

Stewardship Estate Planning Guide

At death, we must have arranged for the transfer of our assets in the most efficient and effective manner to individuals or charitable interests who will continue to use them to reflect our Christian life-style.

Usually when you get married or the birth of the first child occurs is a good time to prepare a will and maintain it regularly. If single, as you begin to accumulate stuff is a good time to prepare a will and maintain it regularly.

For most, estate planning is not as complicated or costly since the new Federal law. For others, it can require complex documents and involve multiple professional authorities. In either case, good life stewardship includes a plan of distribution for when we no longer need the assets God has entrusted to us.

Basic to every estate plan is a will, health care directive and power of attorney. Essential non-legal documents include funeral requests and estate instructions.

Essential Non-Legal Documents

Estate document locator, funeral wishes and essential non-legal are documents for the executor and family.

Estate document locator should include the following sections:

Financial accounts and records: car title, home ownership document, every active insurance policy, mutual funds, rental property, business ownership documents, college funds, financial statements, contact advisor directory, etc.

Wills and estate plans

Information for all financial accounts

Five years of tax returns and other documents: deeds, titles, birth certificates, passports,

Social Security cards, etc.

Funeral Instructions:

Legacy letters to family members.

Conversation is critical: When it comes to estate planning, there are often significant financial and personal benefits to being transparent and having sensitive conversations.

The benefits of having a dialogue about estate planning within your family don't stop at asset protection and an accurate understanding of intentions. Such an open dialogue can bring your family a sense of empowerment, that you are taking control of each other's collective future rather than leaving some elements to chance.

Funeral Wishes

Funeral wishes are a labor of love to give

guidance and direction to loved ones when they need it the most by relieving them of the emotional burden of decision making and allowing them to support

your wishes regarding your final plans. Most people should start thinking about pre-planning their funeral in their forties.

Write down your funeral plans. Write down all the details, including notifications/ invitations list; whether you want a public viewing; draft of obituary; obituary placements; funeral arrangements; funeral program draft; service outline; and burial arrangements and legacy letters distribution. Keep these directions in a safe place where your family can easy access them upon your death.

Pre-pay for as much as you can. Many funeral homes will let you pre-pay for the funeral service and related items and many cemeteries will let you pre-pay for the plots. This way, your family will have little, if any, bills upon your death.

I can and I will, the Lord willing.