

Quick Start Guide to Estate Planning

Follow this checklist to help make sure your estate plan wishes are known and necessary documents are in place. For more tips on estate planning, read *Estate Planning: Build Up, Draw Down, Distribute Balance* at <http://bit.ly/2tpWEwi>.

- Up-to-Date Will:** Directs how to distribute property, other bequests, and if you have children, sets instructions for their well-being.
 - Name Executor
 - Name Estate Beneficiaries
 - Name Guardian for Children
 - Direct Fund Disbursement to Children
 - Name Successor (Business Owners)
 - Added Final Arrangements or Requests

- Healthcare & Financial Directives:** Spell out healthcare wishes, and allow others to make decisions on your behalf. Holding your property in a living trust permits survivors to forego probate court, saving time and money.
 - Name Financial Power of Attorney
 - Name Healthcare Power of Attorney
 - Living Will
 - Living Trust

- Beneficiary Forms:** Name a beneficiary on all accounts to grant designees automatic access to assets and avoid probate.
 - Bank Accounts
 - Retirement Accounts
 - Brokerage & Custodial Accounts
 - Stocks, Bonds, Mutual Funds & Other Investments
 - Name Transfer-On-Death Beneficiary on All Taxable Accounts

- Estate Taxes:** File if your estate exceeds \$5.4 million in 2017. For more information, read *Final Answer: Three Estate Planning Tax Considerations* at <http://bit.ly/2sxMHKd>.

- Life Insurance:** May be important if others rely on your income for basic living expenses, or if your estate will owe any debts after your death.

- Document Storage:** Your executor, attorney, and designated decision makers may need to access documents and account information, so you might wish to store in a safety deposit box, accessible by your designees.
 - Wills
 - Bank & Investment Accounts
 - Insurance Policies
 - Investment Certificates
 - Loans: Mortgage & Auto
 - Credit Cards
 - Tax Filings
 - Utilities & Other Bills