

Your Family's Quick-Start Guide to ESTATE PLANNING

This Guide Covers:

1. What is Estate Planning
2. Intestacy (and why it can be a problem)
3. Guardianship
4. Wills
5. Trusts
6. Power of Attorney & Healthcare Directives
7. Getting Started
8. Working With An Attorney

Talking about one's legacy can be discomfoting. Estate planning, after all, is primarily about what will happen to your physical and financial assets when you are no longer around.

But in my experience as an estate planning attorney, I've come to see that once my clients understand why estate planning is important, they get over any discomfort about the process.

Why?

When you create your estate plan, **you do it out of love**. Having a plan means that your loved ones are exactly the ones who will **inherit** your hard-earned wealth. If your last act is to ensure the security and well-being of those you care about, then you're going to need an estate plan. Seen in this light, estate planning can be empowering. Not depressing.

One other powerful result of proper estate planning is that it ensures that **taxation** on your estate can be minimized. Done strategically, your estate plan could provide for your heirs to inherit the maximum the law permits.

Lastly, as you age, you may become less able to care for yourself, or perhaps become unable to entirely. An estate plan that includes health directives and powers of attorney can help ensure that your wishes regarding **your own well-being** are respected.

This short guide covers just the basics of estate planning, so it's not meant to be exhaustive. But it will help you take that all-important first step.

As the father of two young people, my appeal to you is to do the right thing for your loved ones. If you commit to one thing this year, let it be your estate plan. The fullness of one's life is never completed until the consequences of one's demise are responsibly settled as well.

