**What is Estate Planning and Why is it so Important?**

Estate planning outlines your wishes regarding your finances, health, guardianship and much more, upon your death or if you become incapacitated. This process can provide instructions to your loved-ones or a third party, as to the handling of your property, investments, legal obligations, minor children, debts and potentially everything you own and owe, along with the management of your health, even when you are alive.

**How do I Decide what Documents I need?**

The basic documents are a will, living will, healthcare directive and durable power of attorney. You may want to consider a revocable living trust, a spendthrift trust or numerous other trusts and other legal documents, depending upon your unique situation.

Additionally, you should verify you have included in your investments, banking accounts, retirement accounts and insurance policies, beneficiary designations. Special care should be given to the tax implications of your choices, as well as state law. Also, titling of accounts and other property is important for legal and financial reasons.

**How Do I Obtain these Documents?**

An estate planning attorney can provide detailed information of which documents you need, based upon your unique situation. You can also go online and seek out services and forms, if you intend to create the appropriate documents yourself. However, be aware of the complexities and legalities of such an action.

**What Other Factors Should I Consider?**

Everyone’s financial, legal, family and health situation is unique and as such, a trained estate planning attorney is appropriate. However, if you have a relatively simple estate or desire to spend less than an attorney will charge, there are numerous online sites that may be able to assist.

AtReserve Wealth Management, although we do not provide legal or tax advice, we work with attorneys and tax advisors, in the discussion.

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