

# Proactive Medicaid Planning – A Smart Move for Your Family’s

**By Matthew Crider, JD  
Family Wealth Protection Attorney**

You’ve met with an attorney, set up a trust and you can breathe a sigh of relief. Your work is done, right?

Unfortunately not.

Aging brings with it the potential for loss of personal freedom as well as the potentially devastating financial cost of elder care. Depending on where you live and the level of care you need, nursing homes can cost between \$35,000 and \$150,000 per year.

Long-term nursing care can be devastating to a family’s financial life for generations.

Pro-active planning, in advance if possible, can help protect what you’ve worked so hard for so you can leave it all to your family instead.

Pro-active planning for long-term nursing care can be done in one of two ways: 1) purchasing long-term care insurance or 2) by making sure your assets are structured so you are fully eligible to receive the benefits you’re entitled to under the government’s Medicaid programs.

Medicaid, not to be confused with Medicare is, for all intents and purposes, the only “insurance” plan for long-term institutional care in the United States.

For those lacking the financial resources to pay privately or to pay for coverage under a private long-term care insurance policy, they can pay out of their own pockets for long-term care until they become “impoverished” under the program guidelines and become eligible for Medicaid.

Medicaid and Medicare may sound similar but they are very different programs. Medicare is a totally federal program. As a retiree, if you receive Social Security benefits, you’re also entitled to Medicare as your health insurance.

Medicaid, on the other hand, is run jointly by the federal and state governments and is based on need. As with pretty much any federal or state program, the process of applying benefits can be confusing. The Medicaid eligibility rules differ by state and change constantly. If you’re not in immediate need of long-term care, you may have the luxury of distributing or protecting your assets in advance and protecting your eligibility for Medicaid benefits. This way when you do need long-term care, you’ll quickly qualify for Medicaid benefits. We utilize a number of strategies and tools to proactively plan for your Medicaid eligibility and preserve your assets for your loved ones.

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Medicaid planning, as well as a Will, Trust (if you own assets that would go through probate) and a Kids Protection Plan should be a part of your comprehensive estate plan.

It’s always amazing to me how many lawyers claim to understand the complex Medicaid rules, but really do not. What that means is that your family could end up paying anywhere between \$3,000 and \$7,000 per month out of pocket for care that could have been covered by the government.

Preparing your assets to be eligible for Medicaid is not something you can do yourself. It’s complicated and can be extremely costly if you get bad advice.

If you or a family member is over the age of 65 or ill, call us to schedule your Family Wealth Planning Session today so we can identify what needs to be done to protect your assets for your loved ones and your Medicaid eligibility. Our Family Wealth Planning Session is normally \$750, but this month I’ve made space for the next two people who mention this article to have a complete planning session with me at no charge. Call today and mention this article.

## About Matthew Crider, J.D.

Matthew Crider formed [Crider Law PC](#) in 1999 so he could help individuals and business owners by providing creative solutions and be their trusted advisor and legal counselor. He serves his clients by listening closely to their goals, dreams and concerns and working with them to develop superior and comprehensive estate and asset protection plans. His estate planning practice focuses on preserving and growing wealth by providing comprehensive, highly personalized estate planning counsel to couples, families, individuals and businesses.

