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July 2023 Newsletter



The Comprehensive Estate Planning Checklist Before Summer Travel

Are you ready for summer travel? Summer is a great time to plan a vacation, spend time with family and friends, and enjoy time outdoors. Are you staying local? Or are you traveling to another state or out of the country? It seems that the travel choices you have now that the pandemic has lessened in its impact are countless.

Whether you have minor children or grandchildren who need their days planned with adventures or you are in need of an adventure, or just getting a change of scenery or traveling to an exotic place with your loved ones, as you begin to plan your summer travel, there is much to consider, but have you added your Wisconsin estate planning to your action list? While it may not have crossed your mind initially, it should be on your action list as you prepare. We want to share a Wisconsin estate planning checklist to complete before your summer adventure begins right here on our blog. With our guidance you will be able to travel with peace of mind.

1. Have your mail picked up. Did you know that your neighbors and friends do not have the legal authority to pick up your mail while you are on your summer vacation? However, if you are gone for extended periods of time you want to be sure your mail is taken care of. Under your Wisconsin durable power of attorney, your agent would have the authority to get your mail if you were out of town.

2. Have access to money, cash, and your bank accounts. What do you do if you need money while you are on vacation? Or you need to make bank transfers? Or you need to act on a business transaction or sell a piece of property? While you may not anticipate needing to do this while you are on your summer vacation, you never know if something could come up. Again, your agent, under your Wisconsin durable power of attorney, can be given the legal authority to handle these transactions on your behalf, and even work with your experienced Wisconsin estate planning attorney to make sure it is handled correctly.

3. Have health care decisions made. Who would make your healthcare decisions if you were injured, unconscious, or seriously harmed to the point where you are incapacitated and not able to make decisions for yourself? Your healthcare planning in your Wisconsin advanced directives, will enable you to identify not only a primary person to act in your place, but alternative choices in the event they are unable to act as well.

4. Have the care of kids, and pets. If your children and pets are not accompanying you on your vacation you need to decide who will have the legal authority to care for your kids and your pets while you are on vacation. This important decision needs to be made sooner rather than later. In addition, you will need to decide if this is temporary care or if this person could be a legal custodian should something serious happen to you.

5. Have a second in command. In a crisis, it is critical to identify who the second in command is for your lifetime decisions, such as healthcare and financial, and at the time of your passing. When you work with your experienced Wisconsin estate planning attorney, he can make sure that your intentions are clear and known, as well as create the Wisconsin estate plan that will give the authority to the person of your choosing.

6. Have travel insurance. Be aware that most summer travel has the opportunity to be covered by travel insurance. Just like we mentioned above with other circumstances, the travel insurance company is not going to speak with someone who does not have legal authority to act on your behalf. Your Wisconsin advanced directives will be a significant help should your travel insurance policy need to be activated by someone other than yourself.

7. Have a plan in an emergency. While traveling, if something serious happens to you, your Wisconsin estate plan will hold all the details of what to do. With the guidance of your experienced Wisconsin estate planning attorney, your agent and your personal representative can work with your attorney to ensure your goals for your person and your legacy are met.

As a final point, be sure to ask your experienced Wisconsin estate planning attorney what estate planning documents to bring with you on your summer vacation.

We know this article may raise more questions than it answers. We want to help you protect your aging relatives. We encourage you to contact us and schedule a meeting with attorney Alan Hougum today.



How to Choose the Right Time to Create Your Estate Plan

When is the right time to create your Wisconsin estate plan? This is a good question about a very critical tool that every adult should have. Creating your estate plan allows you to think about what you want for yourself, your loved ones, your business, and your legacy. Estate planning involves more than just what happens at the end of our lives, even though that is an important part of the process. Estate planning also makes us answer the tough questions including, but not limited to, what should happen if we no longer have the capacity we need to make our own decisions or who should be our beneficiaries.

The first step is to know and understand that you need to plan for your future. The next step is to answer the question: When is the right time to create your estate plan? As estate planning attorneys, we are often asked this question and so we want to share five important events with you.

1. You turn 18 and become an adult. Is creating a Wisconsin estate plan at the age of 18 too young? No, it is actually not too young and this is why. Without an estate plan in place, there is no one who has the legal authority to make decisions for you in the event you are in a car accident or other crisis. So, no one will be able to pay your bills, access your bank accounts, or talk to your doctors. Your Wisconsin estate planning attorney can work with you to make an estate plan that will protect you and put the people who you want to be in charge of you in a crisis in place. Your attorney will also talk to you about how to create a legacy and plan for a time when you are no longer here.

2. You decide to get married. Marriage is an exciting time. You are now planning for a time when you will share your life with the person you love. In addition, it is also time to think about how you want to protect and provide for each other. There is no better way to do that than with a Wisconsin estate plan.

3. You have a child. When you have children, estate planning becomes even more critical. Who should care for them if something happens to you? When should they inherit? How can you provide for their future if you are no longer here? These are a few of the important questions your Wisconsin estate plan can answer when you work with your estate planning attorney.

4. You receive an inheritance. Whether you are coming into a small or large inheritance, it is important to protect it. Now, the person who left you this inheritance may have had clear instructions for you that you want to use in your own Wisconsin estate plan or you may have inherited through a messy process that you do not want others to go through. No matter your reason, this is a crucial time to meet with your Wisconsin estate planning attorney and plan forward.

5. You decide to start a business. As you begin the process of starting your business you should consider how to protect yourself, your family, and your business from what comes next. Your Wisconsin estate planning attorney can not only help design your estate plan for you but may be able to advise you on your business as well.

We know this blog may raise more questions than it answers. We encourage you to contact us and schedule a meeting with attorney Alan Hougum today.



Attorney Alan Hougum and his compassionate team will help you protect yourself and the people you love with strategic planning strategies, such as wills, asset protection and trusts, powers of attorney, estate trusts, elder law planning, Medicaid crisis planning, Medicaid eligibility and application, probate and estate administration, avoiding probate, charitable planning and giving, special needs, and estate tax planning. Hougum Law Firm, LLC, serves the entire Wausau, Wisconsin area.

Our office is located in Wausau at 305 S. 18th Avenue, Suite 200, Wausau, Wisconsin 54401. Do you have questions you need answered before or after your appointment? Just let us know! Contact us by email at info@hougumlaw.com or call us at 715-843-5001.