

SAMPLE Letter of Intent

This sample letter of intent contains words or phrases in [square brackets] from which you could choose, or supply your own to fill in the blank. You will need to tailor this letter to suit your own situation and needs. This sample is very similar to the document that my husband and I have created. My iris collection grows on our own land, at the homes of two other families, and on local Historical Society property. This sample is written to address those intricacies. Your letter will be simpler if all your irises grow on your own ground. A list of contact information should be appended on a separate page for ease in annual updating.

Please note that this letter refers to a Power of Attorney. We have that document already in place. If you do not already have one, make sure to consult your attorney; making one solely for your irises will probably open up a larger scope that you may not want. A letter of intent is not a legally binding document. Wills and powers of attorney are legally binding.

Once you have crafted and signed a letter that satisfies you, it is VITAL that you review it not only with your executor, but with all your beneficiaries. Do not wait to review it with these people, but do it promptly. None of us like to think of our own mortality or that of loved ones, but this review step is crucial in preserving your collection—and preservation is, after all, your goal here.

- Nancy McDonald

[Your Name]

[your address at time of signing]

[date]

Dear [family and friends, heirs and assigns],

This letter expresses my feelings. I would like you to follow its instructions and suggestions when I am unable to care for my irises (see below) for either mental or physical reasons. If I am still alive, but am sufficiently mentally incompetent that all decisions must be made by the person named as my Power of Attorney, it is time to put into effect the wishes stated in this letter.

This letter is not my will, nor do I intend it to be an interpretation of my will. My most recent will is the sole expression of my intentions concerning all my property and other matters covered in it. Should anything I say in this letter conflict with, or seem to conflict with, any provision of my will, the will should be followed.

I request that you give a copy of this letter to each person named in my will to take property, or act as a guardian or custodian, and to anyone else you determine should receive a copy.

This letter concerns a group of garden plants that I possess, the irises generally known as [collection name, if any]. These irises are of great importance to me. They grow on my own land and on the land of friends, with whom I have written agreements (copies appended). I value the irises not only because they are beautiful in bloom, but because most of them are historic (that is, 30 years old or more) and have the intrinsic value associated with that history. I wish to ensure their continued survival as historic irises after I am no longer able to care for them for either mental or physical reasons.

The Historic Iris Preservation Society (also known as HIPS) is a section of the American Iris Society (AIS). I work closely with this non-profit organization in my iris gardening efforts. Members of this society are the best resource for advice about what to do with my collection when the time comes to disperse it.

The names and records of these irises, as well as location maps, appear in a spreadsheet on my computer in the Irises directory [*tailor this section to your own situation*]. The current version of this spreadsheet and maps are sent to the HIPS Guardian Gardens administrator annually. However, since I update these records often, please send a current version of the entire Irises directory to that person and to the HIPS Cultivar Preservation chair as soon as you reasonably can.

[*Name of collection, or My iris collection*] grows in four locations in or near [*town, state*] (see addresses and contact information, which I will keep up to date, at the end of this letter). These locations are:

1. My home on [*street name*] (address above)
2. The home of [*person's name*]
3. The home of [*person's name*]
4. [*Public park, historical site, or the like*]

Irises growing at the [*name of public park or whatever*] are historic, but not particularly rare, and I am happy to donate those plants to the [*name park*] to maintain as a garden or to dispose of as they will.

[*Friend 1*] and [*Friend 2*] are aware that the irises belong to me. I am happy to let these nice people keep them if they wish, as long as the irises are cared for and distributed to other historic iris lovers when it is time to divide the plants. This distribution may be done in any way the landowners see fit, including sales and/or donation. However, it is crucial that the irises be made available to HIPS members, as well as to local sales if those are held. The landowners may keep any profit they make, donate it to HIPS, donate it to the [*name of park*], or anything else they wish. The important thing is that the irises are preserved—and known and available to HIPS—with their identities intact.

[*Local iris gardening friend*] (contact information below) also lives in [*name of town*] and is also deeply involved in historic iris preservation and HIPS. Please give [*her or him*] full access to both the irises and the iris records; [*she or he*] will be able to help you in preservation and distribution. Please allow [*name*] to take any irises [*she or he*] wishes to have.

These irises are of no great monetary value, though of course they have some monetary worth due to their sheer numbers. HIPS members should be willing to pay postage and labor costs for digging and shipping. I do not wish the irises or the dispersal of the irises to become a burden on those who inherit them from us.

If no friend or family member is interested in continuing my work with these irises, I would like them to be made available to HIPS members. The HIPS Guardian Gardens administrator, HIPS Cultivar Preservation chair, and American Iris Society National Collections chair will help you organize a rescue of these irises; please extend them all the courtesy and cooperation that you can.

If my property is to be sold, I ask that you attempt to distribute the irises first via HIPS. If the sale needs to be quick, I ask that you work with the purchaser to allow HIPS one full calendar year in which to remove all or some of the irises. These are living plants that must be moved during the growing season if they are to survive.

Thank you for doing all you can to preserve my beloved irises.

[*signature on line, typed name here*]

date