



Dear Friends of Pet Partners,

Thank you for requesting a copy of Pet Partners' *Writing Your Will* document. You have taken an important first step in exploring how you can leave your legacy to further advance, for many years to come, continued education and program services dedicated to improving people's health and wellbeing through the healing powers of animals.

Imagine a world in which EVERY person who is hospitalized, depressed, or lonely participates in animal-assisted therapy to improve their ability to cope, to help them heal, and to find comfort. Imagine a world in which EVERY person with a disability who could benefit from a service animal has one to help them live as independently as possible. Imagine a world in which EVERY healthcare provider is trained on how to incorporate the healing power of animals into their patient prescriptions.

With your support and the support of other Caring Community members (people who have put Pet Partners in their will), I believe this day will come. Here's what a couple of our members say.

"Pet Partners is the perfect organization for teaching us how these special bonds we have with animals work. Bruce and I are proud to be a part of Pet Partners."

Jeannie Nordstrom, Seattle

"Pet Partners has the opportunity to take their work to the international level....the vision of the human-animal bond that has been the work of Delta Society will certainly be a part of the future that benefits the animal kingdom and mankind."

Sally Sweatt, Minneapolis

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at (425)679-5502 or at julied@petpartners.org. Thank you again for your interest in Pet Partners. I hope we have the opportunity to speak in the near future.

Warmest Regards,

Julie Delano
Director of Development

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WHY YOU NEED A WILL

Your Will is the best way to ensure that, upon your death, your assets are distributed in accordance with your wishes. Many personal reasons influence your choices. Therefore, it is important to decide which, how much, to whom and when your assets should be distributed.

A common misconception is that it is only necessary for wealthy people to have Wills. This is not so. As a matter of fact, a smaller estate may require more strategic planning to meet your personal objectives.

IF YOU DON'T HAVE A WILL

To understand the importance of making your Will, it may be helpful to examine the consequences of not having one.

- *The state laws of descent and distribution will determine how your assets will be distributed*

Determination is based on a formula without consideration of the specific needs of your heirs, or your personal wishes. For example, you may wish to provide for a child requiring constant medical attention somewhat differently from a healthy sibling. In the eyes of the state there is no difference.

- *The state will determine who will be the guardian of your minor children*

While the court will attempt to make an appropriate choice of a guardian for your minor children, you should state your wishes as to whom you want to entrust their care and well-being.

- *The state will determine who will manage your estate*

Since you worked hard to accumulate what you have, you will want to recommend an executor or executrix who is qualified, loyal and trustworthy. This is the person who will see to it that your wishes are fulfilled.

- *Estate taxes and probate costs may significantly diminish your gifts to heirs*

Your Will, prepared with the advice of your attorney and possibly your accountant, can minimize these expenses of your estate and the estate of a surviving spouse as well.

BEFORE YOUR SEE YOUR ATTORNEY

Certain decisions should be made before you meet with your attorney. Time spent formulating your wishes can greatly reduce the time you will need to spend with your attorney. This preparation can reduce the cost of legal consultation.

1. Make a list of all of your assets, how they are owned (individually or jointly) and their approximate value.
2. Make a list of important documents indicating family relationships, your assets and your debts. Include birth certificates, marriage licenses, life insurance policies, deeds, savings accounts, securities owned and the names and addresses of all your creditors.
3. Make a list of family members, friends and charitable institutions you would like to remember in your Will. Record the full name and address of each beneficiary and their relationship to you. Decide on specific amounts, percentages and/or balances to be distributed to each individual and institution you wish to remember. Contingency bequests should be provided in the event that an individual for whom you provided a specific bequest predeceases you.
4. Consider the use of trusts in your Will to safeguard the assets you allocate to beneficiaries who may be incapable of managing them. A trust can also determine when, or at what intervals, your assets are to be distributed.
5. Decide who will manage the distribution of your estate. This person, known as an executor or executrix, should be qualified to make certain decisions which may affect the value of your estate, and therefore the amount or value to be received by your beneficiaries. Name a second person in the event the first predeceases you, or is unwilling or unable to act in this capacity.
6. Decide who will look after minor children in the event that your spouse predeceases you or you both die simultaneously.

SEE YOUR ATTORNEY

Your attorney will make certain that your Will is legal and that it will carry out your wishes.

Tax planning considerations may prevent undue erosion of your estate. Your attorney and your accountant can provide the information necessary for you to make these decisions.

TYPES OF BEQUESTS

Different kinds of bequests can be included in your Will to carry out your wishes for each beneficiary. Following is a list of several types of bequests you may wish to consider.

- A general bequest will provide a beneficiary with a specified sum of money or a fixed percentage of your estate.
- A specific bequest will provide a beneficiary with a specific item of property.
- A residuary bequest will provide a beneficiary with an amount that is remaining after all general and specific bequests have been satisfied.
- A contingent bequest will provide a beneficiary with a share should an individual previously named predecease you.

KEEP YOUR WILL CURRENT

If you already have a Will, be sure that it is reviewed and updated periodically. An outdated will can cause confusion, hardship and expense.

You should review your Will for possible changes in light of any of the following circumstances:

- *Marriage or divorce – yours or a child's*
- *Births*
- *Death or incapacity of a named beneficiary*
- *Substantial adjustments in your net worth*
- *Change of needs – your own or of any beneficiaries*
- *Change of residence – check state law*
- *Changes in tax law*
- *Persons assigned as executor/executrix or as guardian of your children are no longer able, willing or qualified*

Certain changes may provide funding for a charitable bequest.

While many changes may be accomplished through a codicil (an amendment) to your Will, others may require a new Will. Check with your attorney.

BEYOND YOUR WILL

Insurance and Retirement Plans can increase an estate's size and replace income lost to family at the death of an income earner. If you name a specific beneficiary, the proceeds will pass outside your Will directly to the beneficiary.

Property transfers during life reduce the size of your estate and can lower estate taxes. The law allows you to give up to \$12,000 per person annually free of gift taxes. (See Publication 950, September 2006, Cat. No. 1444TX, IRS, for more information.)

Joint ownership causes property to pass directly to your spouse or loved ones. Since laws governing ownership vary from state to state, you should consult your attorney before establishing joint ownership.

Lifetime trusts, passing outside your Will, allow you to provide income to your family and others, obtain professional management of your assets, and often save on federal estate taxes and estate administrative costs.

REMEMBERING PET PARTNERS WHEN WRITING OR CHANGING YOUR WILL

A charitable bequest to Pet Partners allows you to continue your support to increase the mutually nurturing relationship between people and animals in the years ahead. Any charitable bequest is deductible as an estate tax charitable contribution which may reduce your estate taxes.

OUTRIGHT BEQUEST

I give, devise and bequeath the sum of _____ dollars (or describe property) to Pet Partners, 875 124th Ave. NE, Ste. 101, Bellevue, WA 98005-2531, to be used for its general purposes.

RESIDUARY BEQUEST

I give, devise and bequeath all (or any percentage) of the residue and remainder of my estate to Pet Partners, 875 124th Ave. NE, Ste. 101, Bellevue, WA 98005-2531, to be used for its general purposes.

CONTINGENT BEQUEST

If any of the above named beneficiaries should predecease me, I hereby bequeath his or her share to Pet Partners, 875 124th Ave. NE, Ste. 101, Bellevue, WA 98005-2531, to be used for its general purposes.

CONFIDENTIAL RESPONSE

If you have remembered, or intend to remember, Pet Partners in your Will, we would like to thank you. Please fill in the information below and return this page only to the address shown below..

PLEASE MAIL TO:

Julie Delano
Director of Development
Pet Partners
875 124th Ave. NE #101
Bellevue, WA 98005

julied@petpartners.org

- _____ I have provided a bequest for Pet Partners in my Will
- _____ I intend to provide a bequest for Pet Partners in my Will
- _____ I would like to speak with a qualified Pet Partners representative about the best way to include Pet Partners in my Will

NAME(S) _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

TELEPHONE _____ BEST TIME TO CALL _____

E-MAIL _____

Please check this box if you do not want to be listed in any public documents as a Caring Community member.