

# The Problems with Do-It-Yourself Estate Planning

In an Internet age, where anything and everything is available online, many people are tempted to forego hiring an estate planning lawyer, with the intent to handle their estate planning on their own.

They falsely assume that if a Will or a trust is a matter of filling in lines on a sheet of paper, they are more than capable of doing that on their own.

In truth, the price of do-it-yourself estate planning is often far greater than a lawyer's fees.

The assumption that a Will is simply a piece of paper has led to many Wills that are legally unenforceable due to some technical detail that the Will's drafter failed to notice.

Likewise, something as seemingly simple as a trust can be later hit with enormous estate taxes, generation-skipping taxes, penalties, or any other fee that subtracts from its total.

The general public is often not aware of these taxes, but an estate planning attorney who is highly qualified will be well-versed in them.

Do-It-Yourself Estate planning can have negative consequences when the time comes for your estate to be allocated and distributed to your family and loved ones:

- Improper drafting of documents, even the slightest errors, can render the document (and your wishes contained within it) as null and void.
- Improper drafting of documents, or the failure to cover all the needed bases, could result in your assets being tied up for several years in court or in arbitration.
- The future of your assets could fall into the hands of the state or federal authorities if your estate planning documents are deemed to be improper or legally unenforceable.

In something as important as estate planning, leaving your estate to an uncertain future is not a risk worth taking.

Even in do-it-yourself planning, many of the documents that are found online cost hundreds of dollars to download and complete.

Hiring a qualified estate planning attorney might cost more in the beginning, but in the long run, the certainty of knowing that you have been given the best advice by the most qualified of experts is well worth it. You can't put a price tag on peace of mind.

If you would like more information concerning your estate planning options visit comprehensive online resources for personal wealth management solutions through wills and revocable trusts.

Whether your estate planning goals are immediate or long-term, a qualified California estate planning attorney will be able to counsel you on the best options available to you to meet your individual needs.