A Will and Trust Lawyer Publishes Guides on Common Planning Gaps

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MARIETTA, GA - September 24, 2026 -
Between late April and early June, Steele Law Firm in Marietta, Georgia published a run of plain-language guides aimed at families working through estate planning decisions. The guides, written by attorney Stephanie Steele, explain the difference between a healthcare directive and a power of attorney, how someone becomes executor when there is no will, and what a trustee does after a death. Another takes up a common assumption: that a will by itself is enough. Questions like these are familiar ground for a will and trust lawyer in Marietta, GA.

According to Steele Law Firm, a will covers how property is distributed after death but does not address what happens if the person becomes unable to make decisions while alive. In Georgia, a will typically goes through probate, a court process that is public and can take time depending on the estate. A revocable living trust is one alternative. It lets its creator remain trustee during life and names a successor trustee to step in if incapacity occurs, though how that plays out depends on how the trust is written and funded.

That is where funding comes in. A trust governs only the assets actually transferred into it, and Steele Law Firm's materials note that an unfunded trust can lead to the probate, delays, and added costs it was meant to

avoid. Funding generally means retitling assets: a new deed for real estate, updated ownership on bank and brokerage accounts, and a written assignment for personal property. The steps vary by asset and by institution, and Steele Law Firm offers trust funding as a separate service from drafting the trust itself.

Incapacity planning follows similar logic. Steele Law Firm's guides describe a financial power of attorney, a health care power of attorney, a living will, and a HIPAA authorization as the documents that let a chosen person handle bills or medical decisions if someone cannot. Without them, a family may have to ask a Georgia court to appoint a guardian or conservator, a process whose length and cost depend on the circumstances. A June guide covers a related point for parents: the legal authority to access a child's medical information can change once the child turns 18.

Georgia's intestacy rules apply when someone dies without a valid will, and the resulting division of property may not match what the person wanted. A May guide from Steele Law Firm notes that families in that position are often left wondering who will handle the estate. Who can serve as executor or administrator, and what the role involves, is governed by Georgia law and can vary with the family's circumstances.

Estate plans are generally worth revisiting every three to five years, according to Steele Law Firm, and after events such as a marriage, divorce, birth, adoption, property purchase, or move to Georgia. Attorneys at Steele Law Firm also work alongside financial advisors and CPAs so that legal documents line up with a client's broader financial planning.

Families looking for a will and trust lawyer in Marietta, GA can find the guides, a monthly newsletter, and downloadable planning worksheets on the Steele Law Firm website. For more information, visit steelecounsel.com.

Steele Law Firm is an estate planning and probate practice at 376 Powder Springs St., Suite 130, in Marietta, Georgia. Founded by attorney Stephanie Steele, who has served Cobb County families since 2006, the practice handles wills, trusts, powers of attorney, guardianship and conservatorship, and probate matters

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