



Your Trusted Estate Planning Attorney

Amarillis Velez
Winter Garden, FL

www.velezlegalpractice.com / (407) 663-9310



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4 ESSENTIAL STRATEGIES FOR PROTECTING YOUR FAMILY'S MOST VALUABLE ASSETS

BY AMARILLIS VELEZ, PERSONAL FAMILY LAWYER

You might assume that only the super wealthy need to worry about asset protection planning, when in fact, those with far less wealth and fewer assets may be at even greater risk. For instance, if you're a multi-millionaire, a \$50,000 judgment against you might not be that big of a deal. But for a family with a modest income, savings, and home, it could be devastating.

Furthermore, asset protection planning isn't something you can put off until something happens. Like all types of planning, to be effective, you must have your asset protection strategies in place well before something happens. And your asset protection plan isn't a one-and-done deal: it must be regularly updated to accommodate changes to your assets, family dynamics, and the law.

While you should meet with us, your Personal Family Lawyer® to determine the asset protection strategies that are best suited for your particular asset profile and family situation, here are four essential strategies for safeguarding your family's most valuable assets.



Your Trusted Estate Planning Attorney

About Amarillis

"I became an Estate Planning Attorney because I wanted to make a real difference in the lives of my clients. Let's talk!"

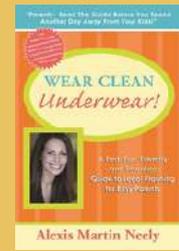


EVENTS

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1. Invest In Insurance Purchasing different forms of insurance—homeowners, health, auto, and watercraft—should always be the first line of defense to protect your family's assets. In our highly litigious society, you face the constant risk of getting sued, even if you've done nothing wrong. And whether you are ultimately found at fault or not, defending yourself in court can be extremely costly.

Your insurance should not only allow you to pay damages if a lawsuit against you is successful, but the policy should also cover the cost of hiring a lawyer to defend you in court, whether you win or lose your case. And because a large judgment could exceed your policies' coverage limits, you should also seriously consider buying umbrella insurance.

Should your underlying insurance policy max out, an umbrella policy will help cover any remaining damages and legal expenses.

As your Trusted Estate Planning Attorney, we will evaluate your current insurance policies and advise you about the types and amounts of insurance you should have for maximum protection.

2. Take Advantage Of Statutory Exemptions Another way to protect your family's assets is by taking full advantage of federal and state laws that make certain types of assets "exempt" from creditor claims and judgments. Depending on the state, the availability and amount of protection offered by such exemptions can vary.

For example, many states offer a homestead exemption, which protects a certain amount—or even the full value—of the equity you have in your primary residence from creditors. If your state provides a generous homestead exemption, paying down your mortgage could protect funds that would otherwise be vulnerable.

Similarly, federal and state laws also classify many retirement plans, such as 401(k)s and IRAs, as exempt assets. Some states also offer significant, or complete, exemptions for life insurance policies and annuities, as well.

Even though such exemptions won't offer you total protection, they can provide significant shelter for certain assets.

Plus, using statutory exemptions is something that can be accomplished without investing anything—all that's required is for you to understand how best to structure your investments to take advantage of these protections. We can advise you on the types and amounts of exemptions available in your area.

3. Use The Right Business Entity Owning a business can be a major wealth-generating asset for your family, but it can also be a serious liability. Indeed, without the proper protection, your personal assets are at serious risk if your company ever runs into trouble.



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For example, if your business is a sole proprietorship or general partnership, you are personally liable for any debts or lawsuits incurred by your business.

Structuring your business as a limited liability company (LLC) or corporation is typically the best move for most small businesses. When properly set up and maintained, both entities create an impenetrable barrier between your personal assets and your business activities. Creditors, clients, and other potentially litigious individuals can go after assets owned by your company, but not your personal assets.

If you own any kind of business, even just a side gig to earn extra income, you should consider setting up a protective entity to ensure any liabilities incurred by your company won't affect your personal assets. We can help you select, put in place, and maintain the proper entity structure for your business operation.

4. Put The Proper Estate Planning In Place

Although each of the above scenarios are mere possibilities, there is one certainty in life—death. It's coming for all of us, and given this fact, your eventual death—or your potential incapacity from a serious accident or illness before you pass away—is the biggest risk to your family's assets.

If you become incapacitated or die without proper estate planning in place, your assets and family will face several potentially tragic outcomes. Without the proper planning, your assets will get stuck in the court system, which could result in those assets passing to family members you would never want to inherit, or if the assets eventually do pass to the loved ones you would want to inherit them, those assets could be seriously depleted or even lost. To this end, planning for the inevitability of death is one of the greatest gifts you can give to those you love most.

You work way too hard to leave your family's assets at risk. If you've been putting off creating your estate plan—or if you haven't updated your existing plan recently—now is the time to get it handled. As a Personal Family Lawyer® firm, we've made estate planning incredibly easy, and we start with a Family Wealth Planning Session, which is the first step in our Life & Legacy Planning process.

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Thank you for referring our practice...

I want you to know how much I appreciate your business. Our team strives to provide excellent service and quality products to all of our valued customers. Sending new clients our way is the best possible compliment. I look forward to our continued friendship.

Here's this month's good word from one of our delighted clients:

"After talking to different legal advisors, feeling overwhelmed and be on a rollercoaster in directions on how and what steps are required...I was fortunate to cross path with Velez Legal Practice. Amarillis Velez dedication in providing the right information, explain options, guidance and prepare all the documentation was more than exceptional..." - Happy Client



Have you Prepared Your Kids in Case You're in an Accident?

If you have minor children and own your home, then this will be the most important preparation you do all year. Here's why...Did you know that if you're in an accident, your kids could be taken into protective custody until the police can figure out who has legal authority to take them, even if you've named legal guardians for them in your will? That's because the people who spend time with your kids don't have that authority automatically.

To make sure your kids are not taken into the care of strangers, even for a minute, you must set up a Comprehensive Kids Protection Plan. And you must put in place a well-considered estate plan that ensures your assets are immediately and privately available to your loved ones—and usually, a simple will is simply not good enough. When you and your parenting partner meet with us for a Family Wealth Planning Session, you will choose the right guardians for your kids and avoid making any of the 6 common mistakes most families (and even regular lawyers) make when naming legal guardians. Be one of the first 3 to schedule in September and we'll waive our regular \$750 planning session fee. Plus, you'll take home a free ID band which stores your children's essential information. Put it in their school backpack and know they will always be taken care of by people you love.

Life & Legacy Planning: Do Right By Those You Love Most

During this process, we'll walk you through an analysis of your assets, what's most important to you, and what will happen to your loved ones when you die or if you become incapacitated. From there, we'll work together with you to put in place the right combination of estate planning solutions to fit with your unique asset profile, family dynamics, budget, as well as your overall goals and desires.

As your Trusted Estate Planning Attorney, we aren't like most estate planning firms—we see estate planning as far more than simply planning for your death and passing on your “estate” and assets to your loved ones—it's about planning for a life you love and a legacy worth leaving by the choices you make today. And this is why we call our services Life & Legacy Planning. Contact us today to schedule your visit.

Feel-Good Zucchini Muffins



- 2 cups rolled oats
- 3/4 cup medjool dates, pitted
- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 1/4 cup real maple syrup
- 2 cups zucchini, grated 2 eggs
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- pinch of sea salt
- chocolate chips (optional)

Prep: Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Mix all ingredients in a blender until a chunky batter comes together. Pour batter into a greased or lined muffin tin. Sprinkle with chocolate chips. Bake for 15-18 minutes, until the tops gently spring back when you press into them. Sprinkle warm muffins with sea salt if you're into that kinda thing. Serve warm or cold ALL DAY LONG. ♡

Recipe: www.pinchofyum.com