

Legacy Protection Checklist: Building Your Estate Plan

To ensure a comprehensive and effective estate planning process, it's essential to come prepared to your appointment with your estate planning attorney. This checklist outlines the key information you should gather and bring with you to help streamline the process and ensure that your plan meets your specific needs. By following these guidelines, you can maximize the efficiency of your appointment and make informed decisions about your estate planning strategy.

Step 1: Collect Personal and Family Profile

- Contact information
- Marital status
- Health status
- Long-term health care plans
- Post-life desires
- Family lineage (including prior marriages)
- Asset ownership (businesses, pending inheritances)
- Information on all children and grandchildren (including their statuses)

Step 2: Create a Family Inventory of Assets and Information

Assets:

- Real estate
- Bank accounts
- Investments
- Retirement accounts
- Life insurance
- Businesses
- Collectibles, recreational vehicles, boats, firearms, etc.

Asset Values:

- Current market values
- Mortgage balances
- Ownership information (joint, client, spouse)

Liabilities:

- Personal loans
- Judgments
- Other debts

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Step 3: Identify Nominations

Personal Representative:

- Responsible for protecting and preserving estate assets
- First, second, and third choices

Guardians:

- For minor children or individuals with special needs

Trustees:

- For trusts established in the estate plan

Attorneys:

- To assist with legal matters related to the estate

Step 4: Establish Estate Distribution Preferences

Bequests:

- Specific gifts of assets or property

Beneficiaries:

- Recipients of the estate assets

Distribution Percentages:

- Allocation of assets among beneficiaries

Contingent Distributions:

- Alternative plans in case of beneficiary's death or incapacity

Intentional Exclusions:

- Assets or individuals not included in the estate plan

Step 5: Authorization and Enactment

Trusts:

- Creation and authorization of trusts

Legal Documentation:

- Wills, powers of attorney, living trusts, etc.
- Ensure the client's wishes are carried out



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This checklist provides a general overview of the estate planning process. It is essential to consult with an estate planning advisor to create a comprehensive plan tailored to your specific needs and circumstances.