

TRUSTS AND ESTATES ADMINISTRATION

Our Trust and Estate Administration professionals offer a full-service approach to probate and trust administration. The will of a deceased individual may need to be probated and the assets in a living trust will need to be administered in order to settle the estate.

Each procedure requires specialized expertise to achieve an efficient and cost-effective resolution. Wherever appropriate, we utilize special procedures to distribute assets outside of probate and formal court administration.

Our attorneys are leading practitioners in Trust and Estate Administration Law who lecture on these topics and participate in the Los Angeles County Bar Association, Trusts and Estates Section, Executive Committee; the Los Angeles panel of court-appointed probate attorneys; and in community organizations concerning the welfare of seniors.

TRUST ADMINISTRATION

Post-Mortem Trust Administration Services

We have a wide-range of experience in all areas relating to post-mortem trust administration. Our expertise includes:

- Trustee notifications
- Asset identification, inventory, and valuation
- Asset and liability allocation
- Transfer document preparation
- Management and preservation of all Trust assets
- Distribution and termination advisement

Court Proceedings

There are many instances when it is advisable for a trustee to seek court approval prior to taking a particular course of action. We have filed numerous petitions and successfully obtained such orders in California courts, including:

- Appointing Successor Trustees when the trust instrument fails to do so
- Instructions and interpretations of trust instruments
- Modification of irrevocable trusts
- Inclusion of omitted assets into a trust post death

Estate Tax Returns

We have vast experience in dealing with complexities relating to all estate and trust taxation matters, including in-house preparation and compilation of the Federal Estate Tax Return, as well as the review of returns prepared by outside accountants and specialists. Our expertise extends to representation regarding audit and/or Tax Court proceedings, solicitation of private letter rulings from the IRS, and confirmation of valuation discounts for assets.

Sub-Trust Allocation Funding

Ongoing guidance is provided to identify, evaluate, and determine proper sub-trust and beneficiary allocations and funding of assets. Our attorneys and paralegals work with the Trustee to maximize all tax benefits and confirm distribution and funding pursuant to the terms of the Trust.

ESTATE ADMINISTRATION

We have extensive experience in areas beyond the scope of traditional probate proceedings. We provide hands-on assistance with the sales, characterization, and management of estate assets, retrieval of estate assets, and advice regarding ongoing business interests, interpretation of testamentary documents, and dispute resolution.

Because of the size of our Trust and Estate Administration Practice, we can provide the most cost-efficient counseling available. Using attorneys and paralegals with appropriate training and experience for the task assigned, we can provide a full range of services with added value.

- Will, asset, and beneficiary analysis
- Petition for Probate and appointment of Executor or Administrator
- Ancillary probate services
- Identifying, collecting, and appraising the assets of the estate

- Sales of real properties
- Identifying and providing Notice to Creditors
- Processing of claims by and against the estate
- Negotiation, payment, and proration of estate liabilities
- Ongoing, specialized guidance and assistance in all aspects of management, and preservation of estate assets and specifically devised property
- Facilitate informal or court-authorized preliminary and final distributions and reports
- Petitions for transfer of property
- Assisting with preparation of all necessary reports and accounting
- Petitions to interpret language in a testamentary instrument

For post-mortem transfers that do not require formal probate, we are proficient in the use of best practices and cost-efficient methodologies, including:

- Spousal set-aside petitions
- Small estate affidavits and collections of real and personal property
- Limited proceedings for distribution of real property

Professionals



THOMAS C. AIKIN
PARTNER



VALISA A. CARNEY
PARTNER



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