**Reasons to Create, Review, or Update Estate Planning Documents**

1. **Death**: Any beneficiary, executor, trustee, or guardian under a Will, or an agent under a power of attorney, has passed away.
2. **Disability**: You or any beneficiary, executor, trustee, or guardian under a Will, or an agent under a power of attorney.
3. **Decline**: Declining mental or physical health in you or any beneficiary, executor, trustee, or guardian under a Will, or an agent under a power of attorney.
4. **Disaffection**: You have no Will that provides for benefits to named beneficiaries or entrusts someone to serve as an executor, trustee, or guardian under a Will, or an agent under a power of attorney or you no longer wish to provide benefits or entrust someone to serve as an executor, trustee, or guardian under a Will, or an agent under a power of attorney.
5. **Disappearance**: You have lost touch with an executor, trustee, or guardian under a Will, or agent under a power of attorney.
6. **Domestication/Marriage**: If you are married or considering marriage in Texas, the community property system may cause you surprising results if your Will does not cover your community and separate property correctly.
7. **Divorce Pending**: Avoid having an estranged spouse making medical decisions for you or inheriting assets if you die while the divorce is pending.
8. **Divorce Finalized**: Consider formally ending all benefits and appointments in favor of your ex-spouse. Otherwise, you may have to ask a court to authorize you to exercise certain of your statutory rights without your ex-spouse’s involvement.
9. **Death Taxes**: These taxes are not going away and the “tax-free amount” could decrease or increase, complicating or simplifying your estate.
10. **Designation**: Make sure current beneficiary choices for life insurance, 401(k)s, IRAs, etc. match the choices in your Will.
11. **Trust/Distrust**: Trust in or lack of trust is the best reason to appoint or change trustees, executors, and agents under a power of attorney.
12. **Dissipation**: If a beneficiary wastes money (is a spendthrift), you might want to put benefits under the control of a trustee.
13. **Drugs**: Special planning may be required for a beneficiary who has problems related to illegal drug use or abuse of prescription drugs or alcohol, including putting benefits under the control of a trustee.
14. **Descendants**: If a child or grandchild is adopted, born out of wedlock, or placed for adoption, special drafting may be required.
15. **Domestic Partner**: Consider whether benefits should be given or withheld from the partner of a family member or beneficiary and, if given, the appropriate method for doing so.
16. **Disaster**: Consider how to handle the distribution of benefits if a fire, flood, tornado, or hurricane destroys an asset of particular value and causes an imbalance in benefits among beneficiaries.
17. **Decimation**: Consider how to handle the distribution of benefits if the collapse of the stock market, etc. impacts gifts of large amounts of cash or a valuable property to one person and results in very little for other beneficiaries.
18. **Deportation**: Consider how to handle the disruption caused by the unanticipated deportation of a trusted employee, caregiver, or proposed executor.
19. **Disposition**: Consider how to handle the disposition of your mortal remain and specific instructions if you have a particular method and/or funeral service in mind.
20. **Digital Data**: Arrange for access by a family member, an agent under a power of attorney, your named executor, or a trusted friend (with instructions regarding any specialized content) to your online banking, automatic bill paying, websites, email, social networks, and hard drives (including passwords and encryption access).
21. **Distance**: Consider replacing a trustee, executor, or agent under a power of attorney who is living too far away to provide meaningful assistance on a timely basis.
22. **Domicile**: If you moved to Texas from another state, your out-of-Texas Will and other legal documents should be reviewed by a Texas attorney and redone/revised as necessary to comply with Texas law. Moving out of Texas likewise may require an attorney in your new state to review your Will and other legal documents.
23. **Don’t Do It Yourself**: This is a great way for you to complicate your estate so that survivors have trouble accessing your assets and incur greater expenses, especially legal fees.