

Estate Planning Letters Of Instructions

Once you have had your Estate Planning Documents prepared and executed, you need to make sure that they are organized, safeguarded, and communicated.

One suggestion is to use Letters of Instructions. While your Last Will & Testament states to whom you wish your real and personal property to be distributed upon your death, a Letter of Instructions is a more informal document for which your family will be thanking you. Be sure to include not just names, but addresses and account numbers as appropriate.

- ✓ Financial Details: You can reduce the stress on your family or executor if you have a complete list of all of your accounts, assets, and liabilities. It is difficult for your property to be divided, if it can't be found.
 - Income
 - Bank Accounts – Checking and Savings
 - Pension Plans
 - Brokerage Accounts
 - Retirement Accounts
 - Insurance Policies
 - Safety Deposit Boxes
 - Business Ownership or Interest
 - Mortgage / Loans
- ✓ Location of Official Papers
 - Social Security Cards
 - Marriage Certificates
 - Birth Certificates
- ✓ Your Advisors – Name, Address, and Telephone number
 - Attorneys
 - Accountants
 - Insurance
 - Doctors
 - Religious
- ✓ List of Family and Friends you want to be notified of your death – Name, Address, and Telephone number
- ✓ Any animals or personal property that would need immediate attention upon your death
- ✓ Any arrangements you have made regarding anatomical gifts
- ✓ Funeral Wishes
 - Beliefs or ideas you want expressed
 - Pre-paid funeral plan information
 - Service details that are important to you – who to officiate, what songs to be played, a charity to receive donations

- ✓ Specific Personal Property Distribution. You can mitigate much of the family disagreements that arise by naming individual objects for particular people.
 - Jewelry
 - Furniture
 - Photos

While you are the one responsible for creating and maintaining your Estate Plan, it is actually for the benefit of the loved ones you leave behind. Include as much detail in your Estate Plan as possible. Open the lines of communication today to avoid uncertainty in the future.