

Estate Planning Matters:

Take this Information
to the Attorney you select to prepare your Will
and other Estate Planning Documents:

(Don't use a form from a store or from the internet and try to prepare your own. You won't ever understand how important this advice is ... but your spouse and children will. I promise you it will cost your family less if you have it done right.)

1. **Full legal name & address and date of birth** for yourself,
 - * your spouse,
 - * your children and
 - * your grandchildren (if you want to include in your Will.

(Important: Include full names of any children and grandchildren you do not intend to include as a beneficiary.)

2. A very recent copy of the **monthly or quarterly statement** from:
 - * ALL bank accounts (checking, savings, money market, CDs, etc.), both joint accounts & accounts in just your name.
 - * ALL brokerage accounts or mutual fund accounts, both joint & single owner.
 - * ALL stock and mutual fund holdings not included in a brokerage account or mutual fund account.
 - * Individual Retirement Accounts, Pension Plans, Profit Sharing Plans, etc.

3. **All Life Insurance policies.** *(Please don't guess at the precise name of the insurance company. A great many companies have similar names.)*

- * For each policy, the attorney also needs to know:
 - (1) **the policy number,**
 - (2) the face amount of the policy,
 - (3) Who is BENEFICIARY of the policy?
 - (4) Who is ALTERNATE BENEFICIARY? And
 - (5) Who is "OWNER" of the policy?

4. **List of assets that may not be obvious**, such as: Automobile in possession of a child, Out-of-state condominium, Boat or camper not kept at your residence, etc.

5. **Names, relationships and address of your beneficiaries**, i.e., the persons/organizations you want to receive your property.
 - * You can let a person have “lifetime rights” in certain property and then have that property distributed to someone else upon the death of the lifetime rights holder. (Caution: think carefully!)
 - * Do you need a Trust to manage the property for a spouse or a parent or for a minor grandchild or for a disabled adult child?
 - * **NEVER leave any property to anyone under age 18!**
(Instead, use a trust for minors).
 - * DON’T let anyone under age 18 be a beneficiary or alternate beneficiary of an IRA, life insurance policy or anything else! (Use a trust for minors.)
 - * A “Special Needs Trust” will preserve Medicaid for disabled family member.

6. Name, relationship and address of who you want to be in charge after your death.
 - * The **Executor** implements your Will (with no power to change it) and then closes your Estate upon paying all the bills and then distributing the assets to the named beneficiaries. This person’s “job” usually lasts about 6 to 9 months.
 - * The **Trustee** manages that portion left in a Trust after the Estate is closed, for as long as the Trust language provides, for the benefit of a spouse, child, grandchild, etc. This person’s “job” can last for many years, depending upon the circumstances.

7. Do you want to include a **Statement of Religious Faith** in your Will?

8. Do you want to have your remains **cremated**?

Write down your questions so you can discuss them with your attorney.

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