

“Guardian-Motivated” Estate Planning Provides Parents with Peace of Mind in an Unpredictable World

Ben Leonard, an estate planning attorney in Colorado, regularly prepares estate plans for parents whose primary motivation is to name a willing and able guardian for their child/children in the event the parents die prematurely or become incapacitated. Ben refers to this as “Guardian-Motivated Estate Planning,” and he is seeing more and more parents inspired to take this approach for the peace of mind it provides.

Benefits of “Guardian-Motivated” Estate Planning:

- **Peace of Mind.** You will have peace of mind while you are living, knowing you have specified who you wish to care for your child/children in the event of your death or incapacity.
- **Long-Term Control.** You retain control of this decision even after your death; you, not the courts, get to decide what’s in the best interest of your child/children.
- **Consent from Your Nominated Guardian.** This process gives you an opportunity to gain the willing consent of your nominated guardian(s).
- **Minimize Family Conflict.** You will learn strategies for communicating your wishes to your immediate family and relatives to help ensure your loved ones don’t end up fighting in court.
- **Future Coverage.** Your plan will cover any additional children, as you can specify that your nominated guardian will care for future-born children as well.
- **Ultimate Flexibility.** You can change your nominated guardian at any time, if you wish.
- **Steer Your Assets to Support Your Child.** You can direct your financial assets to support the care of your child/children to lessen the financial strain on your nominated guardian.
- **Long-Term Protection of Your Estate and Interests.** Having a comprehensive estate plan in place will ensure all of your assets and interests are safeguarded accordingly.
- **Affordability Combined with Quality Representation.** For a reasonable fee, you will receive a comprehensive estate plan drafted and executed by a highly competent lawyer.

Your Estate Plan Includes These Protective Documents:

- **Nomination of Guardian Paperwork** specifying who will care for your child/children.
- **Last Will & Testament** that includes a trust for your child/children.
- **Living Will and Advanced Healthcare Directives** detailing your medical wishes.
- **Medical Powers of Attorney** clarifying who can make medical decisions on your behalf.
- **HIPAA Authorization** stipulating what your doctors can share with whom.
- **General Powers of Attorney** specifying who can make general decisions on your behalf.



BEN LEONARD is a member of the Estate Planning and Tax Practice in the firm’s Denver office. Using effective estate planning strategies, he helps individuals and families protect their wealth and advance their personal and business interests. He is particularly passionate about helping parents prepare estate plans to protect their children. “Every person with one or more children needs an estate plan,” Ben says. “Once a parent understands how an estate plan protects his or her child, everything else an estate plan offers becomes a secondary benefit to that goal.”

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