Family financial security with a living trust

Investing and managing your various assets wisely are but means to a very important goal: financial security for yourself and your family.

There are many issues associated with meeting that goal, and they aren't all couched in financial terms such as "rates of return," "risk/reward ratios" and "after-tax cash flows." Family financial security is best achieved with a dynamic, flexible plan, one that provides for the continuity of sound investment management for the present and the future. A plan that still will function successfully even in the event of unexpected disability or death.

A comprehensive package

A revocable living trust can provide just about everything that you need to structure a complete financial plan. Establishing a living trust is an approach to investment management that provides uninterrupted financial protection for yourself and your designated beneficiaries, as well as a host of other benefits. Here is a short list of what a living trust can accomplish for you and your family:

• *Professional investment management for your portfolio*. The investment strategy for your trust's assets will be tailored specifically to your age, as well as your needs and circumstances. By naming a professional trustee, you gain the security of knowing that your investments are in capable, experienced hands. And in implementing your strategy, you will have a broad array of investments from which to choose.

• *Freedom from the "busywork" of managing your investments*. When you transfer assets to a living trust, you also are transferring the details and chores associated with their management to the trustee. Not only do you free up valuable time, but you also gain the peace of mind of knowing that even during an extended absence, there is someone at the helm, decreasing the chances of incurring costs associated with errors or lapses in tending to your investments.

• *Continued investment management during any period of disability*. Should you become disabled, the trustee of your living trust can be directed to carry out a wide variety of practical tasks, including the filing of tax returns and payment of your taxes and household and medical bills. This kind of provision in a trust agreement may eliminate the need to name a court-appointed guardian to control and manage your assets.

• *Estate organization*. Your living trust can be coordinated with your will to allow for the unification of your assets in order to provide for more efficient estate management. You can arrange

for the distribution of your property to your heirs and create a strategy that can minimize the impact of estate taxes. With such an approach, you may be able to avoid the potential costs and frustrating delays of probate proceedings.

• *Privacy*. Unlike a will, in most instances, the terms of a living trust are not available to the public, shielding your family finances from unwanted scrutiny.

Change, whenever you need it

The terms of the revocable living trust that you establish never are set in stone. You are free to amend or cancel the trust at any time.

By establishing a living trust during your lifetime, you can put your trustee to a "performance" test, while retaining the option to make other arrangements in the future if you are not satisfied.

An invitation

We invite you to call upon us to find out more about how a living trust can serve the financial planning needs of you and your family. And we welcome the chance to serve as the trustee of your living trust.

Put us to the test. We believe that you will be pleased with both our performance and our service.

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Any developments occurring after January 1, 2009, are not reflected in this article.