

## Questions to Consider for Estate Planning

### Estate Planning Strategies

#### Wills

***Who will receive assets under my Will and who will ensure that my assets pass as I wish?***

Tangible Personal Property (e.g., jewelry, art, antiques, automobiles, boats, furniture and furnishings)

- Are there any specific items that you wish to leave to a particular individual?  
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- Items can be bequeathed specifically in your Will or trust or by leaving a letter giving instructions to the Executor for the disposition of these items.
- In a common estate plan, the balance of your property will pass to your revocable trust if you have established a revocable trust.

#### Residential Property

- If your residence is held individually, will it pass under the Will or by operation of law (e.g. to a surviving joint tenant or designated beneficiary under a TOD instrument)?  
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- Do you wish to leave any person full ownership of or lifetime use of the property?  
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- Do you wish to direct that property be sold?  
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- Provisions regarding tangible and residential property often appear in a Will, a Revocable Trust or both.
- In a common estate plan, the balance of your property will pass to your revocable trust if you have established a revocable trust.

#### Executors

- The Executor carries out your wishes as set forth in the Will. The role is administrative in nature (e.g., works with lawyers and accountants to collect and distribute assets, file taxes and prepare legal documents).
- Who will serve as Executor? You can name any individual or a professional fiduciary, such as a trust company.  
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- Consider naming a backup.  
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## Guardians

- Who will serve as guardian of any minor child?  
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- Consider naming a backup.  
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## Revocable Trusts

### ***Who will receive assets that pass under my revocable trust and who will ensure that my assets pass as I wish?***

- Are there any specific cash gifts or specific assets that you wish to leave to family, friends and/or charity?  
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- Who will receive remaining estate assets?  
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- Consider whether each bequest will be outright or in trust. (If properly structured, a trust may provide the beneficiary with asset protection. Further, if the assets remain in trust, you will be able to dictate who receives the remaining assets on the beneficiary's death.)

### Terms of Beneficiaries' Trusts

- The Trust can be as flexible or restrictive as you decide.
- Examples include giving the Trustee full discretion regarding whether to make distributions of income or principal to the beneficiary and the amount of any such distribution. You can provide that a beneficiary receives part or all of the inheritance upon attaining a particular age or reaching a certain milestone.
- You can have the trust continue for the beneficiary's lifetime.
- You can provide the Trustee with complete discretion or limit distributions to certain standards

such as expenses of health, education and support in the beneficiary's accustomed standard of living.

- Consider contingent beneficiaries in the event of the initial beneficiary's death.

## Trustees

- A Trustee makes decisions regarding investment management of the trust assets and distributions to the beneficiaries. The role is discretionary, interactive and administrative in nature.
- Who will serve as Trustee if you become incapacitated?  
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- Who will serve as Trustee for any particular beneficiary's trust?  
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- Should the beneficiary serve as a co-Trustee, and if so, at what age?  
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- You may name one or more Trustees to serve together and may name successors.

## Retirement Accounts and Life Insurance

### ***Who will be the beneficiaries of my retirement accounts and life insurance proceeds?***

- Who should receive assets held in your retirement accounts (e.g., 401(k) plan accounts and IRAs) and the proceeds from your life insurance?  
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- You should complete beneficiary designation forms provided by your plan administrators, account custodians and insurance carriers to ensure your wishes are carried out.

**Power of Attorney/ Health Care Proxy/  
Living Will**

***Who will make financial and health care decisions on my behalf and as I would wish in the case of incapacity or disability?***

- These documents are included in estate plans so financial and health care decisions can be made in the event of an incapacity or disability.

- Who do you wish to name as attorney-in-fact (also referred to as an “agent”) to manage financial decisions on your behalf?  
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- Who do you wish to name as health care agent to make health care decisions on your behalf in the event of your incapacity?  
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- Do you wish to name successor financial and health care agents?  
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## **Important Disclosure**

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