a complete report of all cash and property transactions and of all receipts and disbursements by me (us) as personal representative(s) of the estate of _____ deceased, from _____, _____ through _____, _____.

Signed on _____, _____.

Attorney for Personal Representative:

Personal Representative:

Attorney

Name

Florida Bar No. _____

(address)

(address)

Telephone: _____

[Print or Type Names Under All Signature Lines]

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR _____ COUNTY, FLORIDA

IN RE: ESTATE OF

PROBATE DIVISION

Deceased.

File Number _____

Division _____

_____ ACCOUNTING OF PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE(S)

From: _____, _____, Through: _____, _____

SUMMARY

	<u>Income</u>	<u>Principal</u>	<u>Totals</u>
I. <u>Starting Balance</u>			
Assets per Inventory or on			

	<u>Income</u>	<u>Principal</u>	<u>Totals</u>
Hand at Close of Last Accounting Period	_____	_____	_____
II. <u>Receipts</u>			
Schedule A:	_____	_____	_____
III. <u>Disbursements</u>			
Schedule B:	_____	_____	_____
IV. <u>Distributions</u>			
Schedule C:	_____	_____	_____
V. <u>Capital Transactions and Adjustments</u>			
Schedule D: Net Gain or (Loss)		\$ _____	_____
VI. <u>Assets on Hand at Close of Accounting Period</u>			
Schedule E: Cash and Other Assets	_____	_____	=====

NOTE: Refer to Fla. Prob. R. 5.330(b), 5.345, 5.346, and 5.400.

Also see Accountings, Chapter 12 of Practice Under Florida Probate Code (Fla. Bar CLE).

Entries on Summary are to be taken from totals on Schedules A, B, C, D and E.

The Summary and Schedules A, B, C, D and E are to constitute the full accounting. Every transaction occurring during the accounting period should be reflected on the Schedules.

All purchases and sales, all adjustments to the inventory or carrying value of any asset, and any other changes in the assets (such as stock splits) should be described on Schedule D.

The amount in the "Total" column for Item VI must agree with the total inventory or adjusted carrying value of all assets on hand at the close of the accounting period on Schedule E.

_____ ACCOUNTING OF PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE,

ESTATE OF _____

From: _____, _____, Through: _____,

SCHEDULE A Receipts

Date	Brief Description of Items	Income	Principal
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NOTE: Schedule A should reflect only those items received during administration that are not shown on the inventory. Classification of items as income or principal is to be in accordance with the provisions of the Florida Uniform Principal and Income Act, Chapter 738, Florida Statutes.

Entries involving the sale of assets or other adjustments to the carrying values of assets are to be shown on Schedule D, and not on Schedule A.

_____ ACCOUNTING OF PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE,

ESTATE OF _____

From: _____, _____, Through: _____,

SCHEDULE B

Disbursements

Date	Brief Description of Items	Income	Principal
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NOTE: Schedule B should reflect only those items paid out during the accounting period. Classification of disbursements as income or principal is to be in accordance with the provisions of the Florida Uniform Principal and Income Act, Chapter 738, Florida Statutes.

Entries involving the purchase of assets or adjustments to the carrying values of assets are to be shown on Schedule D, and not on Schedule B.

_____ ACCOUNTING OF PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE,

ESTATE OF _____

From: _____, _____, Through: _____,

SCHEDULE C

Distributions

Date	Brief Description of Items	Income	Principal
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NOTE: Schedule C should reflect only those items or amounts distributed to beneficiaries during the accounting period. Assets distributed should be shown at their inventory or adjusted carrying values. Classification of distributions as income or principal is to be in accordance with the provisions of the Florida Uniform Principal and Income Act, Chapter 738, Florida Statutes.

Entries involving adjustments to the carrying values of assets are to be shown on Schedule D, and not on Schedule C.

_____ ACCOUNTING OF PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE,

ESTATE OF _____

From: _____, _____, Through: _____,

SCHEDULE D Capital Transactions and Adjustments

(Does not include distributions. Distributions are shown on Schedule C.)

Date	Brief Description of Transactions	Net Gain	Net Loss
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TOTAL NET GAINS AND LOSSES

NET GAIN OR (LOSS)

NOTE: Schedule D should reflect all purchases and sales of assets and any adjustments to the carrying values of any assets.

Entries reflecting sales should show the inventory or adjusted carrying values, the costs and expenses of the sale, and the net proceeds received. The net gain or loss should be extended in the appropriate column on the right side of Schedule D.

Entries reflecting purchases should reflect the purchase price, any expenses of purchase or other adjustments to the purchase price, and the total amount paid. Presumably no gain or loss would be shown for purchases.

Entries reflecting adjustments in capital assets should explain the change (such as a stock split) and the net gain or loss should be shown in the appropriate column on the right side of Schedule D.

The NET gain or loss should be entered in the Principal column of the Summary.

_____ ACCOUNTING OF PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE,

ESTATE OF _____

From: _____, _____, Through: _____,

SCHEDULE E

Assets on Hand at Close of Accounting Period

(Indicate where held and legal description, certificate numbers or other identification.)

	Estimated Current Value	Carrying Value
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ASSETS OTHER THAN CASH:

OTHER ASSETS TOTAL

CASH:

CASH TOTAL \$

TOTAL ASSETS (must agree with the Total for Item VI on Summary)

NOTE: Schedule E should be a complete list of all assets on hand reflecting inventory values for each item, adjusted in accordance with any appropriate entries on Schedule D.

Current market values for any assets that are known to be different from the inventory or carrying values as of the close of the accounting period should be shown in the column marked “Current Value.” The total inventory or adjusted carrying value (not Current Value) must agree with the Total for Item VI on Summary.

APPENDIX B

UNIFORM FIDUCIARY ACCOUNTING PRINCIPLES

I. ACCOUNTS SHOULD BE STATED IN A MANNER THAT IS UNDERSTANDABLE BY PERSONS WHO ARE NOT FAMILIAR WITH PRACTICES AND TERMINOLOGY PECULIAR TO THE ADMINISTRATION OF ESTATES AND TRUSTS.

Commentary: In order for an account to fulfill its basic function of communication, it is essential that it be stated in a manner that recognizes that the interested parties are not usually familiar with fiduciary accounts. It is neither practical nor desirable to require that accounts be tailored to meet individual disabilities of particular parties but any account should be capable of being understood by a person of average intelligence, literate in English, and familiar with basic financial terms who has read it with care and attention.

Problems arising from terminology or style are usually a reflection of the fact that people who become versed in a particular form of practice tend to forget that terms which are familiar and useful to them may convey nothing to someone else or may even be affirmatively misleading. For example, the terms “debit” and “credit” are generally incomprehensible to people with no knowledge of bookkeeping and many people who are familiar with them in other contexts would

assume that in the context of fiduciary accounting, the receipt of an item is a “credit” to the fund rather than a “debit” to the fiduciary.

While the need for concise presentation makes a certain amount of abbreviation both acceptable and necessary, uncommon abbreviation of matters essential to an understanding of the account should be avoided or explained.

No position is taken for or against the use of direct print-outs from machine accounting systems. The quality of the accounts produced by these systems varies widely in the extent to which they can be understood by persons who are not familiar with them. To endorse or object to a direct print-out because it is produced by machine from previously stored data would miss the essential point by focusing attention upon the manner of preparation rather than the product.

II. A FIDUCIARY ACCOUNT SHALL BEGIN WITH A CONCISE SUMMARY OF ITS PURPOSE AND CONTENT.

Commentary: Very few people can be expected to pay much attention to a document unless they have some understanding of its general purpose and its significance to them. Even with such an understanding, impressions derived from the first page or two will often determine whether the rest is read. The use that is made of these pages is therefore of particular significance.

The cover page should disclose the nature and function of the account. While a complete explanation of the significance of the account and the effect of its presentation upon the rights of the parties is obviously impractical for inclusion at this point, there should be at least a brief statement identifying the fiduciary and the subject matter, noting the importance of examining the account and giving an address where more information can be obtained.

It is assumed that the parties would also have enough information from other sources to understand the nature of their relationship to the fund (e.g., residuary legatee, life tenant, remainderman), the function of the account, and the obligation of the fiduciary to supply further relevant information upon request. It is also assumed that notice will be given of any significant procedural considerations such as limitation on the time within which objections must be presented. This would normally be provided by prior or contemporaneous memoranda, correspondence, or discussions.

A summary of the account shall also be presented at the outset. This summary, organized as a table of contents, shall indicate the order of the details presented in the account and shall show separate totals for the aggregate of the assets on hand at the beginning of the accounting period; transactions during the period; and the assets remaining on hand at the end of the period. Each entry in the summary shall be supported by a schedule in the account that provides the details on which the summary is based.

III. A FIDUCIARY ACCOUNT SHALL CONTAIN SUFFICIENT INFORMATION TO PUT THE INTERESTED PARTIES ON NOTICE AS TO ALL SIGNIFICANT TRANSACTIONS AFFECTING ADMINISTRATION DURING THE ACCOUNTING PERIOD.

Commentary: The presentation of the information account shall allow an interested party to follow the progress of the fiduciary's administration of assets during the accounting period.

An account is not complete if it does not itemize, or make reference to, assets on hand at the beginning of the accounting period.

Illustration:

3.1 The first account for a decedent's estate or a trust may detail the items received by the fiduciary and for which the fiduciary is responsible. It may refer to the total amount of an inventory filed elsewhere or assets described in a schedule attached to a trust agreement.

Instead of retyping the complete list of assets in the opening balance, the preparer may prefer to attach as an exhibit a copy of the inventory, closing balance from the last account, etc., as appropriate, or may refer to them if previously provided to the interested parties who will receive it.

Transactions shall be described in sufficient detail to give interested parties notice of their purpose and effect. It should be recognized that too much detail may be counterproductive to making the account understandable. In accounts covering long periods or dealing with extensive assets, it is usually desirable to consolidate information. For instance, where income from a number of securities is being accounted for over a long period of time, a statement of the total dividends received on each security with appropriate indication of changes in the number of

shares held will be more readily understandable and easier to check for completeness than a chronological listing of all dividends received.

Although detail should generally be avoided for routine transactions, it will often be necessary to proper understanding of an event that is somewhat out of the ordinary.

Illustrations:

3.2 Extraordinary appraisal costs should be shown separately and explained.

3.3 Interest and penalties in connection with late filing of tax returns should be shown separately and explained.

3.4 An extraordinary allocation between principal and income such as apportionment of proceeds of property acquired on foreclosure should be separately stated and explained.

3.5 Computation of a formula marital deduction gift involving non-probate assets should be explained.

IV. A FIDUCIARY ACCOUNT SHALL CONTAIN TWO VALUES, THE ASSET ACQUISITION VALUE OR CARRYING VALUE, AND CURRENT VALUE.

Commentary: In order for transactions to be reported on a consistent basis, an appropriate carrying value for assets must be chosen and employed consistently.

The carrying value of an asset should reflect its value at the time it is acquired by the fiduciary (or a predecessor fiduciary). When such a value is not precisely determinable, the figure used should reflect a thoughtful decision by the fiduciary. For assets owned by a decedent, inventory values or estate tax values — generally reflective of date of death — would be appropriate. Assets received in kind by a trustee from a settlor of an inter vivos trust should be carried at their value at the time of receipt. For assets purchased during the administration of the fund, cost would normally be used. Use of Federal income tax basis for carrying value is acceptable when basis is reasonably representative of real values at the time of acquisition. Use of tax basis as a carrying value under other circumstances could be affirmatively misleading to beneficiaries and therefore is not appropriate.

In the Model Account, carrying value is referred to as “fiduciary acquisition value.” The Model Account establishes the initial carrying value of assets as their value at date of death for inventoried assets, date of receipt for subsequent receipts, and cost for investments.

Carrying value would not normally be adjusted for depreciation.

Except for adjustments that occur normally under the accounting system in use, carrying values should generally be continued unchanged through successive accounts and assets should not be arbitrarily “written up” or “written down.” In some circumstances, however, with proper disclosure and explanation, carrying value may be adjusted.

Illustrations:

4.1 Carrying values based on date of death may be adjusted to reflect changes on audit of estate or inheritance tax returns.

4.2 Where appropriate under applicable local law, a successor fiduciary may adjust the carrying value of assets to reflect values at the start of that fiduciary’s administration.

4.3 Assets received in kind in satisfaction of a pecuniary legacy should be carried at the value used for purposes of distribution.

Though essential for accounting purposes, carrying values are commonly misunderstood by laypersons as being a representation of actual values. To avoid this, the account should include both current values and carrying values.

The value of assets at the beginning and ending of each accounting period is necessary information for the evaluation of investment performance. Therefore, the account should show, or make reference to, current values at the start of the period for all assets whose carrying values were established in a prior accounting period.

Illustrations:

4.4 The opening balance of the first account of a testamentary trustee will usually contain assets received in kind from the executor. Unless the carrying value was written up at the time of distribution (e.g., 4.2 or 4.3 supra) these assets will be carried at a value established during the executor’s administration. The current value at the beginning of the accounting period should also be shown.

4.5 An executor's first account will normally carry assets at inventory (date of death) values or costs. No separate listing of current values at the beginning of the accounting period is necessary.

Current values should also be shown for all assets on hand at the close of the accounting period. The date on which current values are determined shall be stated and shall be the last day of the accounting period, or a date as close thereto as reasonably possible.

Current values should be shown in a column parallel to the column of carrying values. Both columns should be totalled.

In determining current values for assets for which there is no readily ascertainable current value, the source of the value stated in the account shall be explained. The fiduciary shall make a good faith effort to determine realistic values but should not be expected to incur expenses for appraisals or similar costs when there is no reason to expect that the resulting information will be of practical consequence to the administration of the estate or the protection of the interests of the parties.

Illustrations:

4.6 When an asset is held under circumstances that make it clear that it will not be sold (e.g., a residence held for use of a beneficiary) the fiduciary's estimate of value would be acceptable in lieu of an appraisal.

4.7 Considerations such as a pending tax audit or offer of the property for sale may indicate the advisability of not publishing the fiduciary's best estimate of value. In such circumstances, a statement that value was fixed by some method such as "per company books," "formula under buy-sell agreement," or "300% of assessed value" would be acceptable, but the fiduciary would be expected to provide further information to interested parties upon request.

V. GAINS AND LOSSES INCURRED DURING THE ACCOUNTING PERIOD SHALL BE SHOWN SEPARATELY IN THE SAME SCHEDULE.

Commentary: Each transaction involving the sale or other disposition of securities during the accounting period shall be shown as a separate item in one combined schedule of the account indicating the transaction, date, explanation, and any gain or loss.

Although gains and losses from the sale of securities can be shown separately in accounts, the preferred method of presentation is to present this information in a single schedule. Such a presentation provides the most meaningful description of investment performance and will tend to clarify relationships between gains and losses that are deliberately realized at the same time.

VI. THE ACCOUNT SHALL SHOW SIGNIFICANT TRANSACTIONS THAT DO NOT AFFECT THE AMOUNT FOR WHICH THE FIDUCIARY IS ACCOUNTABLE.

Commentary: Transactions such as the purchase of an investment, receipt of a stock split, or change of a corporate name do not alter the total fund for which a fiduciary is accountable but must be shown in order to permit analysis and an understanding of the administration of the fund. These can be best shown in information schedules.

One schedule should list all investments made during the accounting period. It should include those subsequently sold as well as those still on hand. Frequently the same money will be used for a series of investments. Therefore, the schedule should not be totalled in order to avoid giving an exaggerated idea of the size of the fund.

A second schedule (entitled “Changes in Investment Holdings” in the Model Account) should show all transactions affecting a particular security holding, such as purchase of additional shares, partial sales, stock splits, change of corporate name, divestment distributions, etc. This schedule, similar to a ledger account for each holding, will reconcile opening and closing entries for particular holdings, explain changes in carrying value, and avoid extensive searches through the account for information scattered among other schedules.