

# Estate Planning Checklist

ESTATE PLANNING

Taking the first step is always the most difficult. This is very true for people considering their estate planning issues and are unsure what to do about them. This reluctance to begin the planning process can be overcome by exploring the possibilities in the following Estate Planning Checklist, which identifies many of the issues and considerations that we are all facing. The checklist is intended to get you thinking about your estate plan and provides you with the opportunity to consider the options available to you. Once properly implemented, the result is a plan which reflects your individual situation. An estate plan is a documented expression of your wishes which provides peace of mind in knowing your loved ones will be provided for appropriately.

**The checklist is divided into four major categories:**

- Will Planning
- Liquidity Planning
- Business Planning
- Miscellaneous Planning

As you read through these questions, please check off the issues that you need to address or will require the assistance of your Investment Advisor.

## Estate Planning Checklist

### 1. Will planning

- Should a new will be drawn up that reflects your current wishes?
- Should a new will be drawn up to treat your beneficiaries more equitably?
- Will the bequests set out in your will be accomplished with the types of assets currently making up your estate?
- Is reducing annual income taxes for your beneficiaries an important consideration?
- Should your will utilize trusts to provide greater control over your assets?
- Is providing education and/or encouraging beneficiaries to complete post secondary education a priority?
- Are there any concerns about protecting an inheritance if a beneficiary's marriage breaks down?
- Is it necessary to protect beneficiaries who might be unable to manage money?



- ❑ Are arrangements necessary in blended family situations to support your current spouse while ensuring that capital passes to your children from a first marriage?
- ❑ Is it necessary to make special arrangements for infant children:
  - ❑ To hold portions of their inheritance until they attain responsible ages or reach certain predetermined milestones such as attaining a certain level of education.
  - ❑ To keep them in the family home, or ensure suitable accommodations.
  - ❑ To provide financial support for them while residing with guardians and to provide access to capital for special needs while growing up.
  - ❑ To protect them against undesirable custody or guardianship applications.
- ❑ Should a new will be drawn up to take into consideration adopted children or grandchildren?
- ❑ Are special arrangements required for infirm beneficiaries including protecting their social assistance or other government support?
- ❑ Should a new will be drawn up to take into consideration the special needs of any other dependants such as parents?
- ❑ Have appropriate beneficiary designations been made for registered plans (RRSPs, RPPs, DPSPs)?
- ❑ Have you examined the options available for cottage or vacation home succession planning?
- ❑ Are there gifts of specific items (like jewellery, artwork, etc.) to friends, family or others that you would want to include in an estate plan?
- ❑ Do you want your executors<sup>1</sup>, trustees or beneficiaries to obtain financial or other advice from specific advisors?
- ❑ Do you want to provide benefits beyond the next generation?
- ❑ Are you interested in making charitable donations, establishing charitable remainder trusts or making charitable gifts of securities in your estate plan?

### Your team of experts

Richardson Wealth brings together the resources required to deliver a seamless approach to integrated wealth management solutions. Your Investment Advisor has direct access to our in-house Tax & Estate Planning Team, a multidisciplinary group of professionals that can review and augment any existing wealth planning strategies with recommendations in the areas of financial, tax, estate, insurance, philanthropy and business succession planning.

## 2. Liquidity planning

- ❑ If you are at the wealth accumulation stage, will there be sufficient assets to pay off existing debts and provide an income for dependants?
- ❑ If you are at the wealth preservation stage, will there be adequate liquidity in the estate at the death of the second spouse to pay the expected income taxes and estate costs to avoid undue shrinkage in the value of the estate?

## 3. Business planning

- ❑ As a business owner do you have a need for personal insurance either for wealth accumulation or wealth preservation reasons? Can the insurance be purchased by the corporation rather than by the client personally?
- ❑ Is there a buy-sell agreement? If yes, is funding in place?
- ❑ Should consideration be given to an estate freeze to minimize your tax liability and allow the future growth to accrue to your children?
- ❑ If your spouse and/or family are to carry on the business after your death, will there be enough liquidity in the business to see them through the transition period?
- ❑ Should the business be providing up to \$10,000 as a tax-free death benefit for employees' spouse or other dependants?

<sup>1</sup> Liquidators in Quebec

#### 4. Miscellaneous planning

- Are any assets located outside of Canada? If yes, has consideration been given to potential U.S. Estate Tax Issues for U.S. situs assets?
- Do you have dual citizenship?
- Are there any plans to move out of the jurisdiction in the future?
- Are the potential executors/trustees resident in the appropriate jurisdiction and/or do they plan to stay in the jurisdiction?
- Is the payment of Probate fees a concern?
- Is there an opportunity to save Probate and other estate costs on the transfer of certain assets like private company shares<sup>2</sup>?

If any of these issues and considerations are of interest to you, please contact your Richardson Wealth Investment Advisor. Working together with the members of our Tax & Estate Planning Team, your Investment Advisor can develop a plan, which when properly implemented, will provide you with the peace of mind in knowing your loved ones will be provided for appropriately.

2 Not applicable in Quebec

#### Tax & Estate Planning

As an individual investor or a business owner you have unique objectives and priorities that need to be considered. At Richardson Wealth, your Investment Advisor collaborates with our in-house Tax & Estate Planning professionals to deliver customized wealth management solutions designed to address tax, estate, insurance, philanthropic and succession needs.

Our approach. Our expertise. Our experience.  
**Our difference.**

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