



# GRAY REED®

## TRUSTS & ESTATES

Planning the accumulation, management and transfer of wealth in the most tax-efficient manner involves development and implementation of strategies across a broad spectrum. Gray Reed attorneys provide a full range of estate planning and probate services as well as fiduciary litigation.

In addition, estate planning today requires comprehensive knowledge of other areas of the law, particularly when working with family offices and business owners. Our estate planners work synergistically with the firm's other attorneys in such areas as family law, business law, taxation and real estate.

### ESTATE PLANNING

The firm's estate planning experience includes the preparation of wills and trusts, family partnerships, limited liability companies, grantor retained interest trusts, qualified personal residence trusts, sales to intentionally defective trusts, charitable trusts, life insurance trusts, prenuptial agreements, disclaimers, qualified terminable interest trusts, qualified domestic trusts, offshore trusts, private annuities and other planning devices.

We have extensive experience in the design and implementation of complex estate and business plans for our individual and corporate clients. An effective estate plan must consider the various types of lifetime and testamentary family asset transfers that are designed to shield a family's wealth from taxation, while also accomplishing certain non-tax family objectives. As trusted counselors, our attorneys help their clients and families benefit from available estate planning techniques and to preserve family wealth for the future, as well as help individual and corporate executors and trustees administer decedents' estates and trusts efficiently and cost-effectively.



## PROBATE & TRUST ADMINISTRATION

Our Probate & Trust Administration team represents executors, administrators, and estate beneficiaries in all areas of probating an estate including:

- Handling the court filings
- Evaluating and valuing the estate
- Resolving credit claims
- Communicating with beneficiaries
- Working with beneficiaries to understand their rights and entitlements
- Coordinating with tax professionals
- Resolving other probate issues

We also have significant experience in trust administration representing both trustees and beneficiaries in trust related matters. Trusts are often created as part of an estate plan. Our goal is to ensure the trust is executed as intended and for which it was designed including:

- Ensuring fiduciary duties are met
- Working with beneficiaries to understand their rights and entitlements
- Providing counsel on funding and distribution decisions
- Communicating with beneficiaries
- Coordinating with tax experts
- Managing disputes
- Resolving other trust administrative issues



## PROBATE & FIDUCIARY LITIGATION

Our fiduciary and probate litigation attorneys step in when a trust or estate becomes contested and when an executor or trustee is the subject of litigation or needs advice to manage risk and avoid litigation. Our team represents beneficiaries, executors, trustees, guardians, creditors and charitable organizations before trial courts and appellate courts across Texas in:

- Will contests and probate litigation
- Disputes involving beneficiary designations and gift transfers
- Trust litigation
- Contested guardianships and elder exploitation matters
- Fiduciary litigation
- Complex creditor claim controversies
- Other inheritance disputes

In addition, we assist individual executors, trustees, guardians and agents, and corporate fiduciaries avoid or mitigate litigation through fiduciary risk management, including preparation of accountings and beneficiary communications, fiduciary succession and trust modifications.

## DEPTH OF EXPERIENCE

- Nine attorneys are Board Certified in Estate Planning and Probate Law by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization.
- In the *Chambers High Net Worth Guide 2023*, the Practice Group was ranked as a leading private wealth law practice in Texas and three partners were recognized.
- Eight attorneys are listed as 2024 Best Lawyers in America (a Woodward/White company) and three were named 2024 Ones to Watch in the field of trusts and estates and/or trusts and estates litigation.
- Six attorneys were named 2023 Super Lawyers by *Texas Super Lawyers* (a Thomson Reuters publication) in the fields of trusts and estates.
- Our Trusts and Estates Practice Group was recognized in *Best Lawyers' 2024 "Best Law Firms"* ranking.

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## OUR PURPOSE IS YOU.

Our Trust and Estate attorneys take a custom approach to analyzing the nature of a client's assets and family dynamics to formulate a personalized strategy for a client's family and business circumstances. Estate planning clients and their families are guided through the estate planning process with careful consideration of the impact of estate, gift and generation-skipping taxes on the financial security of surviving family members. When a loved one passes, Gray Reed offers our expertise, guidance and compassion as we help our clients through the difficult and emotional probate and trust administration process. Probate and Fiduciary Litigation clients receive thoughtful, proactive counsel and skilled representation in order to be equipped with the confidence and information required to make the best decisions for their case, their families and their goals.