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A SIMPLE GUIDE FOR PEACE OF MIND

How to Ensure Your Will Reflects Your Current Wishes

Whether getting divorced or welcoming a new child, you may need to change or revoke your will to reflect any life changes. Why? Because significant changes can affect how your assets are handled. Common reasons for adjusting a will include marriage, divorce, new family members, financial changes, buying or selling property, or appointing a new guardian for a minor.

So, how do you change a will? In the past, people added a codicil, an amendment to the original document. However, codicils can create confusion and legal disputes. They require signatures and witnesses, just like a will, which can make them more of a hassle than they're worth.

A simpler approach is to create a new will entirely. This new document should clearly state that it revokes all previous versions, including any codicils, ensuring your latest wishes are honored without question.

Creating a new will is generally no more complex or costly than adding a codicil and provides a clearer legal foundation.

Sometimes, you may need to revoke your will but are not ready to make a new one, but simply destroying the current will might not be enough. If other copies of the will exist, a probate court might still consider those copies valid.

Revoking a will is essentially canceling it. Once a will is properly revoked, it no longer exists legally. If you're considering revoking your will, it's essential to do so through legal means to ensure your intentions are clear. Only the person who created the will, known as the testator, can revoke it. Once the testator dies, the will becomes legally binding and cannot be changed or revoked.

Whether you need to account for new family dynamics, financial shifts, or



relocations, ensuring your will accurately reflects your wishes is crucial to avoid future confusion and legal complications. If you are unsure how to proceed or have concerns, consulting with an experienced estate planning attorney can provide peace of mind and help safeguard your legacy.

CHRISTMAS MOVIE WISDOM

How 'It's a Wonderful Life' Can Shape Your Estate Plan

"Santa Claus Is Comin' to Town," "A Charlie Brown Christmas," "Christmas Vacation," and "Home Alone" — these holiday movies are some of my all-time favorites. Just thinking of them gets me in the holiday spirit! I could watch them all season long, from timeless classics to new holiday rom-coms, but "It's a Wonderful Life" is one of the most iconic!

This 1946 classic has such a warm message and reminds us that true wealth isn't measured by money but rather by our impact on others and the lives we touch. In the movie, George Bailey's journey is a perfect example of the power of intangible legacies. He may not be a millionaire, but his kindness, sacrifices, and friendships create a lasting legacy that touches everyone around him. This holiday season, it's something we can all take to heart as we think about the legacy we want to leave behind for our loved ones.

In estate planning, we primarily talk about assets, inheritances, and financial goals, but a true legacy is much more — it also incorporates the values and the lessons that we wish to pass down to our loved ones. While financial security is important, the intangible gifts — our stories, the causes we support, and the positive impact we have on the lives of others — are what truly make a lasting legacy. This season, when we're all focused on giving, it's a perfect reminder that our most meaningful gifts are often those that money can't buy.



So, if this holiday season finds you thinking about how to leave a meaningful legacy for your family and other loved ones, or even your community, remember that we're here to help. Whether you're thinking about starting or updating your estate plan, or if you're ready to explore the idea of charitable giving or documenting an "ethical will" that incorporates your family values, we'd love to be a resource as you think about your goals and consider options. Giving is what the season is all about, and there's no better time to think about the intangible gifts you can pass on and the legacy you leave behind.

At Beach Cities Estate Law, we know the importance of getting your wishes in order and ensuring they reflect what matters most to you.

From our family to yours, we wish you a wonderful holiday season filled with love, laughter, and a few classic Christmas movies to keep you cozy. Here's to a wonderful life and a legacy that goes beyond dollars and cents. Happy holidays!!

- Angela Klenk

Clear Answers to Common Questions

7 ESTATE PLANNING ANSWERS EVERYONE NEEDS TO KNOW

When it comes to estate planning, endless questions seem to have countless different answers. Before a migraine emerges, let's cover the top seven most commonly asked estate planning questions to settle the score. Don't worry; even the most legal jargon-averse can appreciate this quick guide!

1. Can I put a rental property inside a trust?

Yes, and it's a great idea! Placing your rental property in a trust protects it from going through probate and keeps things running smoothly for your beneficiaries. It can provide them with a steady income stream without the hassles of court proceedings.

2. Can I prevent my spouse from giving my assets to a new partner if they remarry?

Absolutely! To safeguard your assets, you can set up a specific type of trust to prevent this, like a Family Wealth Trust. This ensures your assets are used as intended, even if your surviving spouse remarries. Clear documentation and legal guidance are crucial here to ensure everyone understands the stipulations you want.

3. Should I put my kids on the deed to my house?

No, this can lead to unexpected complications, such as tax issues or financial vulnerabilities (like your child's creditors claiming a stake). Instead, consider using a trust. It's a safer mechanism that allows you to control how and when your house passes to heirs without exposing it to risks.

“Remember, the best approach often involves consulting with an estate planning attorney to tailor a plan that fits your needs and gives you peace of mind.”



4. What happens to my kids if I die without an estate plan?

Without an estate plan, the state takes over, and a judge decides who will care for your children without your input. You must create a will or set up a guardianship to ensure your children are cared for according to your wishes, not the court's.

5. If my home has a mortgage, can I still put it into a trust?

Yes, you can! Moving a mortgaged home into a trust is common and doesn't interfere with your mortgage terms. This approach helps facilitate a smoother transfer to your heirs without probate.

6. How often should I update my estate plan?

It's wise to review your estate plan every 3–5 years or after any significant life event, such as a marriage, divorce, the birth of a child, or significant financial change. This ensures your plan remains aligned with your current circumstances and wishes.

7. What's the difference between a will and a trust?

A will sets out your wishes for after you die and goes through probate, which can be a lengthy public process. A trust, however, takes effect immediately upon creation, offers more privacy, and bypasses probate, allowing for a quicker transfer of assets.

Armed with these answers, you're better equipped to make informed decisions about your estate. Remember, the best approach often involves consulting with an estate planning attorney to tailor a plan that fits your needs and gives you peace of mind.

TAKE A BREAK



CARDINAL
COCOA
FROSTY
GARLAND
GENEROSITY
MENORAH
MITTENS
PEPPERMINT
PINECONES
SNUGGLE
UNITY
YULE



Ingredients

Ingredients

- 3 cups whole milk
- 1 tbsp vanilla extract
- 3 eggs, room temperature
- 4 egg yolks, room temperature
- 1/3 cup sugar

- 1/4 tsp salt
- 2 cups heavy cream
- 1 1/2 tsp nutmeg

For topping

- Whipped cream
- Ground cinnamon
- Extra nutmeg

Directions

1. In a saucepan over medium heat, combine milk and vanilla, swirling occasionally until it starts to steam.
2. In a mixing bowl, beat eggs, egg yolks, sugar, and salt for approximately 5 minutes until the mixture is thickened. Slowly add milk and whisk to combine.
3. Pour the mixture back into the saucepan and cook over low heat, stirring for about 6 minutes.
4. In another large mixing bowl, place heavy cream and nutmeg. Strain egg mixture into the cream and cool in the fridge for at least 2 hours. When chilled, fill a glass with eggnog and top with whipped cream, cinnamon, and extra nutmeg!

GATHER, SAVOR, REPEAT

Tips for Launching Your Own Dinner Club

Although the holiday season often enables us to reconnect with friends and loved ones in person, maintaining that spirit of tangible togetherness all year can often be a struggle. Sure, social media is fine for “likes,” but nothing beats sitting down with people whose company you enjoy. If you're looking for a new way to stay connected with family members, friends from college, old work colleagues, or anyone else within a reasonable travel distance, starting a dinner club may be perfect!

Conceptualizing Your Club

There are no hard-and-fast rules to creating and maintaining a dinner club. You could start by giving your club a fancy name and deciding how often it should meet. From there, think about the people you want to invite. For example, maybe you know people who share a particular interest you also love (classic movies, model airplanes, etc.), or you have a group of old friends you'd love to catch up with over a great meal. The trick is to be mindful of your club's membership size. Ideally, it should be large enough for guests to connect with several friends or new people but small enough to ensure intimacy.

Choosing Your Dinner Destination

Determining the best settings for your dinner club gatherings is key to their success. For example, hosting them at members' homes on a revolving basis (with the host or other members doing the cooking) would help the invitees avoid cramming into a noisy restaurant and having to shout at each other while seated at a long table.

Matching Mood and Menu

Coming up with interesting themes for each meal adds a thrill to the festivities. Maybe one of your members would like to give cooking a vegan meal a try. Perhaps another member would love to share an amazing recipe they picked up while vacationing in Mexico. The possibilities are endless!

No matter how you structure your dinner club, the goal is to have fun and spend time with wonderful people. Bon appétit!

