



National Association of Estate Planners & Councils

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Definition of Estate Planning

Estate planning encompasses the accumulation, conservation, preservation, and transfer of an estate through planning and implementation of an estate plan. The overall purpose of the estate planning process is to develop a plan that will maintain the financial security of individuals and their families. Estate planning has come to include lifetime planning that leads to conservation and transfer of assets. Estate planning should also facilitate the intended and orderly transfer of property at death, taking into consideration the family unit and the potential costs of different methods.

Estate planning activities could include the following functions appropriate to the applicant's respective discipline(s):

- Administering estates and trusts
- Analyzing existing life insurance coverage for continuing relevance
- Analyzing proposed transactions for estate and gift tax implications
- Attending estate planning council meetings and other estate planning educational events
- Business succession planning
- Charitable/gifting planning
- Designing estate plans
- Designing qualified and non-qualified retirement plans
- Developing strategies to minimize potential estate and gift taxes
- Developing programs to conserve assets during lifetime and at death
- Drafting estate planning documents
- Life settlements of life insurance policies
- Preparing estate and gift tax returns
- Preparing fiduciary accountings
- Preparing fiduciary income tax returns
- Probating wills & administering estates
- Proposing life insurance solutions consistent with estate plans
- Retirement distribution planning
- Succession planning

Note: A full time professor at a college, university, or school of law who teaches courses in estate planning, estate tax, or business continuation planning will be considered engaged in estate planning activities.