

A photograph of a group of children at an outdoor event. In the foreground, a young boy with blonde hair, wearing a yellow t-shirt with a turtle shell graphic and blue shorts, is clapping his hands. Behind him, other children are visible, some wearing orange shirts with the words "TOP LEARNING". The background shows more children and adults in a grassy, outdoor setting.

Your Legacy of Faithfulness can Change the Future

*A step-by-step guide
to direct your assets
to the loved ones and
charities you hold dear.*

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Dear Friends,

Since its beginning, Nebraska Lutheran Outdoor Ministries (NLOM) has enjoyed and greatly benefitted from the generosity of people who, during life, made provisions for legacy gifts in their wills and estate plans. Without those gifts, NLOM would not be able to provide the difference-making summer camping and retreat opportunities that have set this ministry apart. Please accept my thanks and congratulations for starting the distribution plan for your estate. It will take some time, but it will feel good when you have it completed. Once finished, your plan will be an invaluable gift to your loved ones and to the charities you choose to remember.

You will be pleased to know that, in addition to the information in this guide, we have more resources available to help you. The professionals at Lutheran Giving (a Nebraska Synod organization partially funded by NLOM) can walk you through the whole process so that you are able to take your plan to your attorney with little left to decide. This can greatly reduce the time your attorney will need to complete the documents for you and, hopefully, save you some money. Of course, there is no cost to you for the assistance of Lutheran Planned Giving Services.

Recently, my wife and I completed our estate plans, and we feel great knowing that our wishes will be carried out. I'm sure you will, too.

I invite you to move forward without delay in creating (or updating) your estate plan. And, of course, I hope you will decide to include NLOM in your plan.

God bless you on this journey!

In Christ,



Jason Gerdes
Executive Director



P.S. When you include NLOM in your estate plan, you will be welcomed into our Club 10:14 where you will enjoy the fellowship of other friends of this life-changing ministry.

INTRODUCTION

Estate planning is a “must do.” If you have possessions, you have an estate. One school of thought says that the more modest your estate, the greater your need to arrange for its careful handling and disposition. Obviously, the greater the value of your assets and the more diverse your wishes, the more important your need is for a proactive plan in order to cut taxes and costs.

Don’t fall into the trap of thinking that state law will ensure that your estate will be distributed in proper proportions to those you would choose. Nor should you make the mistake of thinking that your children will know what to do with your assets (there are way too many horror stories of what often happens in these cases).

With good planning, the later chapters of your life can be comfortable and fulfilling. You’ll feel good knowing that you have planned well for yourself and that you will be leaving a legacy for family and for the charities that are important to you. That’s called being a good steward!

The material presented here will help you think about how you want your assets to be distributed at death and assist you in gathering the information your attorney will need. This process will make your planning easier, less expensive, and will be a great comfort to your family.

The most important thing is to get started on your plan. In estate planning, the worst mistake of all is procrastination. People know they should make plans, but other things are allowed to get in the way. When the unexpected occurs, others are forced to pick up the pieces of what could be a confusing financial puzzle.

So...let's get started!

THE BASIC STEPS

Once you have decided to create or update your estate plan and have gathered all the pertinent information, you will need to talk with your attorney. This 3-step process will save time and help you make tax-wise decisions as you plan for your estate distribution.

STEP 1

Gather personal and financial paperwork including birth certificates, veteran's discharge certificates, prior wills or trusts, and financial documents.

STEP 2

Record information about you and your family.

STEP 3

Write down what you own and owe.

A series of worksheets is included in the back pocket of this guide to bring all necessary information into one place.



"Andy and I were counselors at Carol Joy Holling Camp in 2000 when we met and fell in love. We married in 2003, and since then, our family has continued to be involved with camp in a variety of meaningful ways. We love seeing the impact camp is having on our kids as they grow in faith. We have chosen to include NLOM in our estate plans because we believe that every child should have the same opportunity to grow in faith while experiencing God's love."

- Brooke Gregory

HOW SHOULD YOUR ESTATE BE DIVIDED?

To help choose the plan that's right for you, it is important that you consider the following questions:

1. After your lifetime, how and to whom do you want your estate distributed?
2. If you and your spouse die before your children are old enough to handle larger amounts of money, who should be the trustee of their money? Who should be their guardian while they are minors?
3. How do you want your investments managed after your lifetime? Should your spouse manage them? If not, from whom should your spouse seek help?
4. If you are not survived by a spouse or children, do you want to benefit other relatives?
5. What ministries and other charitable organizations would you like to support?



"As Bishop of the Nebraska Synod during the earliest days of camp, I've been privileged to witness the growth and effectiveness of Nebraska Lutheran Outdoor Ministries. NLOM continues to do critically important work, so Barbara and I are pleased that we have made a generous provision for camp in our estate plans."

- Rev. Dr. Dennis Anderson

PLANNING OPTIONS & DOCUMENTS

Regardless of the size of your estate, you generally should have as a minimum four estate planning tools. Those four include: a will, a durable power of attorney for finances, a durable power of attorney for healthcare, and an advanced directive (also known as a living will).

1. YOUR WILL

A will is a legal document that details where you want your estate's assets to go, who is willing to oversee the execution of the will, and may state who is to care for any minor children.

Without a will, the laws of the state determine what happens to your estate's property. Your spouse, children, charities, or other heirs could end up with less than you had planned, the assets could be poorly managed, children might not have the guardian you would have chosen, and your estate could end up paying more taxes and fees than necessary.

A professionally prepared will, drafted locally, will ensure compliance with state laws, it will help to ensure all important details are included, and will further ensure that challenges to the will won't happen.

2. DURABLE POWER OF ATTORNEY FOR FINANCES

A power of attorney is a lifetime document for estate planning. It allows you to designate a representative to perform certain actions for you should you become unable to manage your affairs. The representative can pay bills, sell securities, or make major financial decisions on your behalf, depending on how broad or narrow you limit the powers. Without a power of attorney, your spouse or other loved one would have to go through the delay and expense of seeking approval from the court to carry out needed financial transactions.

3. DURABLE POWER OF ATTORNEY FOR HEALTHCARE

This document authorizes a person to make medical decisions on your behalf, ideally to carry out what you've specified in your advanced directive (living will). Be sure to talk to the person before appointing them, to ensure that they understand and are comfortable with your wishes, and will be strong enough to carry them out even though some family members may object.

4. ADVANCED DIRECTIVE

An advanced directive (living will) is your written declaration of what life-sustaining medical treatments you will allow or not allow should you become incapacitated. You may request that artificial nourishment be or not be withheld if you are terminally ill. Family members or medical institutions often challenge the meaning or validity of advanced directives, so take considerable care and be specific when drafting your wishes.



"NLOM has an impressive and very strong history that Betty and I fully appreciate. By including NLOM in our estate plan, along with other ministries that we love to support, we are happy to help ensure the future success of camping ministry in Nebraska."

- Bud Dasenbrock

ADDITIONAL PLANNING OPTIONS

5. TRUSTS

It may make sense for you to consider a trust in your estate plan. Trusts are legal vehicles for managing your assets and are typically less vulnerable to legal challenges than wills. Among other things, a trust can:

- Manage funds for an heir who is too young or unable to handle money
- Require an heir to meet certain standards (graduate from college, live independently, etc.)
- Ensure that certain assets go to your children rather than a spouse's children from a previous marriage
- Provide for a disabled child without disqualifying that child from government support (Special Needs Trust)
- Provide a life income for you
- Provide income over time for heirs and leave more for charity
- Avoid probate

6. LIFE INSURANCE

Life insurance is a contract that contains a beneficiary designation form. With planning assistance, you can select primary and contingent beneficiaries in a way that will help meet the goals of your plan. Nebraska Lutheran Outdoor Ministries may be named as a beneficiary.



7. IRA, 401(k), 403(b) OR OTHER RETIREMENT PLANS

Your retirement plan is transferred by a beneficiary designation and, with the exception of the Roth IRA, these assets are taxed at the time funds are withdrawn from the account. As these assets are subject to tax, it may make good sense to name a charity such as NLOM as a beneficiary. Beneficiary designations should be reviewed every two years.

8. ESTATE PLAN FOR BUSINESS, INVESTMENTS, ETC.

If you own a family business, substantial real estate, or if you have a large estate, a custom plan that covers your property goals and requirements should be considered.



LIST TO DISPOSE OF PERSONAL PROPERTY

Many people own items of sentimental value that they want to pass on to certain family members or special friends. Examples include china, silver, jewelry, furniture, stamp or coin collections, and other personal items that are moveable. Many states permit you to update and maintain such a list of personal items that may be changed whenever you desire. The list must be signed and dated, describing the personal property and naming the recipient.



FINAL ARRANGEMENTS

Making known in writing the preferences you have for your funeral/memorial services, disposition of remains, flowers, and memorial fund designations will be incredibly helpful to your family and friends. The appointment of a person to oversee your preferences will help ensure that your wishes are carried out. Be sure to share your wishes with your family! NLOM can provide you with a helpful form for this.

RESOURCES FOR ASSISTANCE

Nebraska Lutheran Outdoor Ministries is in a position to work with you on your personalized estate plan. Our Special Gifts Officer, Dave Coker, is ready to help you get started and will provide motivation to keep the process going through completion.

We work with Lutheran Giving, an agency funded by the serving arms of the Nebraska Synod/ELCA. Lutheran Giving has the knowledge and expertise to suggest what could be right for you so that you can have most all of your “ducks in order” before you visit with your estate planning attorney.

Contact Dave Coker by email at DCoker@NLOM.org or by phone at 402-430-4925.



Disclosure on Attorneys and This Charity

Thank you for reviewing this information and for completing the forms contained within. This material is offered by Nebraska Lutheran Outdoor Ministries as an educational service. While we attempt to provide helpful estate and financial background, we are not able to offer specific legal advice on your personal situation. We recommend that you consult your own attorney when you are ready to complete your estate plan.



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