V. Consider the Options Available to You

Whom do you want to be your personal representative (executor)?
Do you want to establish a trust or guardianship in your will?
How do you want each of your assets to be distributed?
Do you want to prepare a Durable Power of Attorney for your finances and/or your health care decisions? If so, to whom will you give those powers?
Do you want to prepare an Advance Directive?
Have you decided upon your burial and funeral plans?

VI. Prepare A Written List of Questions to Ask Your Attorney

When you meet with your attorney, communicate with her. Ask for explanation, information, guidance, and advice as needed. Your lawyer will ask you questions, too, in order to understand your estate planning goals and help you achieve them.

If you would like additional information, Senior Rights Assistance can help. Seniors trained in basic estate planning matters volunteer their time to assist other seniors who are considering their estate planning options. Call us at (206) 448-5720. The Intake Specialist will be happy to send you written brochures and refer you to an Estate Planning Information Volunteer.

AN ESTATE PLANNING CHECKLIST: HELPFUL TIPS FOR PREPARING

The time you spend with your estate planning attorney can be most efficient (and therefore less costly) if you prepare in advance as much as possible. This checklist is intended to help you with that preparation.

If you need assistance please call:

(206) 448-5720

Prepared by Sound Generations
Senior Rights Assistance Program

2208 Second Avenue, Suite 100
Seattle, Washington 98121

Phone: (206) 448-5720
Or: (888) 435-3377

Estate Planning checklist.doc (revised 4/16)
Estate Planning Checklist

Before meeting with your attorney, locate the information you will need to prepare or revise your estate planning documents and consider in detail what you want to accomplish. Review some of the many brochures or books about estate planning to gain an idea of the available possibilities. You can ask your attorney in advance what the fee likely will be, but keep in mind that the attorney first needs to understand your estate planning goals. She may not be able to quote you a fee until she learns all the details of your situation.

I. Collect the Following Documents

___ Any existing will and all codicils to it
___ Any existing trust documents
___ Any existing Power of Attorney or Advance Directive (“living will”)
___ Any existing community property agreement
___ Copies of deeds or title insurance to show legal descriptions of real property
___ Life insurance policies
___ Long-term care insurance policies
___ Descriptions and values of gifts made in the last 3 years
___ Descriptions and values of property placed into a trust in the last 5 years
___ Other papers about which you have questions

II. Prepare Basic Identifying Data

___ Your full name, names you previously used, your address, birth date, and Social Security number
___ The same information for your spouse and your children (“children” includes legally adopted persons)
___ The names and addresses of all your beneficiaries
___ Information about your military service and veteran disability status if applicable

3. Make an Inventory of Your Assets and Liabilities
Remember to designate whether the property is community or separate, whether it is held in joint tenancy with right of survivorship, whether there is a named beneficiary for the asset, etc. Identify the current value and cost basis of each asset. Estimate the combined value of your assets.

Examples to Include in Your Inventory:

**ASSETS**
Salary, car, boat, airplane, business ownership, life insurance, and real estate (obtain full legal description from deeds)
Bank accounts (checking and savings), safety deposit box(es) and contents
Pension plans, retirement benefits, IRAs, profit sharing plans
Annuities, mutual fund accounts, stocks, bonds, certificates of deposit, contracts receivable, notes held
Household and personal property, jewelry, special sentimental objects (heirlooms), collections

**LIABILITIES**
Mortgages, Credit Card Debt
Judgments or Leins you owe
Consumer loans/promissory notes
Loans for which you may be liable as a co-signer

IV. List the Locations of the Following Items

___ Your will, codicil(s), or community property agreement
___ Your list of specific bequests of tangible personal property
___ Your safe deposit box(es) and key(s)
___ Insurance policies (life, disability, health, auto, home, etc.)
___ Title to property (for your vehicles or boats, for example)
___ Deeds, leases, mortgage papers, other loan papers
___ Any account, such as those with brokerages
___ Certificates of deposit or mutual fund information
___ Stocks and bonds, including the statement issued when you bought them (required for establishing the basis of the asset for tax purposes)