

Estate Planning & Aging Discussion Checklist

Important topics to discuss with your adult children and aging parents

Estate planning objectives and preferences for receiving care as you age are two of the most important items to discuss with your loved ones. Sharing all of the relevant information is critical to ensure your wishes are carried out.

Financial and Estate Planning Department
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PURPOSE OF THIS CHECKLIST

As you get older, it is important to make sure that your financial life is in order. It is also important to communicate your wishes with those who are important to you. The Estate Planning & Aging Discussion Checklist is meant to help identify key items that should be discussed with your loved ones. Making sure your wishes are clear to those who will be most impacted by them is best done in advance of a significant life event, like diminished mental capacity, a serious or terminal medical diagnosis, or death.

This checklist can help facilitate discussions you may have with your children and heirs or with your parents as their loved ones, potential care givers, and likely beneficiaries. Once a conversation has been had, you can work through resolving any issues or problems that may have been uncovered with your Baird Financial Advisor.

SETTING THE AGENDA

While the agenda for this conversation will vary based on each family's particular circumstances, there are certain items that should be covered in every family meeting. These items include:

- Leaving a Legacy
- Legal Issues
- Health Care
- Finances, including what will happen to all of your personal items when you are gone?

ESTATE PLANNING & AGING DISCUSSION CHECKLIST

Specific items that should be discussed from the above categories include:

Leaving a Legacy

- What are the values and beliefs that you want to be remembered for?
- Is there a family mission statement and/or family conference on future philanthropic intentions?
- What are the life lessons that you want to share with your family?

- Are there specific organizations or groups that you want to leave a significant gift to?
- What is the strategy for preventing possible family relationship breakdown over the intergenerational family financial mission plan? Consider developing a communication plan and decision making strategy to help avoid conflicts.
- What is the long term gifting strategy structure and how does it attempt to protect children and grandchildren from being “ruined” by wealth?

Legal Issues

- Is there a will in place? How often is it refined or updated?
 - Who is named as the Personal Representative?
- Are there existing trusts in place?
 - Who are the trustees of any existing trusts?
- Are there financial powers of attorney?
 - Who is the agent and what are their responsibilities?
- How are your assets titled?
- Who are the beneficiaries of any wills, trusts, retirement assets, life insurance contracts, annuities, POD/TOD accounts, etc.? Consider summarizing these in a single document.
- Are any of the wealth transfer vehicles in place incomplete or poorly designed?
- What is the process for keeping all documents current, based on family circumstances and current tax and estate regulations?
- Where are all documents stored? This would include estate documents, account statements (bank, investments, retirement, credit cards, etc.), life insurance policies, annuity contracts,
 - 3-ring binder
 - Digital
 - Stored in a physical location (on a hard drive
 - Stored in a cloud based location/online

Health Care

- Do you have advanced medical directives (health care power of attorney, living will)? Who is your health care proxy and what is their responsibility?
- If you or your spouse need long term care:
 - Where will you live?
 - If the goal is to stay in your home for as long as you can, are there plans for improving home accessibility (both exterior and interior)?
 - Who will provide care?
 - How will you pay for these expenses?

- Are there strategies in place to help transition to an assisted living facility? Who is involved in the conversation, what is the definition of triggers for the conversation and how do you introduce the need to decide on residential care arrangements?

Finances

- Provide overview of net worth. The level of detail provided may vary, depending on family circumstances.
- Discuss family real estate.
 - What will become of the property when you pass away?
 - What would other members of the family want to have happen? Does someone want to buy it? Do they want to share costs?
- Provide overview of retirement plans and discuss beneficiary designations and distribution options during lifetime and at the death of the account owner.
- Are there life insurance policies in place?
 - What is the purpose of these policies?
 - Who is the owner?
 - Who are the beneficiaries?
- What is your long term care funding strategy?
 - Is there a long term care insurance policy? If so, what are the key provisions?
- Have Monte Carlo simulations been used to determine the family's capacity for gifting ?
- Has there been an account and asset review and consolidation? Are the relationships between all banking and brokerage firms?
- Have annuities and income strategies been reviewed and refined?
- Have there been recent comprehensive insurance reviews and updates that assess the changes in overall exposure and coverage?
- Are there portfolio reviews and updates as gift considerations, risk tolerance, and income concerns change?
- Are there liability and credit card reviews and refinements?
- Are there overall family review wealth-transfer plans, income and investment strategies, tilting of assets, trusteeship, and overview of the long-term eldercare plan?
- Are there regular estate liquidity reviews?