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New 2026 Survey of 1,350 Heirs and Executors: Selling an Inherited Home Takes a Median 11.4 Months From Death to Closing

The State of Inherited Property Report 2026 finds 84% needed to clean out the inherited home, 76% faced unexpected costs, and 45% reported probate transfers.

DENVER, CO, UNITED STATES, August 14, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Inherited Property Match, a free nationwide broker-matching service for inherited real estate, has published The State of Inherited Property Report 2026, an original survey of 1,350 U.S. adults who inherited or administered real property and had sold it or were actively selling it.

> "Among respondents who completed a sale, the median from death to closing was 11.4 months. Families establish authority, clear belongings, and resolve title issues while grieving."
>
> *Rhett Fruitman*

The report provides new 2026 inherited property statistics on timelines, transfer paths, property condition, legal and tax knowledge, family disagreement, and agent selection.

The findings arrive as inherited homes reach record volume. Real estate data firm Cotality reported that 340,000 U.S. properties transferred through inheritance in the 12 months ending in August 2025, representing 7% of all U.S. property transfers. The report examines heir and executor sale experiences within that broader trend.

How Long Does It Take to Sell an Inherited House?
Among respondents who completed a sale, the median time from the property owner's death to closing was 11.4 months. Among respondents who completed a sale and listed the property, the median time from listing to closing was 97 days.

The medians were calculated independently and cannot be subtracted to produce a pre-listing figure. They measure two distinct periods.

Why Does Selling Inherited Property Take So Long?
84% of respondents said the property required a cleanout before listing, and 36% called the cleanout one of the hardest parts of the process. 54% said grief or emotional attachment delayed a decision. 34% did not initially know who had the legal authority to sell.

42% managed a property in a different state from where they lived, and 72% of those respondents said distance delayed the sale. 76% encountered costs they had not anticipated. Separately, 38% discovered a mortgage, lien, delinquent property tax, association balance, or title problem that had to be resolved before closing.

How Do Probate and Trust Sale Timelines Compare?

45% of respondents reported that the property transferred through probate, compared with 26% through a living trust, 12% through a transfer-on-death or beneficiary deed, and 11% through joint ownership with right of survivorship.

In this sample, probate-held properties took approximately four months longer to reach closing than trust-held properties. This was a descriptive difference, not a finding that probate caused the gap. Within the probate group, 22% of sales took one to two years and 14% took more than two years.

What Did Heirs Not Know Before Selling Inherited Property?

65% of respondents were either not very prepared or did not know where to start: 34% described themselves as not very prepared when they inherited the property, and another 31% did not know where to start. Only 9% described themselves as very prepared.

53% learned about the stepped-up basis only during the process, while another 25% had heard of the rule without fully understanding it. The stepped-up basis generally resets an inherited property's tax basis to its fair market value at the owner's death, subject to exceptions. 39% obtained a date-of-death appraisal before making a decision about the property.

Do Heirs Sell Inherited Houses As-Is or Make Repairs First?

Only 12% described the property as move-in ready. 35% said it needed a full cleanout, 20% said it needed major repairs, and 33% said it needed minor work.

32% sold completely as-is, while another 22% cleaned out the property without making repairs. 26% made minor repairs, and 20% completed significant repairs or renovations.

How Often Do Families Disagree About an Inherited House?

76% of respondents with more than one family decision-maker reported disagreement. Listing price or property value was the most-selected source at 26%, followed by whether to sell or keep the property at 24%.

When asked why they ultimately sold, 28% selected that they could not afford to keep the property because of taxes, insurance, or upkeep. Another 26% selected the need to split proceeds among heirs.

"A death in the family starts a process most people have never seen before," said Rhett

Fruitman, Co-Founder and CEO of Inherited Property Match. "Among our respondents who completed a sale, the median time from death to closing was 11.4 months, and what filled that time had little to do with the market. Families established who could sign, cleared out belongings, resolved title problems, and made decisions while grieving. That gap between what heirs expect and what the process demands is why we ran this survey."

How Do Heirs Choose a Real Estate Agent for Inherited Property?
54% of respondents believed their agent had no inherited-property experience, while 12% said their agent was clearly experienced. 47% said choosing the right real estate professional was more difficult than expected.

When asked which professional they wished they had engaged sooner, 26% selected a real estate agent who knew inherited property, the most-selected answer. An estate attorney followed at 22%, and a CPA or tax advisor at 20%.

What Would Heirs Do Differently?
When asked to select one action they would take differently, 36% chose obtaining a property valuation earlier, 25% chose starting the legal or probate process sooner, and 15% chose finding an agent with inherited-property experience.

How Was the Research Conducted?
The Heir Experience Survey was a voluntary online survey of 1,350 U.S. adults who had inherited or administered real estate and had sold it or were actively selling it. Responses were collected from May 11 through August 7, 2026, and respondents were recruited through online communities.

Results are self-reported, describe this sample, and are not nationally representative estimates of all U.S. heirs. The complete report, tables, bases, and limitations are available in The State of Inherited Property Report 2026.

About Inherited Property Match
Inherited Property Match is a nationwide broker-matching service for heirs, executors, trustees, and personal representatives selling inherited real estate. It connects property owners with local brokers experienced in probate sales, trust sales, multi-heir situations, out-of-state ownership, and commercial assets. The service is free, and every broker match is made by the founders, not an algorithm. Founded by Alan Fruitman and Rhett Fruitman, the company operates nationwide from Denver, Colorado.

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