



Are You Part of the Client Care Maintenance Plan?

The Client Care Maintenance Plan offers several wonderful benefits:

1. An annual individualized letter that details your estate plan and suggested recommendations for updating.
2. Updating of your estate planning documents—at no additional cost.
3. A wallet size Health Documents Card that allows you and your loved ones 24/7 access to your legal documents related to health care.
4. Phone consultations to the office at no additional cost to you. Reasonable phone consultation with your financial team members (stock broker, accountant, financial planner), also for no additional cost.

5. Seminar Workshop with decidedly delicious desserts from Natalia's Elegant Creations in Falls Church. This is usually scheduled for the last week of October. The topic next year is tentatively scheduled: Forecasting Estate Planning for the Next Two Years.
6. A personalized binder in which to keep all of your current legal documents.

We do not anticipate an increase in the annual subscription charge of \$395 for clients who are couples and \$295 for clients who are single.

Not all clients qualify immediately for enrollment in the Client Care Maintenance Plan. If you would like to enroll, email the office (admin@trusttolast.com.)

A Word about Ethical Wills

We will get back to you promptly to let you know when and how you will become eligible. A Word About Ethical Wills:

Last month I observed how easy it is to dismiss estate planning as just one more thing to put on the to-do list. Since then, I have been considering two approaches to planning for loved ones. One is an "ethical will" (not part of a will that distributes property). I will discuss another approach in the next newsletter.

Preparing an ethical will allows us to concretize our usually unexpressed core values as a message to our families. We have discovered some tools that help us to quickly and effectively discover what we want to say. Let us know if you would like more information. —John Laster

Inside this issue:

<i>First Annual Seminar</i>	2
<i>Introducing Keri Phillips</i>	2
<i>Keeping your documents up-to-</i>	3

WHO WE ARE

John L. Laster:

Senior Attorney

Chris Tomlin:

Legal Assistant

Keri Phillips:

Office Manager



First Annual Care Plan Seminar



October 29, 2008 marked our 1st Annual Client Care Plan Seminar, titled “Dessert and Discussion,” which took place right here at our office in Falls Church, VA. Those in attendance were treated to delicious desserts, coffee, and tea, as well as the wit and wisdom of John Laster. [Ed. Note: I didn’t write this. Really!] The seminar lasted approximately one hour, as Mr. Laster explained the motivations behind the Client Care Plan and described its many benefits. Mr. Laster also reflected on some new developments in the office (which include some greater facility in graphically illustrating our estate plans), explained some gifting techniques that are especially effective in a “down” economy, and took questions from the audience.

Please plan to join us next year for the 2nd Annual Client Care Plan Seminar, tentatively titled “Forecasting Estate Planning for the Next Two Years.” That, and the other benefits of the Client Care Maintenance Plan, are available only to members of the plan.

Introducing Keri Phillips

Keri Phillips recently joined the team at The Law Offices of John L. Laster. She is eager to bring her professional energy and creativity to the office, enriching the team’s dynamic with a fresh set of eyes and ideas.

The youngest of three children, Keri was born and raised in Essex, Vermont, where her family still resides. Growing up, she was an active member of her local community and spent her free time traveling, snowboarding and reading. After graduating high school, she moved to Fairfax, Virginia, to continue her higher education. While attending George Mason University she participated in two international study abroad. The first program took her to Seville, Spain, where she studied both the local language and the local customs. The second program took her to Israel and Palestine where she studied international conflict analysis and resolution. Being very passionate about human rights and cultural understanding, she was also focused on bringing awareness to the Israeli/Palestinian conflict.

After completing her BA in Government and International Politics, she spent the next two years working for The Limited Brands as a Marketing and Visual Manager. Eager for both a new challenge and a desire to attend law school in the coming years, Keri made the decision to pursue a position in the legal field and with our office.

Keri now resides in Vienna, VA. When she is not working diligently in the office, she enjoys going to museums, traveling, playing golf and practicing yoga and pilates. Don’t be surprised to see a



Keeping Your Documents Up to Date

Okay, we readily admit that estate planning is not everyone's favorite topic. When it comes to planning one's estate, the contemplation of one's own death, combined with such arcane concepts as revocable trusts, estate tax liability, and probate, leads most people to either procrastinate or avoid the responsibility altogether. Sure, there are your occasional estate planning enthusiasts – local entrepreneur Jack Kent Cooke famously executed eight amendments to his Last Will and Testament in the last few years before his death – but most people find themselves quite capable of resisting the topic of estate planning.

Documents Become Outdated

One consequence of this lack of enthusiasm is that many who execute documents then let them linger and become outdated, or even lose track of them altogether. For example, I was speaking with a relative recently about wills. He told me he had created a will many years ago, but didn't know where it was. I suggested that he contact the attorney who had drawn up the will, and he admitted that he couldn't even remember the name of the attorney.

I imagine that his story is far too typical. Even if he were able to find this long lost will, imagine the sorts of outdated provisions it would likely contain – perhaps a bequest for his now-deceased mother; or gifts of property that he no longer owns; or a guardian named for his now-grown children; or even a cash gift to his church that, due to inflation, might now seem embarrassingly small. Additionally, there have been many changes in laws since the creation of his will, which would likely affect his estate planning choices.

Review Your Documents Every Three Years

It is for reasons like these that we recommend that you review your estate planning documents at least every three years for accuracy and to make any needed updates. For in all likelihood, several things have changed since you last updated your will – your life situation has changed, the law has changed, and our advice has changed.

At the same time, we understand how easy it is to get busy with other aspects of your life, how procrastination can take over, and how you can wind up with outdated documents that no longer work for you.

Client Care Plan

This is where our new *Client Care Maintenance Plan* comes into play. For a subscription, we'll annually review your estate plan and notify you of updates needed, changes in the law that may affect you, and unique features of your estate plan that you may wish to revisit. These updates to your documents are complimentary provided that the updates requested do not involve a significant upgrade to your existing plan (e.g., switching from a will to a revocable trust).

The *Client Care Maintenance Plan* offers additional avenues of attorney-client communication. Some clients with important questions may hesitate to pick up the phone and call our offices for fear of incurring hourly lawyer fees. The *Client Care Maintenance Plan* solves this dilemma by permitting subscribers — and their advisers — to place reasonable calls to our offices at no additional charge. Subscribers will also be invited to an annual seminar held exclusively for you to educate you about changes in the law and the provisions in estate plans.

—Chris Tomlin



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Happy Holidays!

***May the beauty of the season
bring you joy and happiness.***

***Best wishes for a special
holiday season
and a very happy and healthy
new year!***

Please send us your e-mail address!

endly new face in the office or hear a friendly new voice on the phone during your next visit or phone call.

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