



Planning Ahead Checklist

Life can be uncertain. What would happen if you were suddenly unable to make decisions for yourself? Advance planning can ensure that your finances remain stable and your health care wishes are followed. No one can decide what is right for you regarding advance planning. This handout is provided only as a source of non-biased information. Here is a list of some items you may want to consider.

- ❑ **Gather information.** Decisions should reflect your personal values and beliefs. Make sure that you gather reliable information and make thoughtful, informed decisions. Think about your wants and needs for the future.
- ❑ **Establish advance directives if desired.** There are a variety of different types of documents including living wills and durable power of attorney for health care. Learn more about advance directives at www.arkbar.com.
- ❑ **Store documents in a safe location** such as a safe deposit box or fire box.
- ❑ **Share copies with doctor and family.** It's a good idea to make sure that the important people in your life are aware of your wishes and plans.
- ❑ **Prepare financial inventory.** This can help others make sure that bills are paid and assets are protected if you are ever unable to make decisions.
- ❑ **Determine net worth.** A net worth statement lists all of your assets and liabilities. It's a good place to list all of the valuable items you own.
- ❑ **Make financial decisions.** Is someone prepared to step in and make sure that your bills are paid and medical costs are covered? In the event of your death, does anyone know your wishes for funeral arrangements and distribution of property? You may decide to appoint someone to act on your behalf.
- ❑ **Write an ethical will.** Much of the legacy you leave your friends and family is not material goods. Your greatest influence is through the values, beliefs and life experiences that have made you the unique individual you are. Preserve your stories, life experiences, and wisdom for future generations in an ethical will. The ethical will can be given to your family and friends at any time or upon your death.