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L E G A C Y P L A N N I N G S E R V I C E S

Core Components of a
Comprehensive Estate Plan

WHAT SHOULD I EXPECT FROM MY ESTATE PLAN?

A comprehensive estate plan is more than just a will—it's a roadmap for your loved ones, covering legal, financial, and personal matters. Below is a breakdown of the key documents, including what they do and why they matter.

CORE LEGAL DOCUMENTS

Last Will and Testament

Specifies who will receive your assets after your death, names guardians for minor children, and appoints an executor to manage the estate.

► Without a will, state law decides who inherits your property, often leading to conflict or delay.

Revocable Living Trust

A legal entity that holds your assets during your lifetime and transfers them to beneficiaries upon death, avoiding probate.

► Useful for privacy, avoiding court delays, and managing complex estates or out-of-state property.

Durable Power of Attorney (POA)

Designates someone to make financial decisions on your behalf if you're incapacitated.

► “Durable” means it remains in effect even if you lose capacity.

Healthcare Power of Attorney (Medical POA)

Appoints someone to make medical decisions for you if you're unable to do so.

► Ensures your healthcare preferences are honored when you can't speak for yourself.



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Advance Healthcare Directive / Living Will

Details your medical treatment preferences, especially concerning life-sustaining care.

► Can guide your healthcare POA and reduce family conflict during crises.

HIPAA Authorization Form

Gives selected individuals legal access to your private medical records.

► Critical for those who may need to coordinate care or insurance decisions.

FINANCIAL & ASSET PLANNING DOCUMENTS

Asset Inventory

A comprehensive list of everything you own—bank accounts, investments, real estate, valuables, and digital assets.

► Helps your executor locate and manage your assets more efficiently.

Beneficiary Designations

Forms tied to accounts like IRAs, 401(k)s, and life insurance policies that name who should receive those assets.

► These override what's written in your will, so keeping them updated is essential.

Payable-on-Death (POD) / Transfer-on-Death (TOD) Designations

Used to name beneficiaries directly on certain bank or brokerage accounts.

► Avoids probate and ensures faster access to funds. This can be a good option for funding funeral/memorial services.



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Funeral and Burial Instructions

Outlines your wishes for memorial services, burial, cremation, or other end-of-life rituals.

- Helps family avoid guesswork and ensures your values are honored

LEGACY & ORGANIZATION TOOLS

Digital Asset Plan

Lists your online accounts, passwords, and digital files with instructions for access and management.

- Addresses growing complications around digital identity, social media, and online finances

Ethical Will / Legacy Letters

Non-legal documents where you share values, life lessons, hopes, or personal messages with loved ones.

- Adds emotional clarity and meaning to your planning.

Document Organizer or Digital Vault

Centralized, secure location (physical or digital) where all documents are stored and accessible to key people.

- Shared folders located in secure cloud storage allows for access anytime, anywhere.

A well-prepared estate plan offers not just legal protection, but emotional relief, reduced conflict, and clarity for your family.



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LEGACY PLANNING SERVICES

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