

BRAUN & GRESHAM

ATTORNEYS AT LAW

ESTATE PLANNING IS FOR EVERYONE

Regardless of the size of your estate, what you own, or what your family circumstances may be, a comprehensive estate plan is an essential tool for everyone. It is a “life-plan,” and does not just concern what happens to your assets when you pass away. It is motivated out of love for family, friends, and personal causes.

Comprehensive estate planning allows you to:

- maintain control over your person and affairs while you are alive and well, and have a contingency plan if you become mentally disabled;
- avoid unnecessary placement in a nursing home;
- control which family members make decisions for you if you are disabled;
- provide security to loved ones, including future generations, and those who are dependent upon you;
- avoid conflict and legal disputes at death;
- transfer wealth to loved ones with as much or as little control as they may need and as you desire;
- plan for assets owned in other states;
- achieve your charitable goals;
- coordinate your retirement planning, business planning, insurance and financial planning with your estate plan; and
- save every possible administrative expense, transfer cost, tax dollar, attorney fee and court cost you can.

Estate Planning Begins with Effective Communication

An estate plan is not just a collection of fill-in-the-blank forms. The most effective estate plan is built upon effective communication between you and your advisors, and starts with a thorough discussion of you and your family circumstances to determine what is important to you to accomplish.



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The Braun & Gresham Difference

At Braun & Gresham, PLLC, we use a wide variety of tools to accomplish your estate planning goals, such as wills, living trusts, medical and financial powers of attorney and other disability planning documents, limited liability companies, family limited partnerships, buy-sell agreements, charitable trusts, donor advised funds, conservation easements and many other strategies. We'll help educate you about these various strategies, and together, identify which fit your circumstances best. Using the innovative and versatile estate planning solutions that Braun & Gresham is known for, we'll create the most practical solutions and apply them in a comprehensive plan to achieve your vision for your family and assets.

Already Have a Plan? Is it up to date?

You should review your plan every few years. Changes in life circumstances, and changes in state or federal laws may frustrate the success of your plan, or create new planning opportunities to benefit you. You may think your current estate plan allows for these changes. But, your plan may be woefully out-of-date and fail when it is most needed.

Getting Started— Gather Your Information

Some clients appreciate the opportunity to gather together and organize all their personal and financial information at the start of the planning process. Other clients simply want to get their questions answered and need time to think. Some clients know exactly what they want to do and just need a little help to implement their plan. In most cases, you can save time and money in the preparation of your estate plan by gathering information on your own before approaching an attorney. To assist you in this process, visit our website to download our Estate Planning Worksheet (under the RESOURCES sidebar): www.braungresham.com/client-services/estate-planning

No Obligation Initial Consultation

The thought of wrestling with all the issues involved in planning your estate can sometimes seem daunting. That's why we offer you the opportunity to meet with us for an initial 30-minute consultation, at no cost or obligation, to see how we can best assist you. We will review your family circumstances, your assets and goals, explain any issues we see, and make initial recommendations regarding which strategies and techniques meet your unique needs.

The “No Plan” Plan

Horror stories about probate and end-of-life decision-making usually involve people who did not plan their affairs. Without a plan, the State and Federal governments step in with a plan, which controls you and your property in the event you become mentally disabled, or at death. This plan may include:

- conservatorships and guardianships if you become incapacitated,
- court proceedings governing end-of-life decision-making,
- state control over who receives your assets at death, and if there is no one to receive it, the State takes title, and
- how much you owe in estate taxes.

The “No Plan” estate plan is the most expensive plan for you and your loved ones, and usually produces the most disastrous results.

For the peace of mind that comprehensive estate planning can bring, contact Margaret Menicucci, an experienced estate planning attorney at (512) 894-5426.