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Practice Areas

- Estate Planning
- Asset Protection Planning
- Business and Corporate Planning
- Tax Planning -
 - Corporate and Individual
 - Elder Law and Medicaid Planning
 - Estate and Trust Administration
 - Guardianships and Conservatorships
 - Special Needs and Disability Planning
 - Financial Aid Planning
 - Veterans Benefits Planning
 - Charitable and Exempt Organizations

Locations

Our main office is located at
 71 Elm Street
 Worcester, MA 01609
 508 · 751 · 5010
 www.estatepreservationlaw.com

For our clients' convenience,
 we also have offices in
 Braintree, Cambridge and
 Hyannis, MA

EPLO Answers Your Questions

When Did I Become a Senior and What Do I Do Now?

Editor's Note: Gone are the days of grandma knitting in a rocking chair while grandpa waxes on about "when I was a boy. . ."
Today's seniors are launching second careers, volunteering with non profits, going back to school - and participating in zumba classes. Attorney Linda Cammuso responds to questions about how Estate Preservation Law Offices

can help seniors preserve their lifestyles while ensuring they can leave a legacy for their heirs. She also addresses how EPLO can work with adult children to assist their parents in making financial, legal and healthcare decisions.

I am in my sixties and am worried about protecting my finan-

cial future and my assets. How can EPLO help me?

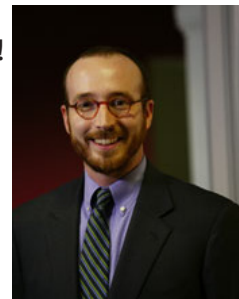
At EPLO, we are sensitive to our clients' concerns - that's important as we work to build a trusting relationship with you and your family. It's never too late to plan, but the most effective planning is done in advance of

Continued on page three

Bridging the Gap: The New Estate Planning Model

By Brendan J. King and Linda T. Cammuso, EPLO Partners

Welcome to the newsletter of Estate Preservation Law Offices! As we reflect on the first edition of our newsletter and the start of a new year - and a new decade - we are excited about the future of Estate Preservation Law Offices (EPLO) and the estate planning and asset protection field as a whole.



Brendan J. King



Linda T. Cammuso

The name we chose for our newsletter, "Bridging the Gap," is a tribute to our core practice philosophy which has shaped our unique estate preservation model.

The focus of estate planning over the last few decades has been estate taxes. In the mid-1990s, a person dying with little more than half a million dollars faced estate tax liability. Legal and financial professionals dreamt up increasingly creative ways to avoid the estate tax, and clients were more than willing to structure their assets in any way that would reduce this hefty tax. By the early 2000s, estate tax planning was not only the norm, but in most cases was the issue that motivated people to do an estate plan at all.

Continued on page two

Bridging the Gap

Continued from page one

Then a couple key things happened. First, the Federal law changed in 2001, resulting in an increasingly higher estate tax “credit” amount. By 2009, a person dying with less than \$3.5 million did not have to pay Federal estate taxes. Although the estate tax threshold in Massachusetts remains at \$1 million, the tax rate is substantially lower.

The second key event was the economic instability of the 2000s. Unemployment, substantial losses in retirement plans and other investments, the severe drop in the real estate market, failed business ventures, and the freeze on lending all worked together to create an environment of fear that shook the very foundation of our society. When it came to estate planning, people began worrying less about estate taxes and more about whether they would even have an “estate” left when they die!

Even before the recession hit, the challenges of dealing with today’s world - whether navigating the increasingly complex healthcare system, grappling with the skyrocketing cost of higher education, caring for special needs/disabled relatives, or protecting inheritances from beneficiaries’ troubled personal or financial circumstances - created a need for specialized lifetime planning solutions.

The bottom line is that estate planning today calls for a strategic and all-encompassing approach that considers lifetime concerns as well as traditional estate and end-of-life matters.

When we founded EPLo, our goal was to provide an innovative model of total estate preservation that bridges the gap between traditional estate planning and today’s asset protection concerns. We are proud to deliver this fine-tuned and highly specialized planning model to each and every one of our clients.

As a firm, our commitment to you, our clients, colleagues, fellow professionals and friends, is to remain on the cutting edge of estate planning and asset protection developments. Never satisfied with the status quo, we continuously challenge ourselves to deliver a higher level of service. Our satisfaction comes from seeing our clients and their families succeed in protecting assets during their lifetimes and preserving them for generations to come.

Be sure to visit our new blog at
www.estatepreservationlaw.com/blog/



Brendan J. King Named Rising Star

Attorney Brendan J. King, partner at Estate Preservation Law Offices-Worcester, MA has been named a Massachusetts Rising Star by Super Lawyers, a Thomson Reuters Service.

Fewer than 5 percent of lawyers in the state qualify for this recognition. Lawyers were asked to submit their nominations of top attorneys who were 40 years old or younger or who have been in practice for 10 years or less. Survey recipients were asked to select only attorneys whom they knew through personal experience. No fee is paid to be included in the Super Lawyers research or on the final list.

In the News

Brendan King is a regular on Money Matters Radio WBNW and WESO every Wednesday afternoons from 3:00 to 4:00 pm. Discussion topics include estate plans for individuals and business owners, long-term care and special needs planning, asset protection and the probate process.

Linda Cammuso is a guest columnist for *Fifty Plus Advocate*. Her articles focus on helping seniors and their families with elder issues.

If you’ve missed Brendan’s broadcasts or Linda’s articles visit www.estatepreservationlaw.com and click on *In The News*.

Are You Eligible for Veterans Benefits?

Talk to EPLO about additional little known benefits: Aid and Attendance and Housebound

Veteran Administration pensions are a benefit paid to wartime veterans who have limited income and assets, are age 65 or older or, if under 65, are permanently and totally disabled. Many veterans qualify for, but never take advantage of little-known benefits offered by the Veterans Administration. The Aid and Attendance (A&A) or Housebound benefits may be available for disabled veterans. These two benefits are part of an “Improved Pension” benefit program that offers benefits to veterans and their surviving spouses. Since these benefits do not require a “service-connected” disability, many veterans or their spouses are not aware of their potential eligibility.

Attorney Linda Cammuso can help you take advantage of this program. She is accredited by the Department for Veterans Affairs, which positions her to provide veterans and their families with advice on complex areas of the law on long-term

care planning including VA pension benefits and Medicaid benefits.

Aid and Attendance Benefit

The Aid and Attendance Benefit can provide money to pay for home care, assisted living and nursing home care for veterans or their spouses. Veterans who qualify are eligible for up to \$1,644 per month, while a surviving spouse is eligible for up to \$1,056 per month. Couples are eligible to receive up to \$1,949 per month.

Housebound Benefit

The Housebound Benefit is another supplemental benefit to the Improved Pension. Housebound benefits are available for certain veterans or their spouses who are disabled and confined to their homes.

If you want more information about these benefits and the eligibility guidelines, call Attorney Linda Cammuso at 508 751-5010

When Did I Become a Senior . . .

Continued from page one

long-term care needs. As part of our complimentary consultation, we will answer your questions and analyze your specific financial and healthcare situation. Our goal is to tailor an estate plan that protects your assets while providing maximum flexibility to adapt to your needs as you age. We also consider strategies to preserve assets for your loved ones beyond your lifetime.

My parents are on the go all the time. I'm happy for them, but worry that an unexpected illness could turn their lives

upside down. What can I do to prepare their future?

Getting parents (or other senior family members) to sit down and talk about their future is a difficult conversation. Family history and dynamics can come into play, which can make the “are you protecting your assets” question fraught with misinterpretation. That’s where EPLO can help. We can bring third party expertise and knowledge to those discussions and combine our experience in Elder Law and Medicaid issues with compassion and insight into your family’s unique situation. We

provide our clients with specialized planning that preserves assets while providing them with peace of mind.

Medicaid paperwork is so confusing. What do I do?

EPLO will handle the application process for you from start to finish. We assist clients in navigating the ever-changing federal and state Medicaid laws and we counsel them on techniques available to protect their assets. Our service does not end there - we continue to work with you to maintain and safeguard your eligibility.

Recipe for Estate Planning Disaster

With the holidays behind us, the last thing anyone wants is another recipe. However, this recipe is one you might already have on hand without even knowing it. Keep reading to find out.

Every good recipe starts with a description of the completed dish and the Estate Planning Disaster Recipe is no exception. If prepared according to the directions, diligent cooks can expect thoroughly unsavory results: unnecessary time and money spent in probate court; unintentional omission of beneficiaries; increased capital gains and estate taxes paid by heirs; hemorrhage of

assets spent on costs of long-term/nursing home care; exposure of assets to beneficiaries' creditors; irresponsible spending (make that blowing) of inherited funds by young or spendthrift beneficiaries; unintentional disqualification of special needs beneficiaries from their needs-based benefits; and everyone's favorite - confusion, hurt feelings and fighting within the family.

Mix equal parts of:

- Lack of proper legal counsel

Even the slightest bit of advice from a qualified estate planning/elder law attorney is bound to spoil this recipe, so it is crucial that the cook steer clear of any professional advice.

- Advice from friends, relatives, neighbors

Cooks with a flair for adventure can experiment by combining the advice of several non-professionals for a smorgasbord effect.

- Procrastination

Like a fine wine or cheese, the Estate Planning Disaster is only improved by the passage of time. The ideal time line is to wait well until into one's senior years, preferably on the verge of a health, family or financial crisis.

- Troubled family dynamics

This oft-overlooked ingredient adds an explosive quality to the recipe. Family tensions can change the whole character of this recipe, transforming a benign dish into an eye-watering experience!

When it comes to the Estate Planning Disaster Recipe, estate planning attorneys all too often have to play the role of reluctant food critics.

The reviews of this concoction are surprisingly bad. Call us perfectionists or even control freaks, but nothing makes an estate planning professional

sadder than to see someone's botched, homemade attempt at estate planning.

At the end of the day there is no substitute for experienced and compassionate advice. Avoid a nasty case of estate planning indigestion and consult a qualified estate planning attorney today.



The Estate Preservation Scholarship Fund

*Committed to supporting students
in their quest for higher education.*



Estate Preservation Law Offices is committed to supporting students in their quest for higher education through our scholarship program.

If you know a deserving student who could qualify for our \$1,500 annual scholarship, please refer your candidate to www.estatepreservationlaw.com and click on scholarship.