

A Husband's Point Of View

A.M.H. Financial Services



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Happy Canada Day!

Preparing a will is not something most Canadians look forward to. Yet there are a number of good reasons why you shouldn't procrastinate in getting your will prepared—especially when you consider how little it costs and the benefits that come with it.

A will is the foundation of an estate plan. The goal of having a properly drafted will is to ensure your assets will be distributed according to your wishes and your loved ones will be properly provided for in a tax efficient manner. By creating a will, you can avoid unnecessary costs, delays and the undesirable results of intestacy, while gaining the ability to choose the executor of your estate and the guardian(s) of your children. When you consider that most wills can be prepared for a few hundred dollars, and also take into account the potential consequences of not having one, it is clear that everyone should have a will.

If you don't have a will or your will is determined to be invalid, you will be deemed to have died intestate. Ultimately, the court will appoint someone to administer and distribute your estate according to the intestacy laws of the province in which you reside, regardless of what your wishes are. This means that your assets may not be distributed to your beneficiaries as you intended.

An intestacy may also result in more tax being paid. This will impact the amount of money left to distribute to your family members or the beneficiaries of your estate. The distribution of your estate may be delayed and costly to administer. This can make the whole process frustrating for your loved ones at a time when they are already grieving.

Once you have prepared a will, you must remember to keep it updated to ensure it continues to reflect your intentions. You should review your will regularly, perhaps every few years or whenever there is a significant event in our life or the lives of your heirs, such as a marriage, divorce, birth, death, disability or new business.

On a personal note, when my father passed away several years ago, there was a problem with a will that was not updated. It took us 13 years to settle the estate and it cost the estate almost \$100,000 in legal bills. As one of the executors I had to deal with family members that were very unhappy with the way things unfolded and had to be dealt with. It was a very stressful time and I cannot stress it loud enough, get a will and review it on a regular basis and keep it updated as things change.

We are in the middle of a pandemic right now, and sadly many people have passed away from the virus. We can only hope that they had a will when they died. We never know what fate has in store for us. Don't be caught off guard. If you don't have a will get one. If you have one review it regularly.

On the Lighter Side

I gave all my batteries away today . . . free of charge.

Why are horses such terrible dancers? They have 2 left feet.

A pet store was ransacked last week . . . there are currently no leads.

Why couldn't the pony sing himself a lullaby? He was a little horse.

Where do pencils go for vacation? Pencil-vania

What kind of music should you listen to while fishing? Something catchy

For more information call Andy today (780) 425-4058

Understanding the Difference between a Will and Estate Plan



Creating wills and estate plans essentially refer to choosing heirs and appointing guardians. They ensure that your loved ones will not suffer financially upon your death. You can rest in peace knowing that your ward will be cared for after your death, and not left at the mercy of fate.

Wills and estate plans are important legal documents. Some people think that both are the same. However, this is not necessarily the case.

A will is a legally binding document that contains information about the distribution of assets after your death. Also, you can appoint guardians through a will to look after your relatives who need assistance due to old age or infirmity. An up-to-date will ensures that your assets will be distributed according to your wishes, and that your loved ones will not face financial hardships after your death.

An estate plan, on the other hand, is a more broad term. Estate planning is the process of arranging the distribution of assets in a way that results in maximum benefits to the beneficiaries. An estate planning attorney can help you in creating a plan that ensures that taxes and associated expenses are minimized.

With an estate plan, you can give direction regarding additional matters that cannot be handled by a will — even if they are mentioned in a will. An estate plan typically, but not necessarily, includes the following:

- ⇒ Wills
- ⇒ Trusts
- ⇒ Power of attorney
- ⇒ Beneficiary designations
- ⇒ Superannuation
- ⇒ Property transfer
- ⇒ Transfer of financial assets



Estate planning guarantees that your loved ones are left with the maximum possible proceeds from your estate. With an estate plan, you can name a guardian or trustee who can ensure that appropriate protections are in place for the beneficiaries, to ensure smooth transfer of business assets, to purchase your shares, and also to guarantee that the superannuation is distributed among the beneficiaries according to your wishes.

The purpose of wills and estate plans is to ensure that your family members receive continuing care after your demise. The popular notion that wills and estate plans are for the rich is not true. Anyone who owns a car, house, bank accounts, business, and other assets can create a will/estate plan to transfer the assets to the loved ones.



Leave your loved ones with solutions not problems!



Top 10 Reasons to Have a Will



Having a will is arguably one of the most important things you can do for yourself and your family. Not only can a will legally protect your spouse, children, and assets, it can also spell out exactly how you would like things handled after you have passed on. While each person's situation varies, here are the top ten reasons to have a will.

- ◆ You decide how your estate will be distributed. A will is a legally-binding document that lets you determine how you would like your estate to be handled upon your death. If you die without a will, there is no guarantee that your intended desires will be carried out. Having a will helps minimize any family fights about your estate that may arise, and also determines the “who, what, and when” of your estate.
- ◆ You decide who will take care of your minor children. A will allows you to make an informed decision about who should take care of your minor children. Absent a will, the court will take it upon itself to choose among family members or an appointed guardian. Having a will allows you to appoint the person you want to raise your children or, better, make sure it is not someone you do not want to raise your children.
- ◆ To avoid a lengthy probate process. Contrary to common belief, all estates must go through the probate process, with or without a will. Having a will, however, speeds up the probate process and informs the court how you'd like your estate divided. Probate courts serve the purpose of “administering your estate”, and when you die without a will (known as dying “intestate”), the court will decide how to divide your estate without your input, which can also cause long, unnecessary delays.
- ◆ Minimize estate taxes. Another reason to have a will is because it allows you to minimize your estate taxes. The value of what you give away to family members or charity will reduce the value of your estate when it's time to pay estate taxes.
- ◆ You decide who will wind up the affairs of your estate. Executors make sure all your affairs are in order, including paying off bills, canceling your credit cards, and notifying the bank and other business establishments. Because executors play the biggest role in the administration of your estate, you'll want to be sure to appoint someone who is honest, trustworthy, and organized (which may or may not always be a family member).
- ◆ You can disinherit individuals who would otherwise stand to inherit. Most people do not realize they can disinherit individuals out of their will. Yes, you may wish to disinherit individuals who may otherwise inherit your estate if you die without a will. Because wills specifically outline how you would like your estate distributed, absent a will your estate may end up on the wrong hands or in the hands of someone you did not intend (such as an ex-spouse with whom you had a bitter divorce).
- ◆ Make gifts and donations. The ability to make gifts is a good reason to have a will because it allows your legacy to live on and reflect your personal values and interests. In addition you are also increasing the value of your estate for your heirs and beneficiaries to enjoy. Be sure to check the current laws for your province to learn the most up-to-date gift tax exclusions.
- ◆ Avoid greater legal challenges. If you die without a will, part or all of your estate may pass to someone you did not intend. For example, one case involved the estate of a deceased son who was awarded over \$1 million from a wrongful death lawsuit. When the son died, the son's father – who had not been a part of his son's life for over 32 years – stood to inherit the entire estate, leaving close relatives and siblings out of the picture!
- ◆ Because you can change your mind if your life circumstances change. A good reason for having a will is that you can change it at any time while you're still alive. Life changes, such as births, deaths, and divorce, can create situations where changing your will are necessary.
- ◆ Because tomorrow is not promised. Procrastination and the unwillingness to accept death as part of life are common reasons for not having a will. Sometimes the realization that wills are necessary comes too late – such as when an unexpected death or disability occurs. To avoid the added stress on families during an already emotional time, it may be wise to meet with an estate planning lawyer to help you draw up a basic estate plan at the minimum, before it's too late.

There are more than 10 reasons to have a will, but it can be overwhelming to actually draft a will. While knowing your province's laws is key, you don't have to be an expert to write your will. You can contact an estate planning attorney near you who can help you craft your wishes into a legal document, or you can call me for a worksheet that will help you to achieve this.

Financial Advisor
Since 1976



Phone: (780) 425-4058
email: andy@amhfinancial.ca

Take a look at our website!

www.amhfinancial.ca

AMH Financial Services is a full-service firm. We offer services to help you examine your financial goals and select the options that will best suit your needs, timeframe and investment style. We believe in helping you create a comprehensive financial plan for your family that includes planning, insurance and portfolio management.

MY COMMITMENT AS A FINANCIAL ADVISOR IS TO HELP PEOPLE TO REACH THEIR FINANCIAL GOALS. IF YOU HAVE A FAMILY MEMBER, FRIEND OR COLLEAGUE WHO YOU FEEL COULD BENEFIT FROM A CONVERSATION WITH ME, I WOULD BE PLEASED TO SPEAK WITH THEM WITHOUT OBLIGATION.

I believe that every individual has an unalienable right to make the best and most effective use of hard-earned income, to have easy access to up-to-date and informed advice, and to be able to provide for short and long-term requirements.



My mission is to help you to make an educated decision that you are comfortable with!

I am committed to serving the individual customer with investment and financial portfolios which will meet current needs and provide for future requirements and situations.



*Want to feel more confident about reaching your financial goals?
We can help you with that!*



I want to get ready for my financial future



I want to plan for my retirement



We want to get ready for our life together



I want my children to get ready for a better financial future

With so much conflicting advice in the news, online, even from friends and family, making sound financial choices is difficult. Eliminate the confusion and make informed financial decisions with help from a professional.

Call us today (780) 425-4058