

FINANCIAL AND ESTATE PLANNING

Budget wisely and plan for the future. Get your finances in order, have an emergency fund and prepare for retirement.

Your Personal Financial Planning

Personal Inventory:

- ☞ Review your credit report and score.
- ☞ Make a list of assets, including bank accounts, real estate, vehicles, jewelry, retirement account, investments and any other items of value.
- ☞ Make a list of debts, including credit cards, mortgage, student loans and other loans.

Set financial goals:

- ✦ Establish a budget.
- ✦ Create an emergency fund for the unexpected. Save enough to sustain your basic needs (utilities, groceries, rent/mortgage, vehicle expenses).
- ✦ Pay off credit cards and/or research for lower interest rates.
- ✦ Get life insurance and research disability-income insurance.
- ✦ Think about your dreams, such as buying a home, renovating, moving or saving so that you will have enough money to have a family or to send children to college.

Be proactive! It is never too late to start planning for “financial health, happiness and welfare” for you and your family.

EAP – SETA’s Employee Assistance Program can provide someone to speak with regarding financial and legal services pertaining to budgeting, retirement planning, credit and financial questions, estate planning and much more. This service is at no cost initially to you.

Call 1-800-227-1060 or members.mhn.com and use the Company Code "sacramento".



Estate Planning

Most of us don't want to think about what might go wrong in our lives and we are no longer here. But planning in advance can provide peace of mind to yourself as well as your loved ones. By planning ahead and having it in writing can help reduce the stress and limit uncertainty on how to carry out your wishes.

Here are some questions you should ask yourself now:

"If I cannot speak for myself, who will make important decisions on my behalf?"

"Who knows where to find my records?"

"Who gets what when I am gone?"

"Who will take care of my children?"

"Do I have the right beneficiaries on my accounts?"

"Where do my assets go if I do not make these designations in advance?"

Sound overwhelming? You are not alone. Pre-planning for the unexpected or end of life is a daunting task. It is one that most of us prefer not to think about until we are close to or have retired. It is never too early to do estate planning. Have a series of family discussions to set expectations regarding your estate planning decisions.

- 1) Protect the future for your loved ones by obtaining life insurance. Doing this can help provide financial security for those who depend on you. There are many types of life insurance policies so you will want to speak with an expert to determine the type, amount and beneficiaries of the policy.
- 2) By creating a will, you can arrange for your possessions to be distributed and managed the way you want. Leave no doubt about your wishes. There are also trusts that can be prepared. You should speak with a professional whose area of expertise is in wills, trusts and estate planning.
- 3) Writing out your wishes for health care can protect you if you become unable to make medical decisions for yourself. You can obtain a Health Care Directive from most medical providers. Once you complete the document, you can turn it in to your medical provider to keep on file.

- 4) With a durable power of attorney for finances, you can give a trusted person authority to handle your finances and property if you become incapacitated and unable to handle your own affairs. The person you name to handle your finances is called your attorney-in-fact, but does not have to be an attorney.

- 5) You can set up a payable-on-death account at your bank and deposit funds into to pay for your funeral and related expenses. If you do not wish to have a separate account for this, you can have your bank accounts set up with a pay-on-death beneficiary, who will be able to immediately access your accounts upon your death with their identification. This process can help relieve some of the stress and anxiety when a loved one has passed.

Resources: There are many websites online you can research for information regarding financial and estate planning, as well as retirement planning. You can also set up an appointment with a financial, estate and/or retirement advisor to go over your personal situation and how it relates to your current and future financial planning.

