

New Year Resolutions? Forget Dieting! Try Estate Planning!

It is definitely time to make your New Year's Resolution if you haven't already done so. Instead of losing weight, exercising more, and other "cliché" resolutions, try this: "This year, I will create an estate plan for me and my family!" So forget about the diet this year, and instead, draft some legal documents that will be helpful to you and your family.

Instead of pulling a muscle by exercising or starving yourself with a silly diet, spend some time creating an estate plan. Your friends will definitely be impressed, and I promise you'll feel better! An estate plan may include:

- A **revocable living trust agreement** which eliminates probate and the need for guardianship or conservatorship proceedings with respect to assets transferred to the trust.
- For married couples, a **Disclaimer Trust** or mandatory AB (i.e., Credit Shelter) trust may be appropriate. In some cases, a QTIP trust (i.e., ABCTrust) may be appropriate. Special trusts may also be necessary or advisable when there are children from prior relationships to prevent "unintentional" disinheritance.
- **Pour-over will(s)** to ensure that all property is transferred to the chosen beneficiaries, even if an asset is mistakenly not transferred to the trust during lifetime.
- **Durable General Power(s) of Attorney** which allow a spouse or anyone else of your choice to sign documents and handle affairs on your behalf if you are unable to do so. This is particularly helpful if mental or physical disability prevents a person from managing his/her own affairs.
- **Advance Health Care Directives** (aka powers of attorney for health care/living wills) which give directions to physicians and family members regarding continuation of life support systems and a long list of other health care related issues.
- **HIPAA authorizations** which authorize medical personnel to release medical records to those designated.

So forget the diet and exercise. Who needs all that sweat and hard work? You know you're just going to fall back on old habits anyway! Instead, call for a free consultation. I promise I won't make

you eat any vegetables or put you through any exercise routine! For more information and for a free audio cd about Estate Planning please call 661-414-7100 or visit www.MansourLaw.com. I also practice personal injury. To learn more, please visit www.ValenciaLawyer.com.