

Estate Planning Update – 05.06.21

Section 1.01 Pandemic Pets and Pet Companionship: Seven Benefits/Considerations for Care Coordination and Estate Planning

By: [Rebecca Miller](#)

When my kids started to feel isolated and bored spending so much time at home due to the pandemic, we volunteered to be foster parents for a sweet four-week old kitty, Marigold. She was a fuzzi-ball so tiny that I could hold her in one hand, and she was a little sick and not eating very well. She needed lots of love and attention! It wasn't long before she was feeling well and had the whole family wrapped around her tiny paw. We learned that foster programs are more like pet adoption schemes, and Marigold became a permanent member of the Miller family. She was our first "pandemic pet." Next came Patrick, the Vizsla puppy who recently joined our clan.

It turns out my family wasn't the only one acquiring new furry members. One of the many unanticipated effects of the pandemic was a surge in interest in fostering and adopting pets. Stay-at-home orders decreased opportunities for social interaction, and people started looking for new companions. The forced time at home created a perfect environment for adding a pet — people could invest more time and money on pets. According to data from PetPoint, animal welfare organizations across the country saw a spike in adoptions starting in March 2020, and many shelters had a hard time keeping up with demand. Cats and dogs were being adopted at unforeseen rates, resulting in a shortage of so-called "pandemic puppies." The pet care industry also benefited from the surge in demand for pet care products and veterinary services.

This trend made me think about whether pets should play a more significant part in the care coordination and estate planning advice we give our clients, particularly seniors and people with disabilities or special needs.

Owning, or even having regular opportunities to interact with a pet, has lots of benefits.

Click Read More to read about seven benefits for pet owners — including key considerations for aging individuals and people with special needs.

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Estate Planning Resources

Senators Propose Sweeping Changes to the Taxation of Estates and Inherited Gains

Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders has introduced legislation that would require more estates to pay estate tax, and that raises the amounts they would pay. Another proposed law would eliminate the step-up in basis that inherited assets currently enjoy.

[Read More](#)



Medicaid Recipients Have a Little More Time to Spend Down Their Stimulus Money

The one-year deadline for nursing home residents on Medicaid to spend down their first round of stimulus checks is here, but they may have a little extra time.

[Read More](#)

Also check out...

[The Vacation Home: Uniting the Family or Tearing It Apart?](#)

Inheriting a vacation home with your siblings can be a great thing, or it can cause huge problems within the family. Planning ahead can help prevent sibling disagreements. Click [here](#) to read the full article.

[Finding the Right Hospital Bed Rental](#)

If you are caring for a loved one at home, you may need to rent a hospital bed. Here are the ins and outs of hospital bed rentals. Click [here](#) to read the full article.

[How Long Does Protection From COVID-19 Vaccines Last?](#)

Since the COVID-19 vaccines haven't been around that long, it's not yet known how long their protection lasts. How well the vaccines work against emerging variants will also determine if, when, and how often additional shots might be needed. Read the [Associated Press article posted by U.S. News](#) for a look at various considerations.

[CDC: 30% of U.S. Population Fully Vaccinated Against Coronavirus](#)

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recently reported that 30% of the entire U.S. population is fully vaccinated against the coronavirus. And, more than 43% has received at least one dose of the vaccine. For a look at the vaccination progress and recent updated guidance from the CDC, read the [U.S. News article](#).

Say Yes! COVID Test At-Home Testing Challenge

Hamilton County Health Department, in partnership with the CDC and NIH, is facilitating access for Hamilton County households to receive free, rapid, at-home COVID-19 test kits. You can test three times a week to help protect your family and our community.

Just for Fun

Action for Happiness May 2021 Calendar

Meaningful May 2021

SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
1 Make a list of what matters most to you and why	2 Do something kind for someone you really care about	3 Focus on what you can do rather than what you can't do	4 Take a step towards an important goal, however small	5 Send your friend a photo from a time you enjoyed together
8 Set yourself a kindness mission to help others today	9 Notice the beauty in nature, even if you're stuck indoors	10 What values are important to you? Find ways to use them today	11 Be grateful for the little things, even in difficult times	12 Listen to a favourite piece of music and remember what it means to you
15 Do something to contribute to your local community	16 Look up at the sky. Remember we are all part of something bigger	17 Show your gratitude to people who are helping to make things better	18 Find a way to make what you do today meaningful	19 Send a handwritten note to someone you care about
22 Find a way to help a project or charity you care about	23 Share a quote you find inspiring to give others a boost	24 Recall three things you've done that you are proud of	25 Make choices that have a positive impact for others today	26 Ask someone else what matters most to them and why
29 Do something special and revisit it in your memory tonight	30 Today do something to care for the natural world	31 Find three reasons to be hopeful about the future		

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Source: actionforhappiness.org