

Get a Life Plan

Frequently Asked Questions

Is “Do-it-Yourself” Estate Planning right for me?

The American Bar Association (ABA) created a Task Force to investigate and evaluate the use of Do-it-Yourself (“DIY”) estate planning tools. The ABA published an article about the Task Force’s findings. The article explains that it may be appropriate to use DIY estate planning tools but only in very limited circumstances. It emphasizes that creating a Will or other estate planning documents online creates risk, and the risk could have lasting consequences. You can click on this link to read the full-length article: [ABA Article](#).

Some of the article’s most important points are summarized below:

If there is a problem, it won’t happen until after your death or incapacity.

One of the biggest risks with making your own Will is that you won’t know if there’s a problem with the Will until after you die. Problems with a Will can end up being much more expensive than the price an attorney would charge to make the Will properly. The same is true about a Power of Attorney. If there is a problem with your Power of Attorney, it most likely will not be discovered until after you become incapacitated, and by then, it’s too late to fix the problem. If you make a Power of Attorney online and it fails, your loved ones will not be able to help you manage your finances without going through an expensive court process.

Estate Planning is a specialized subject matter.

Just like any other topic that you can study and learn about, estate planning law is a complex area that attorneys can specialize in. You might be an expert in other areas, but most people don’t have an opportunity to learn all the details about estate planning. The most intelligent people still get help from experts in other fields. Estate planning attorneys have expertise in the types of issues that need to be considered in creating these documents, including common pitfalls; tax guidance; coordinating probate and non-probate assets; special needs planning; births, deaths, marriages, and divorce; changes in the law; thinking about all the “*what ifs*”; and most importantly, how to make sure you wishes are carried out.

If there is a dispute, an attorney can help support the validity of your plan.

When you meet with an attorney, the attorney keeps notes about your conversation and your wishes. If a dispute arises after your death or incapacity, these notes and the attorney’s testimony may help prove that your documents are valid when you can no longer defend them yourself.