



THE LAW OFFICES OF
HOYT & BRYAN, LLC
FAMILY WEALTH & LEGACY COUNSELLORS

MARGARET "PEGGY" R. HOYT, J.D., M.B.A., B.C.S. ††*
RANDY C. BRYAN, J.D., B.C.S. ††
SARAH S. AUMILLER, J.D.
MICHELLE A. ADAMS, J.D.

‡ BOARD CERTIFIED IN WILLS, TRUSTS & ESTATES
† BOARD CERTIFIED IN ELDER LAW
*CERTIFIED LEGACY ADVISOR™

IRA Beneficiary Designations

From an estate planning perspective, an Individual Retirement Account (IRA) can be the most challenging asset in an individual's portfolio. The challenge rests in balancing the unrealized income tax consequences of an IRA and the integration of IRA beneficiary designations with an individual's overall plan. Even the best laid estate plan can run afoul as a result of beneficiary designations that do not accurately reflect an individual's ultimate planning goals.

When counseling clients on planning for their assets, one of two planning considerations will typically drive the conversation – the client's ultimate planning goals or estate tax avoidance. Generally, both of these considerations can be addressed and successfully integrated. When planning for an IRA however, a third planning consideration must also be discussed – minimizing income taxes. Because traditional IRAs are subject to both estate and income taxes, all three planning considerations must be carefully balanced.

To determine what is more important to you – implementing your personal planning goals, avoiding estate taxes or minimizing income taxes – certain considerations must be discussed with a counseling oriented attorney who knows you and your family and understands your planning goals. For example, you may want assets that pass to your loved ones protected from the claims of creditors, predators (divorcing spouses) or other bad things that happen to good people; you may be in a blended family and want to ensure children from your previous marriage receive the same benefits as your children with your current spouse; or you may want to protect your children from being unintentionally disinherited as a result of your surviving spouse's remarriage. It is only after you have discussed these personal planning goals, along with your tax planning motivations and other considerations that your IRA beneficiary designations can be named to accurately reflect your ultimate planning goals.

Once you have made your beneficiary designations, it is important to review your IRA beneficiary designations on an annual basis to ensure they remain in compliance with your estate plan and ultimate goals. If you are a client enrolled in our Estate Security Plan (ESP) program we will assist you with confirming, not only that your IRA beneficiary designations are correct, but that all of your assets are coordinated with your estate plan. Asset ownership and beneficiary designations are included in your annual Asset Detail Report. For those of you who are not yet ESP members and would like to learn more about the program, please feel free to contact our office for further information.

The Law Offices of Hoyt & Bryan assists families in the protection of their loved ones by focusing their practice in the areas of Estate Planning, Probate and Trust

Administration, Elder Law including Medicaid and VA Planning and Special Needs Planning, Pet Planning, Business Succession Planning and Real Estate. The founders, Peggy Hoyt and Randy Bryan, are both dual board certified by the Florida Bar in Wills, Trusts and Estates as well as Elder Law. Hoyt & Bryan is the only law firm in Florida with the distinction of two attorneys with these certifications. We offer many complimentary educational workshops each week in our Learning Center at The Law Offices of Hoyt & Bryan and monthly workshops in the Auditorium of One Senior Place in Altamonte Springs. For more information please contact our office at 407-977-8080 or visit our website HoytBryan.com.