

Your Personal Estate Plan

By creating your estate planning documents you can:

- Eliminate probate and the emotional trauma that accompanies this costly, time consuming, and unnecessary procedure.
- Minimize estate taxes to the fullest extent permitted by law. Identify guardians for your minor children.
- Establish a trust for the benefit of your family and others.
- Avoid family conflicts and assure proper distribution of your assets according to your wishes.
- Maintain your privacy.
- Eliminate the need for family members to make difficult decisions relative to your health care in the event you are incapacitated.
- Discourage legal challenges.

Legacy documents are the finest and most comprehensive available. Our professional staff constantly monitors the marketplace and legal arena to ensure your documents include every advantage.

Signing Your Documents

Signing and dating your documents is called "executing" your documents. The date you execute your documents is the date they become valid and legally binding. The date you execute your trust also becomes part of the official name of your trust, i.e. John Jacob Doe and Jane Smith Doe, Co-Trustees of the Doe Family Trust dated _____ . (insert date trust notarized)

Funding Your Trust

However, creating and executing your documents is not enough. You must transfer your property to the trust. Your trust can only control what it owns.

Transferring assets to your trust is called "funding" the trust. You need to formally transfer the title of your assets, from you as an individual, joint tenant, etc. to you as trustee or co-trustee of your trust.

Estate plans prepared by Legacy utilize a unique, four tiered funding process to ensure our trust will perform the way you intend.

Transferring your assets into your trust is essential for it to properly function.

Keeping Your Documents Current and Up-to-Date

Most people don't execute their trust one day and die the next. It is usually many years in the future when the documents are actually used to carry out your wishes and/or distribute your property.

From the day your documents are executed to the day you die, you will probably need to change your estate planning documents several times – adding new beneficiaries, removing beneficiaries, changing the distribution of your assets, changing trustees, etc. As these changes occur they must be reflected in your documents.

Changes to your trust are made in the form of an amendment. Changes to your will are made in the form of a codicil. Changes to your power of attorney and health care directives are not permitted, but require the drafting of entirely new documents. Amendments, codicils, new directives, and POA's must be formally executed.

Attorney fees to keep your documents current over time often far exceed the initial cost of preparing the original documents. As a member of Legacy you enjoy peace of mind knowing that you can keep your documents current for the least possible cost. That's Legacy's guarantee to you.

Estate planning is a process, not an event. The most important part of your planning is keeping your documents current so they will indeed do what you intend them to do at the appropriate time.