



How to Navigate a Senior's Home Sale Across Long Distances

Working as a diplomat in another country, Susan only had one week to fly to her father's town in the U.S., move him into a care community, and arrange for his home to be sold. All of her professional education and globe-trotting business affairs had not prepared her for this challenge, and she wondered how she would manage it in so short of a time.

Laura and her three siblings each lived in a different state, each hundreds or thousands of miles from their aging parents. When their father had a stroke and the decision was made to move her parents into an assisted living community, none of the siblings could take weeks off from work to be present for the move. There was no time to feel guilty about it; immediate action was needed for their parents' well-being.

With families spread far and wide in today's age, this is a common scenario. Fortunately, there are a number of practical tips that can provide peace of mind to the family, as well as plenty of support and assistance to the senior homeowners.

The most important step is to compile a professional "team of helpers" in the area which the seniors live, who can provide a full range of skills and assistance through the entire process. Getting referrals from trusted sources is critical for this selection process. Insist on references and choose experienced professionals. This step is too important to choose help based on the cheapest price. Quality, trusted services are a must.

A placement advisor can assist in finding an appropriate retirement community. Downsizing professionals can help with the sorting, packing, and moving process. A qualified Realtor® who is experienced in selling seniors' homes can work to coordinate getting the home ready and choosing a competitive price. These and other professionals can communicate with you daily or weekly as steps are carried out.

Establish a plan and timeline, creating a pace that will be reasonable for the seniors, and knowing that plans will likely change many times along the way. Set up regular Skype calls or telephone conferences to update the decision makers and keep family informed. Stay flexible, and celebrate each small step of progress on the way.

Plan to be there in person for critical moments such as signing legal documents, moving day, discharge from the hospital, or a day of sorting through heirlooms in the home. If this is not possible, stay in touch by phone, e-mail, and text with your professional team, to keep the process moving. In addition, speak with your senior loved ones by phone regularly to offer emotional support and encouragement.

Above all, stay optimistic and positive to the final step, as obstacles and challenges will inevitably occur. With the right support, plan, and assistance, your family can get through it successfully as well.

SASH Senior Home Sale Services are designed to assist seniors and their families through the home sale. Call us to find out how we can help make it the best home sale experience possible.

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