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## 6 Reasons Why You May Need an Estate Plan

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### Reason No. 6:

Providing for your minor children after your death requires some thought. If you leave your life insurance policy directly to your children, the insurance company will require that a Guardian of the property be appointed by the Court. That costs money. Who do you think is going to pay for the lawyers required to set that guardianship up and maintain it? It's going to come from your children's inheritance. The solution? The Court doesn't get involved if you leave your insurance policy to the Trustee of trust for benefit of minors created in your will. Your careful planning saves your children money.

### Reason No. 5

Change in marital status: Have you recently married? or divorced or become widowed? When your marital status changes, your Will may be interpreted differently under Florida law. This is an excellent opportunity to revisit your estate plan and make sure it does what you intended.

### Reason No. 4

Do you have a disabled family member you want to provide for? Leaving money directly to your disabled family member may make him or her ineligible for Federal benefits such as SSI or Medicaid. Leaving the money you want them to have to someone else you have instructed to use the money for their benefit may not result in care being provided for your disabled person. Ask us about Special Needs Trusts.

### Reason No. 3

Do your loved ones have written instructions for how you want to be cared for at the end of your life? As we learned from the tragic experience of Terry Schiavo, failure to give a clear written directive may result in years of suffering for all family members, years of litigation, and depletion of assets. We prepare HIPAA Releases, Designations of Health Care Surrogate and Living Wills as part of your estate plan – no extra charge.

### Reason No. 2

Have you appointed a legal representative to take care of your business and financial affairs in the event that you are temporarily unable to handle them for yourself? It is important to have a Durable Power of Attorney that is updated to the current standards of Florida law. If you have one that predates 2011, it may no longer do exactly what you hoped. Please let us review it for you.

### Reason No. 1

Avoid probate! With a properly created estate plan, you can avoid the expense and complications of probate altogether. When we work together, we will consider the best way to pass your assets to your loved ones without putting them in the position of having to go get a lawyer to start probate when they should be having time to grieve. There are right ways to avoid probate, and ways that create more problems than you had when you started. Contact us to make sure your papers are in order.