

Hot Tip: Succession Planning for Lawyers.

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RULE VI Section 4(B)(4) of the SUPREME COURT RULES FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THE BAR OF OHIO, provides as follows:

Each attorney engaged in the private practice of law shall provide the following information when registering pursuant to Section 2 of this rule:

- (a) Whether the attorney has professional liability insurance on the date of registration;
- (b) Whether the attorney has a plan to manage the attorney's work or caseload in the event the attorney becomes temporarily or permanently unable to do so.(5) The attorney shall notify the Office of Attorney Services within thirty days of any change in the attorney's registration information.

What does this mean to us?

If you do not have a succession plan for your firm, you should establish one. The 2017 Ohio Ethics Guide Succession Planning, authored by the Ohio Board of Professional Conduct is an excellent resource. It provides a step-by-step plan to designate a successor lawyer for your practice, address business entity structure concerns and identify the information to include in your succession plan.

The Guide recommends the following "core elements" of a proper succession plan:

- A written agreement with the designated successor lawyer.
- Information regarding the status of open client matters, including the location and status of client files (both closed and opened);
- A copy of the practice's client file retention plan;
- Details concerning IOLTA and operating accounts and client ledgers;

- The location of log-in and password information for office computers, mobile devices, voicemail, cloud storage, billing systems, calendaring system, email (including server addresses and passwords), online banking, and other websites upon which the law office relies (such as payroll provider, retirement benefits provider; accounting application; client payment service provider, off-site storage access);
- The location of accounts payable and receivable information and billing/collection practices;
- Contact information for office personnel and key vendors (such as your client invoice service provider, bookkeeper, IT provider, accountant, business lawyer; website provider; banker);
- Detailed information (leases, insurance, taxes, sale of building) needed to physically close and wind up a law practice, if applicable;
- An office procedures manual.

2017 Ohio Ethics Guide Succession Planning, authored by the Ohio Board of Professional Conduct, at page 3.

https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/c6a571_2659db3631f24d3d9a86222e197e1074.pdf

Amy Weis is a Fellow in the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers (AAML), and the International Academy of Family Lawyers (IAFL).

EDUCATION & EXPERIENCE

A magna cum laude graduate of Capital University Law School, Amy Weis was admitted to the Ohio Bar in 1996. Previously, she served as the Ohio AAML Chapter's president and vice president, as well as a National Board of Governors Delegate.

Attorney Weis is a certified specialist in Family Relations Law by the Ohio State Bar Association.

Her awards include:

- Named one of The Best Lawyers in America© in Family Law – 2015 to 2022
- Ohio Rising Stars, Super Lawyers® – 2007
- Ohio Super Lawyers® – 2009 to 2023
- Named one of the Top 50 Women Lawyers in Ohio – 2011 to 2017, 2019 to 2025
- Named one of the Top 100 Lawyers in Ohio, 2022-2025
- Named one of the Top 25 Columbus Women Lawyers – 2010 to 2024
- Named one of the Top 50 Columbus Lawyers – 2015-2016, 2022 -2025

In addition to this, she has written on the law and lectured on its practice. In 1997, she co-authored “Using Discovery to Your Client’s Advantage,” which the Ohio CLE Institute selected for publication in its “The Best of Family Law 1997” publication.

In her free-time, Amy enjoys cycling, hiking, travel, and golf.

Bar and professional activity:

- American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers, Board of Governors Delegate for Ohio (2015-2021); Member-at-Large (2020 to 2023); Immediate Past-President (2013-2015); President, Ohio Chapter (2011-2013); Vice President (2009-2010).
- Chair, Domestic Relations Committee, Central Ohio Association for Justice (formerly the Franklin County Trial Lawyers Association), 2002
- Central Ohio Academy of Collaborative Divorce Professionals (2017 to present); Member Protocols Committee (2019 to 2021)
- Columbus Bar Association, Family Law Committee (1996 to present)
- American Bar Association, Family Law Section (1996 to present)
- Ohio State Bar Association, Family Law Committee
- Capital University Law Review, Associate Editor, 1995-1996
- Capital University Law School, Order of the Curia, Staff Member, 1994 – 1995

Pro bono/Community Service:

- The Greater Columbus Film Commission, Advisory Board Member (2018 to 2022); Vice President (2019 to 2022)

Scholarly Lectures/Writings:

- Presenter, Post-Nuptial Agreements Maybe it Makes Sense to Stay Married, *Ohio Judicial College OADRJ Fall Seminar, 2023* and Fairfield County Bar Association
- Moderator, Post-Nuptial Agreements Maybe it Makes Sense to Stay Married, *34th Annual Harold R. Kemp AAML Ohio Symposium on Family Law, 2023*
- Presenter, The Successful Sabbatical: How and Why to Take a Month Away and Why it is Good for your Team, *American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers Mid-Year Meeting, Family Law, 2023*
- Presenter, The Remote Office, *American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers Mid-Year Meeting, Family Law, 2021*
- Presenter, What's Up with Prenupts?, *31st Annual Harold R. Kemp AAML Ohio Symposium on Family Law, 2020*
- Presenter, Divorce 101-Using Discovery in Divorce, *AAML Ohio/CBA, 2018*
- Presenter, Ted Talks Tax: Home is Where the Tax Is, *American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers Fall Meeting, Family Law, 2017*
- Presenter, Hot Tips: Getting the Court to Order Life Insurance to Secure Support, *American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers Ohio Chapter Symposium, 2017*
- Presenter, Family Law Update, *OSBA State Convention, 2014*
- *Replevin--Give Me Back My Stuff*, legal options available to non-married people seeking return of their property after a relationship ends, presented as part of "Divorce Without A Marriage", *24th Annual Harold R. Kemp AAML Ohio Symposium on Family Law, 2013*
- *Often Overlooked Antenuptial Agreement Issues*, *23rd Annual Harold R. Kemp AAML Ohio Family Law Symposium; Dayton Bar Association, 2012*
- *Relocation in Custody Matters*, key aspects of representing parents moving out-of-state with the children vs parents remaining in their home state with the children, *Columbus Bar Association, 2008*
- *Child & Spousal Support Update, 2007*
- *Life Insurance & Divorce*, importance and ability to obtain and maintain life insurance to collateralize support obligations with life insurance, *Columbus Bar Association, 2006*
- *Retirement Benefits & Qualified Domestic Relations Orders, Ohio Legal Aid, 2006*
- *Relocation Do's and Don'ts*, tips for litigating parental relocation in custody matters, *18th Annual AAML Ohio Family Law Symposium, 2006*
- *Using Prenuptial Agreements to Minimize Financial Surprises, 2004*
- *Divorce & Representing Small Business Owners, 1998*
- *Using Discovery to Your Client's Advantage*, which was selected by the Ohio CLE Institute for publication in *The Best of Family Law 1997*, Co-Author, 1997
- *Capital University Law Review, Associate Editor, 1995 – 1996*