# **Take Charge!**

Your Estate Planning Guide and Organizer



"The key to realizing a dream is to focus not on success but significance, and then even the small steps and little victories along your path will take on greater meaning."

-Oprah Winfrey

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## Introduction

Let's start with a simple question: do you really need an estate plan? The simple answer is "yes," unless you are willing to relinquish to others – who may be perfect strangers – the decisions about your family, your bank accounts, your investments, your care, and anything else important to you. To be candid, putting an estate plan in place requires some effort. But like those seemingly daunting projects you may confront at work and in the home, once done you will feel a sense of



accomplishment and even relief. And you will have given your loved ones the gift of stability should an unanticipated event make you absent from their lives.

There are several benefits to making an estate plan:

- **Peace of Mind for You** An estate plan is designed to provide for you during your lifetime should the unforeseen (your incapacity) happen and for your family when the foreseen (your passing) does occur.
- Peace of Mind for Your Family An estate plan and documents will help guide your family if they need to make difficult decisions about your care and provide the authority they might need to do so, and to know what to do when you are gone. Consider your plan a final gift to your family and other loved ones at the very time they need it the most.
- Distribution that You Want Without an estate plan of some type, the laws of your state determine what happens to your property. This is called intestate succession (property inheritance when there is no will). Very likely the distributions the state dictates will NOT be the ones you would have chosen. And no state distribution law provides for gifts to friends or charities, or makes provisions for your pets. Make sure what you've earned and accumulated in your lifetime goes to help those you love and the causes you care about.

- **Provisions for Your Family** An estate plan is especially important if you have minor children, as it will name a guardian to care for them and in many instances establish a trust to help ensure their financial wellbeing.
- Financial Wisdom A good estate plan will help streamline the distribution process, minimize administrative costs, and possibly reduce taxes that might otherwise be owed. That means you leave the most you can to the people you love and the causes you care about.

In this booklet, we will first spend some time talking about the key elements of an estate plan, the documents you should have, and some charitable giving ideas you might want to incorporate into your estate plan. Then you'll have the opportunity to record personal and financial information to share with your family and to create your estate plan. (Note: If you are married or have a partner, it will be most helpful if each of you completes separate information inventories.) Finally, we end with some frequently asked questions.

Let's get started.



## Key Elements of an Estate Plan

### **Documents Related to Your Final Wishes**

- Will. A will is a planning document that you create to leave instructions for an executor on how to distribute your assets. Normally it is a typed, signed and dated document requiring witness signatures although each state sets guidelines that make a will legal. Wills are validated and enforced through the process called probate.
- **Revocable Living Trust**. Also known as a "living trust" or an "RLT," a revocable living trust can serve as the main document to distribute your property. The trust is created while you are living, and most often people serve as their own trustee and retain the power to change or even to revoke it. Your living trust becomes irrevocable upon your death. Living trusts require that property be transferred into the trust for it to be initiated; living trusts generally will avoid the probate process and can offer certain other tax advantages.

There are pros and cons with each approach, and an estate planning attorney can work with you to determine which is best for your situation.

Note: Even if you decide upon a revocable living trust, you should still have what is called a "pour-over" will. It catches any property that was, intentionally or inadvertently, left out of the trust during your life and is not transferred in another way. While this property will still need to go through probate, it will eventually be distributed according to your trust instructions instead of being distributed under state law provisions.



- Beneficiary Designations. These are the forms you fill out when you open a bank or stock brokerage account, establish an IRA or other type of retirement plan, or purchase a commercial annuity or life insurance policy. Beneficiary designations indicate who will receive whatever assets remain upon your passing, or in the case of life insurance, the death benefit.
- Form of Ownership. Property that is "jointly owned with right of survivorship" passes directly to the surviving joint owner regardless of what the will or living trust might provide. This is most often seen with real estate but can involve other types of property as well. If you live in a community property state, your half of the community property will pass automatically to your spouse.

These latter two means of passing property can have a profound impact on how your overall estate is distributed and should be considered as part of any coordinated plan.

## **Documents Providing for Physical or Mental Incapacity**

- **Power of Attorney** (POA) for financial matters. This document grants to someone you trust the ability to act on your behalf for a variety of potential transactions and responsibilities. When the POA becomes effective, the extent of the authority granted can be tailored to your particular desires.
- **Power of Attorney** for health care decisions. This document appoints someone to make decisions for you regarding medical treatment if you are not able to do so. You can specify who is in charge of making critical treatment decisions and, perhaps more importantly, who does not have that authority.
- Health Care Directive. Sometimes referred to as an "advance directive" or "living will" (not to be confused with a living trust), this specifies the type of end-of-life treatment you want to receive. It is a directive to the physicians treating you and for the person holding your Health Care Power of Attorney.
- Medical Order for Life Sustaining Treatment (MOLST). In some states, this is called a POLST. Working with your doctor, you can document your wishes for the benefit of health care providers regarding resuscitation and other life-sustaining procedures.

If you have any questions about our estate planning guide, or you would like to learn more about how your gift can help HopeHealth, please contact Suzanne Fortier, MPA, CFRE.

- Call (401) 415-4690
- Email Legacy@HopeHealthCo.org

## How to Create Your Estate Plan

Depending on your situation, creating an estate plan doesn't have to be overly difficult or expensive. Here are some practical steps to get you started:

- 1. Take inventory of what you own. List all of your assets and their approximate value. Include pertinent information about each asset. There is a section later in this booklet for just this purpose.
- 2. Make a list of tangible personal property, such as jewelry, dishes, books, furniture

  items other than real estate and investments
  and who is to receive each item upon your passing. You may want to maintain a separate list rather than designating this in your will, for maximum flexibility.
- 3. Make a list of all your electronic devices, along with the passwords needed to access them. Then make a list of all digital accounts with a coordinated list of passwords. Place the lists in a secure place known to your executor and possibly one other trusted individual. Give written instructions for what you want to happen to your social media accounts. Do you want them to continue or to be taken down? Make sure your power of attorney gives your attorney or advisor the right to access your electronic devices and digital accounts.
- 4. Think about your goals for your estate plan. Ask yourself: who do you want to benefit? How do you want to treat each of your children? Are there any special needs that you want to provide for? What happens if you and your spouse both pass away within a short period of time? Are there charities or organizations you want to remember? Your attorney will most likely ask you about goals you didn't consider, but at least you'll have a head start on those that are most important to you.
- 5. Consider whom you would like to name as your agents, for example the executor of your will or the trustee of your trust, and the person to hold your power of attorney. Gather pertinent information about them. There is also a section in this booklet for that purpose.

- 6. Make an appointment with an attorney, preferably one who specializes in estate planning. If you don't have one or know of one to call, ask us for referrals or check with family, friends, or co-workers for recommendations.
- 7. Follow through on whatever actions are decided upon in the meeting with your attorney. Rely on the advice of your attorney and other professional advisors as you make your decisions.
- 8. Share your plans with others. Key documents are of little or no value if no one knows what they say or where to find them when they are needed. This is especially true for the person(s) you have designated to serve as your personal administrator/ executor under your will or the trustee of your living trust. It's also important to give loved ones at least a general sense of what to expect, so that there won't be surprises later on.
- 9. Rest assured that you have made good decisions and have a plan in place.



## Consider Your Charitable Legacy

You may believe strongly in the work of specific charities, and you may have supported these organizations throughout your lifetime. Making a gift provision in your estate plan for one or more organizations can be a natural extension of that support. You might be surprised at how much you can leave, or at the personal or other family goals you can achieve, when you choose to include gifts through your will or trust to the charitable causes that you love.

**Bequest:** This is a gift made through your will or living trust. You can leave a specified amount of money, a particular piece of property, or all or a portion of the "residual" of your estate (what remains after your final expenses, debts, and specific gifts are paid). You can also make such a gift contingent. A contingency ensures your wishes are carried out even though your circumstances may have changed since you wrote your will or living trust. See page 28 for sample bequest language.

**Beneficiary Designation:** Just as you designate individuals to receive certain assets directly as a beneficiary, you can name HopeHealth to receive all or part of the asset. This strategy is most commonly used with IRAs and other retirement plan assets and life insurance policies, but it can also work with assets such as checking and savings accounts, donor advised funds, brokerage accounts and commercial annuities.

In addition to leaving a final legacy, bequests and beneficiary designations have the advantage of being flexible (give as little or as much as you like) and revocable (generally they can be changed at any time), and perhaps most importantly, they leave the assets under your control should you need them during your lifetime.

Bequests and beneficiary designation gifts are fully deductible from your estate, and there is no limit as to how much can be deducted.



**Charitable Gift Annuity:** This is a simple way to make a gift and receive fixed payments for life. In addition, you receive an income tax charitable deduction and the payments are partly tax-free. A gift annuity is arranged directly with the charity you wish to support. Once the last beneficiary passes, the charity can use the remaining amount for its programs.

**Charitable Remainder Trust:** This is another way to support your favorite cause and receive tax benefits while securing an income for yourself and/or family members. A charitable remainder trust is an especially attractive gift if you would like to sell an appreciated asset (e.g, real estate held for investment purposes), and generate income from the sale without paying capital gains tax.

**Charitable Lead Trust:** A lead trust is the opposite of a remainder trust. The charity receives the payments first for each year the trust is in existence, and at the end of the trust term, what is left is returned to you or to your heirs. This can be an excellent way to transfer substantial assets to your children while minimizing gift and estate taxes.

**Retained Life Estate:** You can give your home or farm to charity and continue living in it for the rest of your life. You have the satisfaction of knowing that this generous gift has been completed and the added benefit of saving on income taxes with the charitable deduction you will receive.



## **Essential Information Organizer**

Contains confidential and sensitive information — keep in a secure location

This questionnaire is designed to help you organize your important information. This will in turn help you when you see an attorney to prepare your will and other key planning documents. It will also help your loved ones at a time when they need it the most — if you are no longer able to make decisions for yourself or if you have passed away.

While it will take some time to complete, the time couldn't be better spent. Imagine the peace of mind that will come from knowing you have done all that you can do for yourself and your loved ones to be prepared for the unexpected. Gathering information is your first step in this process.

Date:

I. You and Your Family

You				
Full Legal Name				
Maiden Name (if ap	plicable)			
Address 1				
Address 2				
Phone				
Email				
Date of Birth		Place of Birth		
Social Security Nu	nber			

Driver's License (state and number)			
Marital Status:			
If married, place and date of marriage			
Do you have a prenuptial agreement?			
If widowed, divorced, or legally separated, what date did this occur?			
Are you a U.S. citizen or a Lawful Permanent Resident?			
□ No □ Born in the U.S. □ Naturalized (date and place) □ Lawful Permanent Resident □ Other Citizenship?			
Are You: Employed Retired			
Current or Most Recent Employer			
Name			
Phone			
Supervisor			
Position Start Date End Date			
Current Pension or Retirement Account			
Military Service			
Branch			
Service Dates			
Military Identification #			
Check what planning documents you have and their location:			
□ Will			
Revocable Living Trust			
Health Care Directive			
Medical Order for Life Sustaining Treatment (MOLST)           Power of Attorney — Financial			
Power of Attorney — Health			
Personal Property Inventory			

#### Your Spouse

Full Legal Name
Maiden Name (if applicable)
Address 1
Address 2
Phone
Email
Date of Birth Place of Birth
Social Security Number
Driver's License (state and number)
Status       — Is your spouse a U.S. citizen or a Lawful Permanent Resident?         No       Born in the U.S.       Naturalized (date and place)         Lawful Permanent Resident       Other Citizenship?
Check what planning documents your spouse has and their location:
□ Will
Revocable Living Trust
Health Care Directive
Physician's Order for Life Sustaining Treatment (POLST)
Power of Attorney — Financial
Power of Attorney — Health
Personal Property Inventory
<u>Your Children</u> First Child
Full Legal Name
Address 1
Address 2
Phone
Email
Date of Birth Place of Birth
Social Security Number
Driver's License (state and number)
Status       Dependent       Adopted       Previous Marriage       Special Needs       Deceased         Date of Adoption ( <i>if applicable</i> )

### Second Child

Full Legal Name
Address 1
Address 2
Phone
Email
Date of Birth Place of Birth
Social Security Number
Driver's License (state and number)
Status       Dependent       Adopted       Previous Marriage       Special Needs       Deceased         Date of Adoption ( <i>if applicable</i> )
Date of Death ( <i>if applicable</i> )
(Add additional pages as needed.)
Your Grandchildren
First Grandchild
Full Legal Name
Parents' Names
Address 1
Address 2
Phone
Email
Date of Birth Place of Birth
Social Security Number
Driver's License (state and number)
Status       Dependent       Special Needs       Deceased         Date of Adoption ( <i>if applicable</i> )
(Add additional pages as needed.)

#### Your Parents

Mother			
Full Legal Name			
Address 1			
Address 2			
Phone			
Email			
Date of Birth			
Social Security Number			
Driver's License (state and number)			
Date of Death	Resting Place		
Father			
Full Legal Name			
Address 1			
Address 2			
Phone			
Email			
Date of Birth	Place of Birth		
Social Security Number			
Driver's License (state and number)			
Date of Death	Resting Place		
Your Pets			
First Pet			
Name			
Description			
Vet Contact Information			
Food/Medicine/Special Instructions			
Second Pet			
Name			
Description			
Vet Contact Information			

Food/Medicine/Special Instructions

## **II. Professional Advisors**

(Add additional pages as needed.)

Primary Care Physician
Name
Practice/Company
Contact Information
Dentist
Name
Practice/Company
Contact Information
Attorney
Name
Practice/Company
Contact Information
Financial Planner
Name
Practice/Company
Contact Information
Accountant
Name
Practice/Company
Contact Information
Broker
Name
Practice/Company
Contact Information
Life Insurance Agent
Name
Practice/Company
Contact Information
Other

## **III. Financial Information**

☐ Tax Records	
Location	
Preparer Name	
Contact Information	
Safety Deposit Box(es)	
Location/Institution	
Address	
Box Number	
Key Location	
Who Has Access Authority?	
Social Security Payments	
Deposited to Account	
Bank Name	
Bank City/State Phone Number	
Account Number	
Pension Information	
Type of Plan	
Company Name	
Address	
Benefit Value	
Named Beneficiary —	
Insurance Policies — Disability/Accie	lent/Health
Туре	
Company	
Contact Info	
Policy #	

## IV. Assets and Debts

#### Assets

Cash (checking, savings, money market, CDs)
Туре
Bank Name/Location
Account #
Maturity Date
Owned by You Alone \$
Owned Jointly with Spouse \$
If co-owner is someone other than a spouse, note here:
Securities (stocks, bonds, mutual funds, savings bonds)
Description
Location/Firm
Number of Shares
Owned by You Alone \$
Owned Jointly with Spouse \$
If co-owner is someone other than a spouse, note here:
My securities broker is:
Name
Firm
Address/Phone
Business Interests (closely held stock, partnerships, LLC units)
Business Name
Location
Number of Shares/Percent
Owned by You Alone \$
Owned Jointly with Spouse \$
If co-owner is someone other than a spouse, note here:
Real Estate
Description
Address
Date Purchased
Owned by You Alone \$
Owned Jointly with Spouse \$
If co-owner is someone other than a spouse, note here:

#### Life Insurance/Annuities

Description	
Name of Company	
Insured/Annuitant	
Beneficiary	
Policy #	
Owned by You Alone	\$
Owned Jointly with Spouse	\$
If co-owner is someone other	r than a spouse, note here:
Retirement Assets (IRAs, 401(	k), 403(b), etc.)
Description	
Custodian Name/Address	
Beneficiary	
Owned by You Alone	\$
Owned Jointly with Spouse	\$
If co-owner is someone other	than a spouse, note here:
Debts Owed to Me (mortgages	held, accounts, or notes receivable)
Description	
Debtor Name/Address	
Owned by You Alone	\$
Owned Jointly with Spouse	\$
If co-owner is someone other	r than a spouse, note here:
Other Income Producing Asse	ets (patents, royalties, copyrights, etc.)
Description	
Company	
Owned by You Alone	\$
Owned Jointly with Spouse	
If co-owner is someone other	r than a spouse, note here:
Tangible Personal Property (c	ars, jewelry, antiques, boats, collections, tools)
Date of Purchase	
Owned by You Alone	\$
Owned Jointly with Spouse	\$
If co-owner is someone other	r than a spouse, note here:

### Debts

Mortgages (first and second, h	nome equity)
Description/Loan #	
Creditor Name	
Owed by You Alone	\$
Owed Jointly with Spouse	\$
If co-debtor is someone othe	er than a spouse, note here:
Loans (insurance, bank, perso	nal, business, car or boat)
Description/Loan #	
Owed by You Alone	\$
Owed Jointly with Spouse	\$
If co-debtor is someone othe	er than a spouse, note here:
Credit Cards	
Description/Account #	
Creditor Name	
Owed by You Alone	
Owed Jointly with Spouse	\$
If co-debtor is someone othe	er than a spouse, note here:
All Other Debts or Obligation	IS
Description/Loan #	
Creditor Name	
Owed by You Alone	\$
Owed Jointly with Spouse	\$
If co-debtor is someone oth	er than a spouse, note here:



## V. Agents

Executor	
Name	
Address 1	
Address 2	
Phone	Email
Relationship, if not spouse	
Alternate Executor	
Name	
A daha a a 4	
Phone	
Guardian (if you have minor child	-
· · ·	ally the first named guardian will be a spouse.
Address 2	
Phone	
Relationship	
Alternate Guardian	
Name	
Address 1	
Address 2	
Phone	Email
Relationship	
Device of Attorney Hackth Co	
Power of Attorney — Health Ca	re
Address 1	
Address 1	
Phone	Email
Relationship, if not spouse	

### Alternate Power of Attorney — Health Care

Name		
Address 1		
Address 2		
Phone	Email	
Relationship		
Power of Attorney — Fina	ancial	
Name		
Address 1		
Address 2		
Phone	Email	
Relationship, if not spouse		
Alternate Power of Attorr	ev — Financial	
Name	-	
Address 1		
Address 2		
Phone	Email	
Relationship		



## VI. Final Instructions

Body, Organ, Tissue Donation							
I wish to donate my body, organs, or tissue							
If yes, please describe your intention							
Funeral Instructions							
Funeral Home							
Funeral Arrangements							
Cremation Burial Body Donation							
I have prepaid funeral arrangements with (company, address, phone, amount paid)							
Preferred resting place							
Preferred funeral and burial/cremation instructions							
Obituary (what you would like included)							

#### **Personal Statement to Loved Ones**

(Take a few moments to think about what you want say to those you love that a will or living trust doesn't convey: what you feel is important in life, how you would like to be remembered, what you would like the next generation to know or, perhaps, simply what makes you happy.)

#### **Distribution of Estate**

(If your state allows it, you can create a separate list for gifts of tangible personal property that can easily be changed and updated, see pg. 27).

#### **Gifts to Spouse**

Description of Asset/Percent of Estate

#### **Gifts to Heirs/Others**

Description of Asset/Percent of Estate

Beneficiary Name/Relationship/Address

(Add additional pages as needed.)

#### **Gifts to Charity**

Legal Name of Charity/Tax ID # \_\_\_\_\_

Location

Amount \$

OR Percent of Net Estate

OR Description of Asset

(Add additional pages as needed.)

#### **Residue of Estate**

Contingent Beneficiary Name/Address

### **Gifts of Tangible Personal Property**

This list includes personal items that can easily be moved, such as furniture, books, jewelry, kitchen goods, china, clothes, art, and the like. If the items have a high financial value, talk with your attorney about the best way to transfer them. Whenever you update this list, make sure to make a copy and give the original to your executor or your attorney.

De	escription	Recipient	Contact Information
1			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
10			
12			
Signature:			Date:

### Charitable Gifts — Sample Bequest Language

Gifts to HopeHealth support the organization's most pressing needs and programs, which in turn form the foundation of our work in the community. If you have a specific program in mind that you would like to support, please contact us to discuss available options and to obtain appropriate wording to insert into your estate plan. We look forward to helping you fulfill your charitable goals.

If you wish to include HopeHealth in your will or living trust, this is sample bequest language to share with your attorney.

#### Gift of Cash

I give to HopeHealth, 1085 North Main St., Providence, RI 02904, Federal Tax Identification Number: 51-0192422, or its successor organization, the sum of (\$\_\_\_\_\_) or percentage

\_\_\_\_% to be used for its general purposes.

#### **Gift of Property\***

I give to HopeHealth, 1085 North Main St., Providence, RI 02904, a Rhode Island nonprofit corporation, or its successor, Federal Tax Identification Number 51-0192422, [insert here a description of the particular property].

#### Gift of a Percent of the Net Estate

I give to HopeHealth, 1085 North Main St., Providence, RI 02904, Federal Tax Identification Number: 51-0192422, or its successor organization, all (or stated percentage) of the rest, residue, and remainder of my estate to be used for its general purposes.

#### **Contingent Gift**

If my [name of primary beneficiary] does not survive me, or shall die within ninety (90) days from the date of my death, or as a result of a common disaster, then I give to HopeHealth, 1085 North Main St., Providence, RI 02904, Federal Tax Identification Number: 51-0192422, or its successor organization, [describe cash, property\* or percentage of residual estate] to be used for its general purposes.

#### Specific Bequest of a certain asset\* from your estate may be worded:

"I give to HopeHealth, 1085 North Main St., Providence, RI 02904, a Rhode Island nonprofit corporation, or its successor, Federal Tax Identification Number 51-0192422, [insert here a description of the particular property]."

\*HopeHealth has Gift Acceptance Policies that govern the type of property that the organization can accept. Please contact Philanthropy Department staff for further information.

## NEXT STEPS:

To receive further information and assistance on estate planning, or to learn more about how your gift can help HopeHealth Hospice & Palliative Care, please contact Suzanne Fortier, MPA, CFRE.

- Call (401) 415-4690
- Email Legacy@HopeHealthCo.org