

## What is an "estate?"

Your estate is all of your things, real estate properties, your personal possessions, your banking and investment accounts, knickknacks, and more.

## What is "estate planning?"

There are 3 basic documents when it comes to estate planning:

- Will
- Power of Attorney
- Health Care Proxy

In these documents, you provide information about how you want your affairs handled if you pass away, or are unable to handle them yourself.

## Why should I have my estate planning done?

Estate planning gives you a voice. It puts your wishes in writing and ensures they are known and honored.

## WANT TO GET YOUR ESTATE PLANNING DONE THROUGH US?


Contact the Oneida County Office for the Aging at (315) 798-5456 and tell them you would like assistance through the Legal Aid Society of Mid-New York.

They will send your contact information to us, and we will contact you.


OUR ESTATE PLANNING SERVICES ARE PROVIDED FREE OF CHARGE.



## Contact Us

 (315) 793-7000

 [www.lasmny.org](http://www.lasmny.org)

 120 Bleecker Street  
Utica, NY 13501



# BASIC ESTATE PLANNING AND WHY IT MATTERS

## WILL

### WHAT IS A WILL?

Also called a Last Will and Testament, a Will dictates how you want your belongings distributed after you pass away.

You choose someone called an Executor, whose job is to make sure your wishes in your Will are honored.

### WHY DO I NEED A WILL?

A Will empowers you; it gives you a say in who receives your things after you pass away.

Without one, the courts will decide how to distribute your things, and they may not be given to who you had in mind.



## POWER OF ATTORNEY

### WHAT IS A POWER OF ATTORNEY?

A Power of Attorney allows you to choose someone, called your Agent, to have the authority to help you with your finances.

You can still handle your finances on your own, but it shares the power you have with another person.

### WHY DO I NEED A POWER OF ATTORNEY?

This document can be especially helpful if you ever become unable to manage your finances on your own.

If you have to go into the hospital or become unable to take care of your bills, someone else can do those things on your behalf.

## HEALTH CARE PROXY

### WHAT IS A HEALTH CARE PROXY?

A Health Care Proxy allows you to choose someone, called your Health Care Agent, to make medical decisions on your behalf if you are ever unable to advocate for yourself.

### WHY DO I NEED A HEALTH CARE PROXY?

This document allows you to state your wishes with regard to life support, comfort care, and more.

It also tells medical professionals who you want to make big decisions regarding your health care if you can't communicate them yourself.

