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## Deciding Between an Attorney or Online Forms for Estate Planning

By [Brette Sember, J.D.](#) on April 12, 2022 8:00 AM

Making the decision to start the estate planning process is an important one. The first thing you must decide is if you can use an online estate planning tool or if you should work directly with an attorney. There are benefits to both approaches, but only you can decide which is appropriate for you.

### Benefits of Online DIY Estate Planning

Online estate planning services like [FindLaw Legal Forms & Services](#) are a popular option for getting your affairs in order. Using an online tool to complete your estate planning includes many positives:

- You can work at your own pace and in your own time
- You might be more motivated to get started if you can do this on your own
- Online services are generally less expensive than working directly with an attorney
- You may feel you have more control over the process
- You don't have to leave your home

### Benefits of Using an Attorney for Estate Planning

Working with an attorney to complete your estate planning is a more traditional route that comes with its own list of benefits to consider:

- You are assured your will complies with your state's laws
- The will is executed under the attorney's supervision, avoiding mistakes
- Your attorney can answer all of your questions and concerns
- The attorney may notice issues that you are not even aware of or make suggestions that would never have occurred to you

### When Online DIY Estate Planning Is a Good Fit For You

Online estate planning can be an excellent fit for you if:

- The overall value of your assets is small or moderate and won't incur estate tax
- You simply want to divide your assets among your family and loved ones without any complex bequests
- You need only a will and possibly a health care directive and power of attorney
- You know who you want to serve as guardian for your minor children

### When to Consider Working with an Attorney

There are certain situations in which it makes sense to [work personally with an attorney](#) to complete your estate planning:

- Your estate is large enough that state or federal estate taxes will be an issue
- You need to do Medicaid planning to make sure you will be eligible for this benefit
- You wish to make sure a spouse, child, or grandchild does not inherit anything
- You want to leave something to a charity
- You do not want your minor child's other legal parent to get [guardianship](#) of your child if you die
- You want to create a [trust](#) in addition to a will, [health care directive](#), and [power of attorney](#)
- You are the parent of a special needs child and need to ensure they are financially protected after you die
- You own property in more than one state and/or more than one country
- You own a business and want to make sure it continues running smoothly
- You have a prenuptial agreement or divorce judgment that requires you to make a specific bequest in your will
- You do not feel comfortable drafting a legal document on your own
- You have questions about the law or about the will creation process

Creating a will and completing your estate planning is one of the most crucial (and final) decisions you will ever make. It is important to use a process that answers all of your questions and produces documents you can rely on. Online services and attorneys both produce valid, legal wills. It's up to you to decide which method you are most comfortable with.

### Related Resources:

- [When Should You Start Estate Planning?](#) (FindLaw's Law and Daily Life)
- [How To Talk to Your Loved Ones About Estate Planning](#) (FindLaw's Law and Daily Life)
- [3 Estate Planning Documents You Probably Need](#) (FindLaw's Law and Daily Life)

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