

Frequently Asked Questions: Does Your Family Need a Trust?

**By Matthew Crider, JD
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Estate planning attorneys get asked a lot of questions about how to protect every different kind of family and situation, but the questions that are asked the most tend to be about trusts. For this reason, we'd like to take a moment to review with our readers the basic definition and benefit of trusts—which are, for most families, the most comprehensive, most reliable tool for protecting your assets and passing them on to your beneficiaries.

The primary benefit of trusts is their versatility. Trusts are so useful and versatile, in fact, that they serve as the backbone of just about every different kind of estate plan; from the plan created by an elderly grandparent, to the one executed by the new young couple. This isn't to say that each trust is the same for every estate plan—far from it! Each person and family will be different; from their property and assets, to the people (or charities) they'd like to name as heirs, all the way down to their values and beliefs (which can be expressed and passed on through a trust.) With all of these differences, each living trust must be customized to suit the individual.

This is the beauty of trusts, they are indeed highly customizable. Perhaps the most well-known and commonly-used trusts are the living trust or a testamentary trust, but trusts provide far more options than those three mentioned above. Other options include special needs trusts, irrevocable trusts, retirement trusts, education trusts, gifting trusts, and many more . . . even pet trusts!

If you are considering creating a will or estate plan, or planning to update the one you already have, the best thing you can do is to know your options. Contact our office for more information about trusts, and which of the many trust options may be the right tool to protect your family.

About Matthew Crider, J.D.

Matthew Crider formed [Crider Law PC](http://www.criderlaw.net) 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.

