**Estate Planning Special for New Parents**

**$750 per couple**

**For parents-to-be and parents of children under 5 years old.**

**Why should every parent have a will?**

Imagine how many people love your children. Would there be a fight over who would care for your children if you passed away without leaving instructions?

Naming a guardian in your will helps avoid litigation that would cause additional stress to your children and loved ones. You can also name a back-up in the event that your first choice is unable or unwilling to serve as guardian.

**What happens if I die in Maryland without a will?**

If you are married and have minor children, your spouse will inherit one half of your intestate property and your children will inherit the rest. If you have children but no spouse, your children will inherit everything.

For most parents, this plan doesn’t make sense. Married people generally want their spouse to inherit all of their estate and unmarried people should have more control over how funds are distributed to their minor children.

Furthermore, Maryland law doesn’t take into account nontraditional families. For example, foster children and stepchildren that are not legally adopted will not automatically inherit a share of your estate.

You can find the complete laws of intestacy (dying without a will) in the Maryland Code of Estates & Trusts §§ 3-101 to 3-303.

**Should we prepare a will now if we plan to have more children in the future?**

There is no reason to put off drafting a will. A will can be written to treat your children as a “class” that would include any future children born to or adopted by you.

**What does the estate planning package include?**

Our estate planning package includes a will, an advance medical directive, and a power of attorney. A will names a guardian for your children and gives instructions on how to distribute your probate property at death. An advance medical directive, also known as a living will, states directions regarding your healthcare decisions in the event that you can’t make those decisions yourself. A power of attorney gives someone the ability to handle your financial affairs during your lifetime.

**How long will the process take?**

Before our first meeting, you will receive information to help you start thinking about some of the decisions we’ll make during the initial consultation which lasts approximately one hour. It takes about 2 to 3 weeks after our initial meeting to draft your documents. You will receive draft copies of your documents to review before coming in for your last appointment to sign the documents in front of witnesses and a notary.

[Photo]

“I’ve seen first-hand the problems created when a parent dies without a will. Young parents are least likely to think about estate planning, but having a plan for a guardian is most important when your children are small. I created our estate planning special to encourage new parents to start planning before it’s too late.” - Nicole M. Whitaker, Esq.

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New Parent Estate Planning program ends 12/31/17. Special does not apply to individuals with over $1 million net worth or particularly complex plans. Special does not include drafting trusts. Available to Maryland residents only.