

FINANCIAL WELLNESS

RESOLVE TO PROTECT YOUR FINANCES AND YOUR FAMILY IN THE NEW YEAR

After a holiday season spent racking up credit card bills, many Americans consider making financial resolutions in the New Year. However, now is the perfect time to not only reevaluate your saving and spending, but also commit to creating a more holistic financial plan designed to protect your finances and your family.

Consumers are seeking stability and preparedness in today's uncertain economic environment, according to a recent Consumer Sentiment Tracker study by Lincoln Financial Group. With ongoing inflation and market volatility, 56% of respondents cited protection from risk as being most important to them. When it comes to thinking about their finances, people said they have the greatest interest in protecting their family (39%) followed by their income (26%).

"Our research reinforced the importance of financial solutions that can help consumers navigate through market cycles and protect their loved ones," said David Berkowitz, president, Lincoln Financial Network, Lincoln Financial's wealth management business. "People are not only concerned about having enough to pay their bills, but also saving for retirement and preparing for the



PHOTO COURTESY OF METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION

With a robust plan, you can help ensure a solid financial future for you and your family.

unexpected. It's important to have a well-rounded financial plan that can address those risks, protect assets and create positive outcomes for today's families."

To achieve a stronger financial future, don't neglect your finances in 2023 — instead, add a little TLC (Talk, Learn, Commit). Resolve to create a robust financial plan using these three tips

from Lincoln Financial:

1. Talk about it. Financial conversations play a crucial role. Be transparent with your loved ones about financial priorities so you can set expectations and work toward your shared financial goals. Initiate ongoing discussions to stay on track with everything from sav-

ing for retirement to paying for a long-term health-care event, which can happen suddenly and be very costly. Also, consider talking to a financial professional who can help identify solutions that best meet your individual needs, as well as drive better outcomes. Lincoln's research found those who work with financial profes-

sionals are more likely to prioritize retirement savings (26% vs. 10%).

2. Learn more about tax-deferred investments. Life insurance can be more than just a death benefit, with some types of policies offering income replacement for unforeseen events. It can also protect your financial se-

curity from the impact of taxes, market volatility and longevity. It's not just for individuals and families either, but businesses too. Also, consider diversifying your portfolio with an annuity, which can provide protected growth and monthly lifetime income to help cover expenses in retirement and ensure you have a stream of income.

3. Commit to maximizing your workplace benefits. Look into supplemental coverages like disability, accident and life insurance that may be available through your employer. Solutions like these protect against unexpected events that can disrupt your ability to provide for your family or drive you into additional debt. If you have an employer-sponsored retirement plan, make sure you are contributing and getting a match, if offered. Tap into any financial wellness tools offered at work to help provide you with an accurate picture of your holistic financial situation and lower stress.

With a robust plan, you can help ensure a solid financial future for you and your family. Visit [lfg.com](https://www.lfg.com) for more tools and resources.

Story courtesy of StatePoint Media

FUNERALS

How to start the conversation about funeral planning

We plan ahead for the things in life we look forward to — the birth of a baby, weddings, vacations and holidays. It doesn't come as naturally to plan for our funeral. It's easier to avoid the conversation altogether. But, by discussing your personal wishes for your final arrangements, you can protect your loved ones from having to make difficult decisions in a time of immense grief, and potentially ease their financial obligations.

None of us wants to be a burden on those we love. Yet conversations around funeral planning can be tough. Some families find it more natural to discuss the details of their final wishes after the death of a friend or colleague. Others look for specific milestones, like birthdays or retirement. And some families don't want to have the discussion at all, preferring to write their wishes down. (Just don't forget to tell your loved ones where to find the document!)

Starting the conversation can be challenging, whether you're talking about your funeral or asking a loved one how they want to be memorialized. Perhaps watch a movie with a funeral scene or even just schedule a casual conversation after dinner. Here are a few suggestions for kicking off the discussion:

- Do you want to be buried or cremated?
- Have I ever told you my favorite scripture?
- If you could write your own eulogy, what would you say?
- Would you prefer a traditional funeral or more contemporary celebration of life?

If you're still unsure how to broach the subject, The Insider's Guide to Funeral & Cremation Planning is a great resource. Following along with the free guide will help you and your loved ones understand the steps of advance funeral planning. Or you can download Imagine, a free booklet that will help you design the one-of-a-kind service you'd like to have.

Remember that almost any funeral or cremation can be planned in advance, including the venue, catering, mementos and cemetery property, but you might be surprised at all there is to consider. A memorial service is unlike any other event, and, by some estimates, your loved ones could have up to 200 decisions



PHOTO COURTESY OF METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION

Talking openly about the memorial you envision — and encouraging your loved ones to do the same — removes the guesswork from the planning process.



PHOTO COURTESY OF BRANDPOINT

None of us wants to be a burden on those we love. Yet conversations around funeral planning can be tough.

to make in a short timeframe, during the darkest hours of their lives. The most memorable services are planned thoughtfully, with personalized touches that reflect the individual and bring comfort to those in attendance. A Dignity Memorial funeral director can help you navigate your options and develop a plan for a truly personalized event.

Talking openly about the memorial you envision — and encouraging your loved ones to do the same — removes the guesswork from the planning process, and the focus can stay



PHOTO COURTESY OF METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION

Starting the conversation can be challenging, whether you're talking about your funeral or asking a loved one how they want to be memorialized.

on honoring a unique life lived and celebrating the moments you and your loved ones cherish.

For more information, visit [dignitymemorial.com](https://www.dignitymemorial.com).

Story courtesy of BrandPoint

ESTATE PLANNING



PHOTO COURTESY OF METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION

Estate planning is an important part of managing one's finances.

Explaining wills and trusts

It's never too early for adults to think about estate planning. Estate planning is an important part of money management. While it's easy to think of estate planning as just a way to dictate how your assets are allocated after your death, estate planning also can protect people and their money should accidents or injury make them incapable of managing their finances on their own.

Some familiar terms may come up when people begin planning how they hope to transfer their assets. Two more common terms are wills and trusts. Understanding the distinctions between the two can help people as they begin estate planning.

What is a will?

The online financial resource Investopedia notes that wills are legally enforceable documents that dictate how people want their affairs handled and assets allocated in the wake of their deaths. Wills should include a host of information, including who a person wants to assume guardianship of their minor children should they pass away. This is especially important information to include in a will, as surviving relatives may have to go to court to contest guardianship if parents do not dic-

tate who they want to serve as guardians in their wills.

What is a trust?

A trust is a relationship in which another party is given authority to handle a person's assets for the benefit of that person's beneficiaries. When making a trust, a person will need to designate someone as a trustee, who will be tasked with distributing assets in accordance to the terms dictated in the trust. There are many types of trusts, and working with an attorney who specializes in estate planning can help men and women determine which type of trust, if any, is best for them.

Is it better to have a will or a trust?

Both wills and trusts can be useful when estate planning. In fact, wills are often used to establish trusts, and many people have both a will and a trust.

Estate planning is an important part of managing one's finances. A qualified attorney who specializes in estate planning can help people write their wills and, if necessary, establish trusts that can help surviving loved ones in the wake of their death.

Story courtesy of Metro Creative Connection

A Commitment to Personal Service for 4 Generations

The first Martenson Funeral Home, established in 1934 in Detroit, has been serving the families of the Downriver area for over 80 years. Over the years, the entire family and staff have looked for better ways to serve families who have come to trust and depend on The Martenson Family. Offering choices in funeral arrangements, maintaining comfortable surroundings, and providing assistance after the funeral are just a few ways we can help. All six of the Martenson/Allore Funeral Homes are family-owned and offer a warm, home-like atmosphere, a bright, welcoming feeling, and staff members whose caring and compassion will greet you the moment you enter.

Offering choices in funeral arrangements, maintaining comfortable surroundings and providing assistance after the funeral are just a few ways we can help.

During a time of grieving, our caring professionals will ensure that all aspects of the cremation or burial services are in place and managed for the family. As trusted funeral home services providers, we will obtain all required permits

and certificates, and we will coordinate all aspects of the ceremony you choose. Our staff can arrange for flowers, tributes and other special requests, and we take the time to understand the specific needs of the family for their remembrance of their loved one.

We also specialize in working with families of veterans. Our services include assistance with documentation and support in working with the Department of Veterans Affairs.



When you need help to plan a Remembrance of Life, including traditional burial services or cremation arrangements, we pledge to be a professional resource and accept this unique responsibility to honor the dignity of life, to aid the family in time of grief and to encourage remembrance with each family within its own traditions, culture and financial

means. We believe that it's our job to provide extraordinary, personalized opportunities to help you celebrate the life of your loved one.

Martenson Family of Funeral Homes is a *Cremation-With-Care* provider. Rest assured that every cremation is performed with dignity & respect in accordance with the highest level of ethical cremation standards & procedures by a local certified cremation specialist.

Those of us who have enjoyed the love of a pet over the course of many years know that we can feel the loss of that companionship very deeply. Our beloved, loyal friends deserve a tribute just as a family member would. That is why Martenson Funeral Home now offers the opportunity to say goodbye to a pet in a healing, dignified way and have also have cremation options for your family pet.

We are always available to help and answer questions at any time of the day. Contact martenson.com or 734-671-5400 for more information.

A CELEBRATION:
Celebrate the life
and let the memories live



John Martenson, Jr.



Michael Martenson



Ben Martenson



Robin Locklear



Alayna M. Karsten



Mika Wright



Ryan Wahl



Mckenzie Drysdale



Derek Welker



Tom Trouten

Serving families in our community for 4 generations

(734) 671-5400

martenson.com

Ridge Chapel
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Trenton, MI 48183

Trenton Chapel
734-671-5400
3200 West Rd.
Trenton, MI 48183

Allen Park Chapel
313-386-6600
10915 Allen Rd.
Allen Park, MI 48101

Allore Funeral Home/
Monroe Chapel
734-241-5225
203 East Elm Ave.
Monroe, MI 48162

Allore Funeral Home/
Ford Chapel
734-379-9311
23620 N. Huron River Dr.
Rockwood, MI 48173

Liedel Chapel
734-587-8465
9061 Raisin St.
Maybee, MI 48159

ESTATE PLANNING

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PHOTO COURTESY OF METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION

Determining if you are a good candidate for life insurance involves doing a little research. These qualities often make life insurance a smart move.

Who needs life insurance?

Life insurance is one of many components of estate planning. Statistics from the insurance industry groups Life Happens and LIMRA indicate that 70% of Americans consider life insurance a necessity. However, 41% of respondents in 2017 did not have any life insurance.

Even though most people deem life insurance important, it is not necessary for everyone. Determining if you are a good candidate for life insurance involves doing a little research. These qualities often make life insurance a smart move.

You're married or in a committed relationship

If you are married or in a relationship in which your partner depends on you financially — even if just partially — it is smart to have a life insurance policy. This way your significant other does not have to rely entirely on his or her income to pay off debts or maintain the quality of life you currently enjoy. Many households cannot function without two incomes. Life insurance can ensure financial burdens do not rest entirely on the shoulders of surviving loved ones.

You have children

If you have children who depend on you, life insurance is a must-have. If your spouse and children could not continue their standard of living on one income, then life insurance can fill in the gap or pay for future plans, such as college educations.

Even if you are a stay-at-home parent, your contribution to the household still holds weight. Should you pass away, your spouse will have to pay for tasks that you would normally perform, such as child care, cleaning services, cooking, and transportation.

You're a business owner

Entrepreneurs benefit from life insurance since it can help pay off business debts, advises the online financial resource NerdWallet. When business owners pass away, their heirs might be able to use life insurance payouts to pay off estate taxes or fund a buy-sell agreement.

You want to leave an inheritance

If you do not have a vast accumulation of assets, investing in permanent life insurance can provide a small sum of money to heirs upon your death.

A life insurance policy is a wise investment for people whose survivors could benefit from some financial assistance in the wake of their deaths.

Story courtesy of Metro Creative Connection

Things to know before drafting a living will

During the prime of their lives, people typically don't give much thought to scenarios in which they become ill or are facing the end of life. Sickness and mortality are not easy conversations to have, but it is important for everyone to approach these heavy topics with close family members so that individuals can rest easy knowing their needs will be met if or when their health falters.

An advanced healthcare directive — also known as a living will — is a legal document in which a person lists the specifics of medical care and comfort actions they desire should the individual no longer be able to make decisions for themselves due to illness or incapacity. The legal advice resource Legal Zoom says the living will may list certain things, such as whether life support is desired or if pain medication should be administered. A living will should not be confused with a traditional will, which is a legal document that explains wishes for financial and personal assets after a person dies.

Living wills also differ from living trusts, which address how assets will be managed if a person becomes incapacitated.

A living will is not always a necessity if a person does not have strong feelings about decisions made on his or her behalf while not cognizant. However, for those who do want to have a say in care, a living will is the best method for ensuring choices will be carried out. The following are some other questions people should ask themselves concerning living wills.

- Do I want to remove the burden of tough choices from my loved ones? A living will relieves grieving loved ones of the responsibility of making challenging decisions of invoking life-saving procedures or not — particularly if they're not sure what you desire.

- Do I have firm feelings about life-saving methods? A living will allows you to spell out preferences on insertion of feeding tubes, if you want specialized hydration, if you want to be hooked up to life support



PHOTOS COURTESY OF METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION

A living will is an important component of medical and estate planning.

if brain function is minimal, and a host of other scenarios.

- Is cost preventing me from drafting a living will? Cost need not be a factor in setting up a living will. You can download a free template from any number of online legal sources. Local hospitals often have forms as well, which can be notarized for only a few dollars. These forms are generally comprehensive and can help you answer all the questions and write in specifics.

- Have you selected a trusted person to carry out wishes? A health care proxy, according to the American Bar Association, is a person appointed by you with the authority to make decisions for you if you are unable to express your preferences for medical treatment.

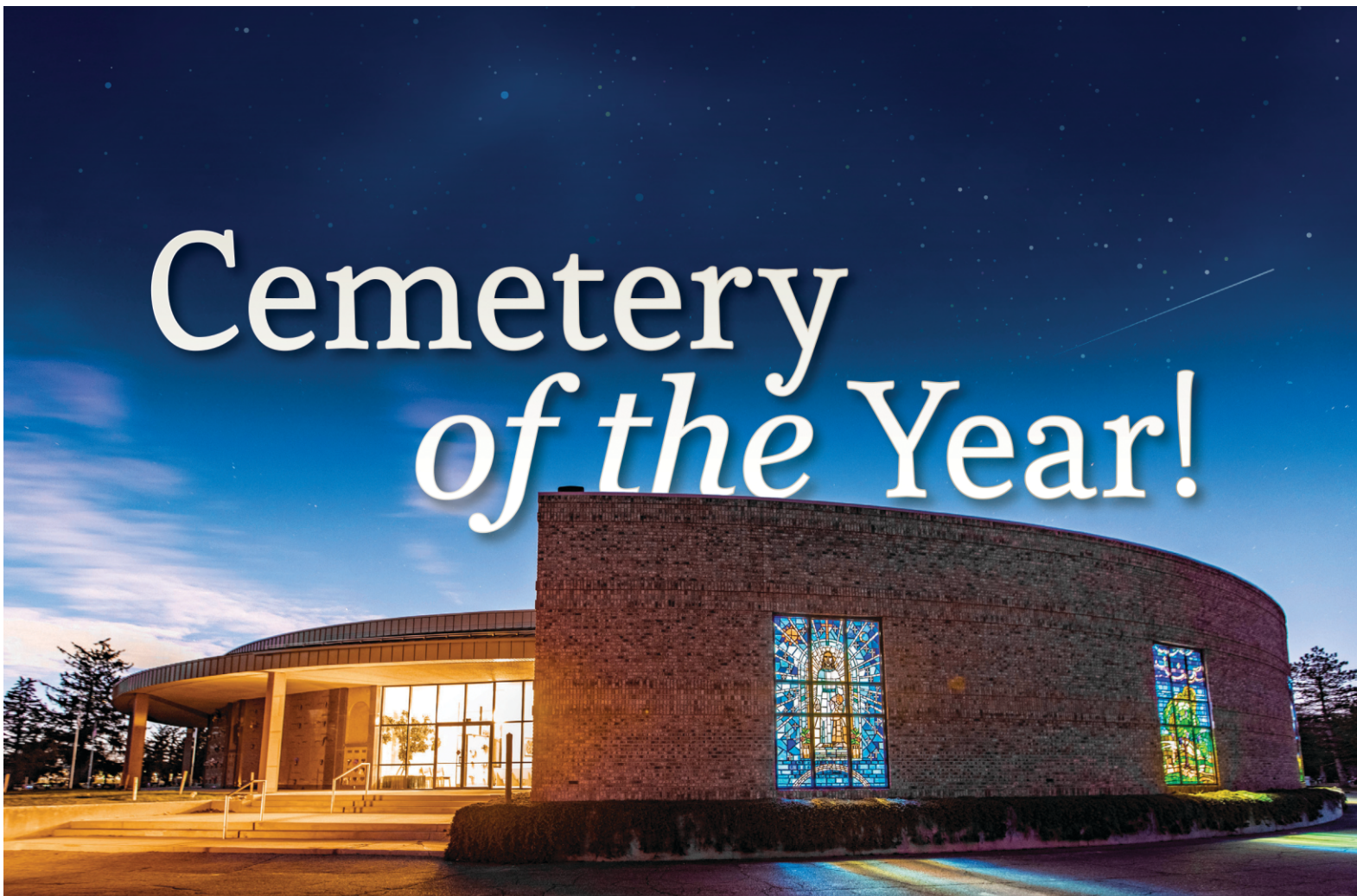
Together with the living will, the health care proxy, also called a durable medical power of attorney, can fulfill your wishes accordingly. A living will is an important component of medical and estate planning.

Story courtesy of Metro Creative Connection



An advanced healthcare directive — also known as a living will — is a legal document in which a person lists the specifics of medical care and comfort actions they desire should the individual no longer be able to make decisions for themselves due to illness or incapacity.

Cemetery of the Year!



There are over 20,000 registered cemeteries in the US, and only one is selected as the Cemetery of the Year.

Michigan Memorial Park was honored with this prestigious award based on tough criteria by their peers such as overall park aesthetics, innovations, superior maintenance, and a responsive management team and staff.

Yes, that is your Michigan Memorial Park, and, Memorial Funeral Home where a high standard of excellence and integrity is something you can count on when you need it most.



Michigan Memorial

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ESTATE PLANNING

Estate planning statistics to read before writing your will

The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated estate planning activity in the U.S. But many Americans still remain without one.

Only 33% of U.S. adults have created estate planning documents. Learn which demographics are the most and least likely to have a will and why it's so important to share your end-of-life wishes with your loved ones.

For those who haven't made a living trust or created any estate planning documents, 60% report not making any effort to start. Understandably, estate planning can be an uncomfortable topic to think about and even harder to talk about, but it is something you shouldn't postpone for too long.

Estate planning involves developing a comprehensive plan to help transfer your assets to the people or organizations of your choice upon your death. If you own any valuable assets—including a house, a car, or a bank account—or if there are people who depend on you, you should have an estate plan in place. Even if you're single with no dependents, a living trust and a will can ensure that you get to choose what happens to you and your possessions instead of the state.

Here are 49 estate planning statistics for a closer look at how common estate planning is among various demographics, why so many people don't have a will, the effects of pandemics and natural disasters on estate planning, and tips for making a will.

Must-read estate planning statistics

Fifty-six percent of Americans believe that estate planning is important, but only 33% of adults in the U.S. have documented their end-of-life plans. Of

the estate plans made in 2021, 75.12% were wills, 18.78% were trusts, and 6.1% of people nominated a guardian for their young children.

Here are some other recent estate planning statistics from surveys of Americans:

- 32% of Americans have a will. (Caring.com)
- 41% of people between the ages of 18 and 34, and 34% of people between 35 and 54, have never discussed estate planning with anyone. (Caring.com)
- American retirees expect to transfer more than \$36 trillion to their families, friends, nonprofits, and additional beneficiaries over the next 30 years. (SeniorLiving.org)
- 52% of people don't know where their parents store estate planning documents. (Cambridge Trust)
- 60% of people without a will reported not taking any action to create a will and also haven't made a living trust or any other estate planning document. (Caring.com)
- 18% of people don't know what an advance health care directive is. (Cambridge Trust)
- 77% of pet owners designate a guardian for their furry friend. (Trust & Will)
- 24% of those pet owners designate someone outside of their family to care for their animals. (Trust & Will)
- 76% of people choose a family member to care for their pets. (Trust & Will)
- Only 46% of will executors were aware of a will. (SeniorLiving.org)
- 32% of adults under 35 said they wrote a will because of the COVID-19 pandemic. (Caring.com)
- Americans who dealt with a serious case of COVID-19 are 66% more likely to have a will. (Caring.com)
- 41% of Americans with loved ones who had a seri-

ous case of COVID-19 have a will, compared to 29% who had no close experiences with severe COVID. (Caring.com)

Estate planning statistics by demographic

Estate planning initiatives vary widely by age, race, and socioeconomic status.

Estate planning statistics by age

It's best practice to begin planning your estate in your 30s and no later than your 40s. Younger people may feel that they have all the time in the world, they have nothing of value to leave behind, or that estate planning is unaffordable—but there are solutions for everyone.

- 24% of 18- to 34-year-olds have a will. (Caring.com)
- 27% of 25- to 54-year-olds have a will. (Caring.com)
- 45% of people over the age of 55 have a will. (Caring.com)
- 81% of people over the age of 72 have a will. (AARP)

Estate planning statistics by race

Due in part to wealth gaps, wage inequalities, and a lack of access to financial literacy education, fewer BIPOC individuals invest in estate planning, a crucial step in accruing generational wealth. The newest findings in a 2022 study show that BIPOC individuals are also 14% less likely to have an estate plan than non-BIPOC individuals.

- 29% of Black Americans have a will or estate planning document—a 12% increase from 2020. (Caring.com)
- Black Americans have surpassed Hispanic Americans in estate planning since 2021. (Caring.com)
- 35% of white adults have a will. (Caring.com)
- 29% of Black adults have a will. (Caring.com)
- 27% of Hispanic adults have a will. (Caring.com)

Estate planning by socioeconomic status

Wealthy and educated Americans often have the most assets to leave their families but regularly postpone the estate planning process due to busy sched-

ules and high stress.

- 63% of people who make more than \$80,000 per year cite not having "gotten around to it" or procrastinating as their primary reason for putting off estate planning. (Caring.com)
- 42% of people who earn between \$40,000 and \$80,000 annually say they don't have time to write a will, while 32% believe they don't have enough assets to leave, while 11% believe estate planning is too expensive. (Caring.com)

Inheritance planning statistics

While many heirs expect to receive a significant inheritance of \$72,000 from their elders, that amount can vary heavily based on the benefactor's retirement savings, debts, education, and financial literacy throughout life.

- The median inheritance among white families is \$88,500. (Annuity)
- The median inheritance among Black families is \$85,000. (Annuity)
- The median inheritance among Hispanic families is \$52,000. (Annuity)
- Nearly 70% of property owners plan to bequeath real estate to their heirs. (Bloomberg)
- Parents with a college degree bequeath an average of \$92,700 to their families. (The Federal Reserve)
- Parents without a college degree leave behind an inheritance of \$76,000 on average. (The Federal Reserve)
- 15% of people were concerned that their future heirs wouldn't be able to pay for the taxes or maintenance of the assets they leave behind. (Bloomberg)

Estate planning procrastination statistics

Some people delay estate planning because they believe certain myths about wills—for example, that they are confusing or expensive. Others believe that they don't have enough assets to warrant writing a will.

- 40% of American adults say they don't have a will because they haven't gotten around to it. (Caring.com)
- 33% of American adults say they don't have a will because they don't have enough assets to leave to someone. (Caring.com)
- 13% of American adults say they don't have a will because they believe it's too expensive to write one. (Caring.com)
- 12% of American adults say they don't have a will because they don't know how to write one. (Caring.com)

Other estate planning statistics

Choose a person you trust and start discussing advance health care directives, end-of-life plans, and important asset management details. This is a crucial part of estate planning and guarantees that you and your loved ones aren't sidelined later in life.

- Probate expenses can cost up to 10% of an estate. (LegalZoom)
- Probating a will can take anywhere from a few months to several years. (LegalZoom)
- 35% of adults in the U.S. say they or someone they know has experienced familial conflicts due to not having an estate plan or will in place. (WealthCounsel)
- Americans over 55 cite easing the burden on their loved ones as the top benefit.

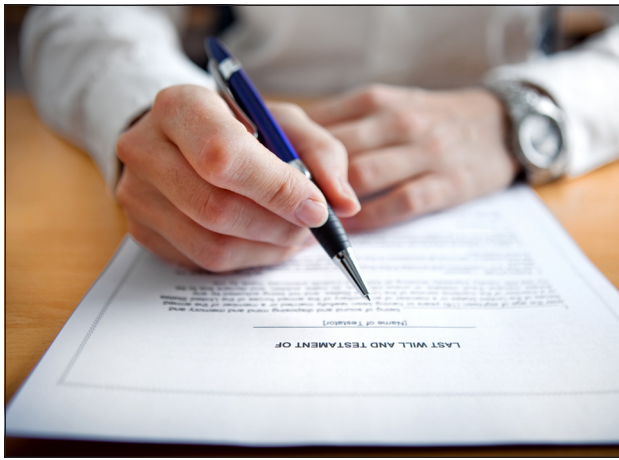


PHOTO COURTESY OF METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION

Proactive estate planning allows families to bypass lengthy and expensive probate court proceedings and cut down on family drama that arises from estate disputes.

Estate planning statistics by race

Estate planning statistics by demographic

Estate planning statistics by age

Estate planning statistics by socioeconomic status

Estate planning procrastination statistics

Inheritance planning statistics

Other estate planning statistics



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Uncertainty happens –

A loved one enters a nursing home; your mom can no longer handle her finances; grandma dies; your aunt wanders from home and can't remember how to get back; a disabled child on Medicaid benefits receives money from a lawsuit settlement.

The Law Offices of Kevin M. Gilhool is an elder law firm that assists families in Michigan facing long-term care costs protect their savings and maximize government benefits. These benefits can include Medicare and Medicaid benefits, Veterans Administration benefits, and creative use of private finances. Our practice includes preparation and advice regarding durable powers of attorney, health care surrogates, living wills, trusts, and last will and testaments. We assist in the administration of decedent's estates including probate administration and trust administration. We also provide advice and counsel pertaining to guardianship matters. Our practice offers planning for the disabled including special needs trusts. Our team's mission is to provide guidance and thoughtful counsel in times of uncertainty.



The Law Offices of
Kevin M. Gilhool

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2409 Fort Street, Wyandotte, MI 48192

Solosy Funeral Home – Lincoln Park

Solosy
FUNERAL HOME
Funeral and Cremation Services

In a time when the world was rocked by the economic fall out of The Great Depression, Solosy Funeral Home was born.

It is a story of determination and a deep love for community, which still is woven into the fabric of our business today.

Not unlike other areas, the Delray neighborhood of Southwest Detroit was deeply affected by The Great Depression. The vibrant neighborhood teemed with immigrants from all over the world, which made it one of the most ethnically diverse areas of Detroit. During The Depression though, the community that was once filled with hope, gave way to a deep struggle to make ends meet.

In 1936, among the darkest of times, Kalman Szollosy, of Delray, made it a point to try something new. His strategic decision to survive and serve the community he loved was

the motivation that propelled him. It was there that Kalman purchased and opened a funeral home.

Now in Lincoln Park, the thread of determination and a deep desire to serve the community around us for over 85 years as a local, family-owned business has continued through John and Clara Solosy (Szollosy), John and Emily Solosy, Brian Patrick, and now through Jason and Carrie Harrison.

Our foundation was built on handling the details so families and friends can give their attention to mourning the loss of their loved one.



As our community continues to change, that remains the bedrock of Solosy Funeral Home. Our community continues to look to us as a trusted friend who can help provide direction during a time of loss and we are honored to serve our community in this way.

At Solosy Funeral Home, we regularly remind families that there are no wrong ways to remember a loved one. Having a time of remembrance can take on many different forms and fit a wide variety of budgets. By carefully listening to your needs, we provide options and space for you to make choices that fit your loved one best. What sets us apart is our desire to serve our community by providing a welcoming, friendly environment for all.

Please find us at www.SolosyFuneralHome.com or call 313-383-1870 for more information.

**Did you tell your family EXACTLY
what you wanted for Christmas?**

Now, tell them EXACTLY how you want to be remembered.

Give yourself and your family the gift of peace of mind in 2023.

Call 313-383-1870

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Professional, friendly, & affordable
support when you need it most.

3206 Fort St, Lincoln Park
SolosyFuneralHome.com

Have you ever thought about the kind of legacy you will leave behind, or how you would like to be remembered? As difficult as it is to think about the end of life, let alone having that conversation with loved ones, there are many great benefits to Pre-planning your funeral arrangements. On average there are about 80-120 questions for family members to answer during arrangements.

Planning ahead alleviates stress and ensures peace of mind to your family that they are left with less difficult decisions to make during an emotional time. It allows you to communicate your final wishes so when that time comes, your family will know exactly how to honor your life, memory, and legacy.

Whenever you are ready, you may schedule an appointment at any of our four locations or even within the comfort of your own home. Every month we offer a Peace of Mind seminar in a casual atmosphere where we will answer any questions you may have. Our Pre-Planning specialists will help guide you and your family through all

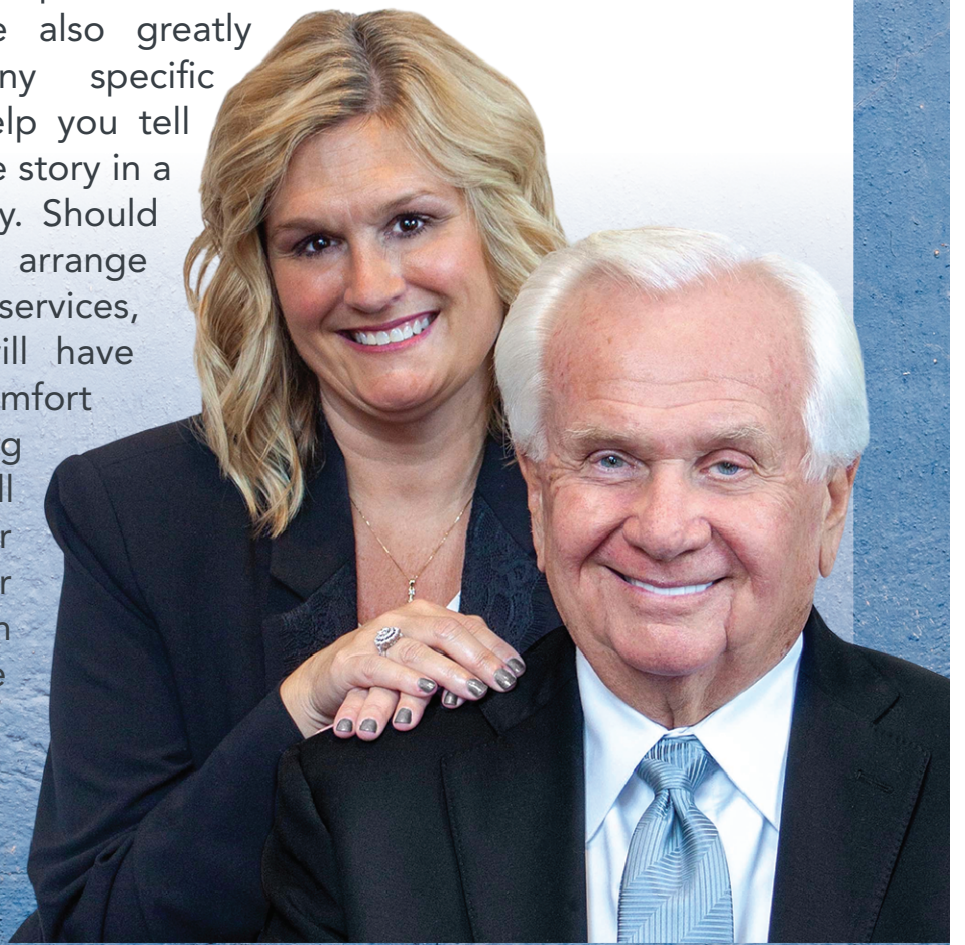


of the decisions that need to be made.

The process can be as simple or detailed as you like. You can expect to go over details such as burial or cremation services, visitation and service options, selections of merchandise, receptions, and personalized selections. We also greatly encourage any specific requests to help you tell your unique life story in a meaningful way. Should you choose to arrange cremation services, your family will have the added comfort of knowing that you will never leave our care, as our Brownstown Chapel is home to The On-Site Crematory.

Here at Molnar Funeral Homes, we value providing comfort and convenience to the families we serve. Several of our facilities offer spacious reception areas where we are able to offer luncheons immediately following funeral services. We will assist with catering options, whether it be our caterer or a preferred caterer of your choice.

No matter how you'd like your story to be told, know that we are with you every step of the way.



100 Years
SINCE 1923

WE ARE WITH YOU EVERY STEP OF THE WAY



734-284-1600 | MOLNARFUNERALHOME.COM

SERVICES

Tips to find the right lawyer



PHOTO COURTESY OF METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION

Some simple strategies can help people find the right person to represent them in all types of legal matters.

It may not be possible to predict every instance in which you could use some legal advice, but it's fair to assume that such a situation will present itself at some point. Knowing where to look for legal advice can provide peace of mind and help potentially difficult situations become much more manageable.

Finding a trustworthy lawyer is no small task, especially for people who have never had to do so in the past. Opening the yellow pages or looking online for a local lawyer will likely turn up hundreds of results. Sifting through those results can be intimidating and time-consuming. In recognition of the importance of finding the right legal representation, the American Bar Association offers these tips to people

on the lookout for a lawyer.

- Ask someone you trust. The ABA notes that seeking recommendations from friends, relatives or business associates can be a great way to find a reliable lawyer. Individuals you know who live nearby may offer advice on who to hire or even lawyers to avoid based on their own experiences, so don't hesitate to ask around. However, the ABA points out that no two legal cases are the same, so a lawyer who was right for a loved one's case may not necessarily be perfect for you.

- Contact your local bar association. According to the ABA, bar associations in most communities will make referrals according to specific areas of law. This can ensure people without much or any experience

hiring lawyers find one with the right experience and practice concentration. Local referral services also may help, and the ABA notes that many, though not all, have competency requirements for lawyers who wish to be referred. When speaking with a referral service, ask if they have such requirements in place and how frequently they reevaluate lawyers they refer.

- Recognize what you need. Lawyers specialize in many different areas of the law, so finding the right lawyer is not a one-size-fits-all venture. Someone who needs help with estate planning will be looking for a different lawyer than someone seeking a personal injury specialist. Individuals are urged to identify which services they

need and then narrow their search to include only those lawyers who specialize in providing them.

- Consider your comfort level. The ABA urges individuals to make their own comfort levels with a given lawyer a top priority. Lawyers serve as their clients' representation, so their clients must be comfortable telling them all they need to know to represent them to the best of their abilities.

Finding a lawyer can seem like a daunting task for those who have never done so in the past. But some simple strategies can help people find the right person to represent them in all types of legal matters.

Story courtesy of Metro Creative Connection

Statistics

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efit of estate planning and other end-of-life planning. (Age Wave/Merrill)

- 52% of Americans over the age of 55 say that dying without an end-of-life plan would be "irresponsible," 22% say it would be "inconsiderate," and 14% say it would be "ignorant." (Age Wave/Merrill)

- 71% of American adults report that creating an estate plan would make them feel like a good parent or partner. (WealthCounsel)

For most people, estate planning starts with talking to a loved one. Twenty percent of people choose to talk with a loved one about estate planning, while 10% start by doing some solo research online.

If you're just beginning your research, some estate planning documents you should look into include a:

- Last will and testament: Specify how you want your assets and property to be distributed after your death.

- Living will: Inform your family about your wishes for end-of-life health care decisions.

- Living trust: Much like a last will and testament, this legal document allows you to dictate who should receive your assets upon your death. The primary difference is that you can also transfer your assets before you pass away.

What happens if you die without a will?

Passing away without a will—also called dying intestate—means that the courts ultimately decide who receives your assets. To prevent that scenario, you should write a will and update it regularly.

When to write a will

A will is a legal document that includes instructions for the executor about who will care for your minor children and what to do with your assets. It's generally best to make at least a simple will as soon as you become a legal adult.

- 34% of people started estate planning due to the birth of a child. (Trust & Will)

- 9% of people made estate planning a priority after buying a home. (Trust & Will)

- 11% of people were spurred to begin estate planning following the death of a family member. (Trust & Will)

Additionally, proactive estate planning allows families to bypass lengthy and expensive probate court proceedings and cut down on family drama that arises from estate disputes.

Story courtesy of LegalZoom. For more information, visit legalzoom.com.

Michigan Memorial Park earns Cemetery of the Year Honors

By: A. Grambeau

Flatrock - Michigan Memorial Park, a community gathering place for Downriver families for nearly one hundred years, has earned national recognition as Cemetery of the Year, by the American Cemetery & Cremation publication. With over 1,500 burials per year, Michigan Memorial Park is the final resting place for more than 88,000 people.



"There are over 20,000 registered cemeteries in the US, so to be selected as the winner of the American Cemetery Excellence Award is a huge honor," says Kelly Dwyer, President and Owner of Michigan Memorial Park.

Based on criteria such as community engagement, innovations, overall park aesthetics, superior maintenance, and staff responsiveness, Michigan Memorial Park stands out as superior among its peers.

There is very low turnover among a staff of over 50 at Michigan Memorial Park, with 446 years of combined years of experience. "One of the reasons the park is so well run is that we have a great staff," explains Heidi Umin, Vice President and Co-owner of Michigan Memorial Park. She adds, "And the fact that we are fourth generation and woman-owned and operated, is also very special."

The Park encompasses 290 acres in Flatrock, where there are 14 different community mausoleums, over 25 cremation burial options, 38 block areas for traditional burials and two monument sections and two Babyland areas for children's burials, all surrounded by spectacular nature and wildlife. As for special features, there is the 35-foot lighthouse with a working beacon situated on the bank of the Huron River. For veterans, there's a cremation burial memorial with a perpetual eternal flame in remembrance of those who served. And, as for innovations, Michigan Memorial Park now offers a burial 19th hole for golfers, a butterfly garden, and a popular "Be-A-Tree cremation burial option that features a live tree planted in the park.

Matt Baily, Funeral Director and peer states that, "Kelly Dwyer is the most positive and forward thinking Cemetaryian that I have ever come across. She operates from a perspective that is always about improvement and it shows at Michigan Memorial Park. She is a role model for women and men in our profession."

In 2013 Michigan Memorial Park opened the first crematory inside a funeral home in Michigan. The Park rents space in the adjacent Michigan Memorial Funeral Home, owned and operated by Daniel P. Dwyer, Kelly Dwyer's husband. The Funeral Home and "The Witness Crematory" are unique in the profession, where a family can come and spend time with their loved one before they are cremated. Michigan Memorial Funeral Home, a separately owned and Operated Downriver business leader, holds the same high standard as Michigan Memorial Park next door.

Always customer-oriented, forward thinking with high-quality standards, Michigan Memorial Funeral Home is honored to be the most frequently selected funeral home Downriver and to serve those in need at one of their most difficult times. Michigan Memorial Funeral Home is also well-known for their special options including catered Celebration of Life Receptions, unique hearse options such as horse-drawn antique hearses; a military-style caisson; a customized Harley Davidson Motorcycle hearse which are all available to take one last ceremonial ride to their final resting place.



The professional Representatives at Michigan Memorial Funeral Home and Michigan Memorial Park encourage pre-planning your final arrangements so you can lock in today's prices, and ensure that your family knows your final wishes that will reduce stress at a difficult time. To contact either Michigan Memorial Park or Michigan Memorial Funeral Home visit: MiMemorial.com. These companies are separately owned and operated.

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TRUE OR FALSE:

If I decide to be cremated, I won't be able to have a viewing for my family and friends to say goodbye to me.

FALSE

The decision to be cremated is becoming more and more frequent. Contrary to popular belief, cremation does not limit your options. Cremation offers the same services as one would have if they chose burial. Viewings are encouraged with numerous options.

Many choose a ceremony followed by a cremation which allows for a traditional funeral service or ceremony prior to the cremation. The funeral service may be conducted in a funeral home, church or any other appropriate setting. You may have clergy or a celebrant conduct the service or maybe a less formal format to share memories. The event can be personalized using photos, music, personal effects and more including casket and stationary choices to reflect your loved ones personality and interests.

Some decide that a cremation followed by a memorial service is right for them. A ceremony or gathering held at location of the family's choosing to commemorate the life of your loved one. Often during

the ceremony or service, the family will read eulogies or other special readings, listen to music selections or view photos. Additionally, some include their loved one's hobbies or material objects your loved one held dear. The gathering is an opportunity for those who cared about the deceased to remember them in a special way and to say goodbye.

Others may decide that direct cremation is their path. This path removes the ceremony or gathering opportunity as well as the ability to comfort each other as a group & find closure.

Whatever you decide remember, family & friends need time to grieve and say goodbye. The support of family and friends is crucial to understand and cope with loss. Having a visitation, funeral or memorial service is an important step of the grieving process & brings people together who can give you a support network. Let our 150 years of experience show you how.

It's Time to Review your Estate Plan ... Again

By: Gerald M. Morello, Jr., Esq.

TAX CUTS AND JOBS ACT OF 2017

President Trump's 2017 Tax Act provides a great opportunity to simplify your estate planning and to better provide for the future of your children and grandchildren. The following is a brief list of estate planning issues that should be part of any discussion.

REVIEW OF ESTATE PLAN

The beginning of the year is an ideal time to review your estate plan. Time flies, and your estate plan needs to keep current.

First, think about the key appointees within your documents. Are you still comfortable with who you've selected to handle your financial and medical affairs if you pass away, or become incapacitated? Second, are your beneficiaries up to date? Third, does your trust provide age (or other) restrictions on your beneficiaries and what is most appropriate now based on your beneficiaries' current circumstances? Lastly, if you do not have a comprehensive estate plan in place, now is the time to develop one.

IRA CONDUIT TRUST

The Secure Act went in to effect January 1, 2020. It dramatically changes the distribution rules for most beneficiaries. The stretch IRA is eliminated for most beneficiaries in favor of a new 10 year rule. This significant tax rule change makes a current estate plan even more important. IRA rules are complex, yet critically important in the estate planning arena. Most clients have retirement accounts, and desire to continue the power of tax deferral for the beneficiary after one's death. A properly designed Revocable Living Trust requires appropriate provisions to ensure continued tax deferral on these accounts for the beneficiaries.

SIMPLIFIED PLANNING FOR MARRIED COUPLES

Historically, a married couple needed to establish two separate AB type Trusts to protect both the husband's, as well as the wife's, exemptions against the Federal Estate Tax. For a married couple, if you did not "protect it," you would "lose it." Now, with proper planning, most married couples can protect both the spouse's exemptions against the Federal Estate Tax (\$12.06 million each for a total of \$24.12 million) by doing some very simple, straight-forward planning. This simplified approach will not always be appropriate planning; it's based on many factors the clients should be made aware of.

LADY BIRD DEEDS

Our offices utilize Lady Bird Deeds to protect a primary residence during a nursing home stay from the Medicaid spend-down rules, while ensuring that, at death, the home ultimately is transferred to the Trust in order to avoid the Michigan Estate Recovery Act. This Act provides the State of Michigan with the ability to be reimbursed for Medicaid costs by extracting the reimbursement from the sale of the primary residence after the taxpayer has passed away.

MAKE INFORMED DECISIONS

Your estate plan should be reviewed on a regular basis with an experienced estate planning attorney to ensure your important legal affairs are in good order. Remember that there are many issues to address, so make sure you are fully informed of what is right for you.

If you would like further information, or to schedule an appointment to discuss your current estate planning needs, please contact Morello Law Group, P.C. at 734-281-6464 or 248-347-2950 or morellolawgroup.com.

Here are some additional recommendations on what to consider when updating your estate plan:

- Prepare or update a Revocable Living Trust to avoid probate court, eliminate government interference, maintain privacy, simplify administration and protect your family's estate.
- Review ownership and beneficiary designation to make certain they are owned or "funded" in the name of your Trust. Do not put a child on the deed to your home, stocks or mutual funds due to adverse tax consequences.
- Roll-over 401k plan monies after changing jobs, or at retirement, to an IRA account.
- Review selection of Executor, Trustee, Guardians for minor children, and Financial and Medical Advocate.
- Determine whether your estate plan contemplates recent tax rules and 2020 IRA rules changes.
- Review your total net worth, and determine whether your estate plan is appropriate.
- Determine whether you have acquired real estate since your Trust was developed and whether ownership of that real estate is appropriate.
- Determine whether your heirs' circumstances have changed, which might affect your planning, such as a disability, births, deaths, marriage or divorce.
- Consider provisions in your Trust to provide monies for younger heirs for education and health care, and an age requirement to receive the inheritance, such as age 25.



Gerald M. Morello, Jr., Esq.
President, Morello Law Group, P.C.

EDUCATION

B.S.A., with High Honors in Finance and Managerial Economics, University of Michigan – Dearborn; J.D., Higgins Scholar and Notre Dame Law School Scholar, Notre Dame Law School; M.B.A., with Honors, University of Notre Dame Graduate Business School.

AREAS OF PRACTICE

Estate Planning; Elder Law; Tax Planning; Wills; Trusts and Estates; Probate and Trust Administration; Business Law; and Business Planning.

CAREER

Mr. Morello has personally developed or supervised over 10,000 Estate Plans over the past 30 years. He is a frequent speaker on estate and business planning; selected as Downriver's Estate and Business Planning Attorney; selected as one of Detroit's top estate planning lawyers by DBusiness Magazine; awarded the Five Star Professional in 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017; awarded the Martindale-Hubbell Platinum Client Champion Award in 2017 and 2018; awarded the 2016 Northville Record People's Choice Award for Best Attorney.

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Morello Law Group, P.C. is a full service law firm representing clients throughout Southeastern Michigan. We take great pride in our organized, proactive approach to providing top quality legal and professional services to our clients. Morello Law Group attorneys take a team approach to providing legal services to clients. The firm's team approach allows each client to have his or her legal affairs handled by an experienced attorney of the firm. This approach provides clients with the highest level of service in the most efficient manner. Morello Law Group has 9 attorneys and over 20 paraprofessionals on staff to assist you. We welcome the opportunity to assist you with your legal needs.

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