

For many people, putting together an estate plan is something that remains perpetually on their “to do” list. They know it's a good idea, and they *want* to prioritize it, but somehow life always gets in the way.

If preparing a will was on your list of New Year's resolutions for 2016, here are some thoughts to help you push yourself to start the process:

1. Preparing an Estate Plan Provides Certainty for You and Your Loved Ones

In all respects, preparing an estate plan is a good thing to do. It allows you to make sure that your final wishes will be observed, and it lets your family members know what they can expect should you no longer be around. Without an estate plan, your assets will be distributed according to a statutory framework that is rife with complexities and that rarely, if ever, truly reflects what individuals want when they die.

In addition, without a plan, your entire estate will be subject to a more complex probate process. Probate without a will takes time, can be expensive, and often leads to disputes that could have been avoided if there had been an estate plan in place.

2. Preparing an Estate Plan Can Help You Avoid Putting Your Loved Ones in Challenging Circumstances

Many people do not realize that estate planning involves more than just deciding “who

gets what.” Another important aspect of a comprehensive estate plan involves making decisions about your medical treatment should you no longer be able to make those decisions on your own. Through durable powers of attorney, health care directives, living wills, and other documents, you can plan ahead for your end-of-life care and help your loved ones avoid being put in a position where they need to try to make decisions on your behalf.

3. You Can Always Change Your Plan if You Need To

Another common misconception about estate planning is that once you create a plan, it is set in stone. However, the reality is that estate plans can – and often should – change over time. When you create an estate plan, you are planning ahead for events that may not happen for decades down the line. You are not expected to have all of the answers now. Your estate plan will reflect your *current* wishes and circumstances, and it will be something that you can modify if and when you need to.

4. Preparing a Comprehensive Estate Plan Isn't As Time-Consuming or Expensive As You Might Think

Finally, many people put off preparing their estate plan because they assume that it will be an expensive and time-consuming process. But, it doesn't have to be, and for most individuals and couples, the process is actually fairly straightforward. When you factor in the costs and stresses your loved ones will face if you fall ill or pass unexpectedly without an estate plan, planning your estate is well worth the relatively-

Another Year Has Gone By and You Still Don't Have an Estate Plan

modest investment for all parties involved.

Contact an Allen Estate Planning Lawyer at The Nordhaus Firm Today

At The Nordhaus Firm, we provide personalized, comprehensive and efficient estate planning services for individuals and couples in the Allen, TX area. If you are ready to get started on your estate plan, call (214) 726-1450 or contact us online to schedule an initial consultation with one of our experienced attorneys today.