

5 MISTAKES TO AVOID WHEN CHOOSING AN ESTATE PLANNING ATTORNEY



The Chubb Law Firm

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Did you know that many families "fly in the dark" when it comes to securing the financial future of their loved ones? It's sad, but true.

Well, you've already taken the first step toward shedding real light on your family's future by requesting this free Ebook. You're about to discover how you can cut through jargon and avoid the costly mistakes made by so many when choosing a lawyer for your family's legal planning needs.

Here are the five biggest mistakes I've seen.

MISTAKE #1-- Going it alone with "cheap" online options.



They are not as easy-to-use as claimed and actually cost an arm and a leg because more than likely your family will need to hire a real lawyer to clean up the mess.

Using those programs can end up leaving thousands (or much more) of your assets in the coffers of Uncle Sam, even if you follow all of their instructions to a tee. I see it all the time —frustrated clients bringing in online-generated plans. The security you get from these plans is actually false security.

It often leads to frustrated families who come to see us during a period of great stress. We then need to undo the poorly-crafted plans which end up costing everybody far more than they'd like. It's not just about the money, either; it's also the time wasted and the emotional toll on the family.

Choosing a well-trained and caring professional is important, someone who will put your interests first.

Mistake #2-- Choosing a lawyer who will charge you outrageously high hourly rates for simple services.



Many lawyers will lure you in with cheap basic services and proceed to rack up fees as they execute planning services which really should be covered by a flat fee. When you're investigating flat-fee services from a lawyer, here are some simple questions to ask:

- Are all of your services flat fees?
- How much do you charge for ongoing work after the initial completion of my estate plan?
- What happens when I call with legal questions two years after my estate plan is completed?
- What if the questions are about something other than my estate plan?

You need to be satisfied with the answers you receive to these questions, as they often sneak up on families after-the-fact, and can be a major drain on your family's cash flow.

Mistake #3-- Not checking to see if the lawyer offers estate plan maintenance.

It's important to keep your plan up-to-date. It's equally as important that your lawyer offers you the opportunity to review your plan within three years at no charge. If you've experienced life changes and your plan needs to be revised, additional fees may be applied at that time. Making periodic updates may give you peace of mind throughout the course of your family's life together.

Mistake #4-- Hiring a lawyer who only addresses obvious assets.



We happen to believe that families seek to pass on wealth to their loved ones in a manner which encompasses a deeper heritage than just a bank account.

We're referring to legacies, objects, and heirlooms that are important to your family. This may include intellectual assets such as a family business, an invention, or a patent. Family history may also be passed down in the form of photographs, jewelry, or letters that hold value to your loved ones.

Does your estate plan take these into consideration or is it all just dollars and cents? Too often, families may be left with a plan that doesn't properly honor the richness of their experience. Don't let that happen—life is more than cash.



Mistake #5-- Working with a lawyer who is document-driven.

Many lawyers run a will and trust service as a branch of their regular practice. The result for you may be that a lawyer may not look at your entire picture or everything about you to accommodate your specific needs.

Consider a lawyer who will provide you with a plan that meets all of your goals - today, tomorrow, and in the future. This includes customizing your estate plan to protect assets that you leave your children.

Choose a lawyer who will structure your estate plan so that whatever you leave to your family will be protected from any unexpected legal challenges.



Contact Us

At The Chubb Law Firm, we specialize in helping families during difficult times. We make sure our client's journey is as smooth as possible. If you would like to schedule a Discovery Meeting to discuss your situation, we invite you to contact us by phone at (916) 241-9661 or send an email to info@chubblawfirm.com. We look forward to hearing from you.



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