

Estate Planning in a New Era:

How the One Big Beautiful Bill Act Impacts You

When it comes to protecting your wealth and sharing it with the people and causes you care about, thoughtful planning is everything. With the [One Big Beautiful Bill Act \(OBBBA\)](#)—passed on July 4, 2025—now in place, many families may find that the tools and strategies they use to build their legacy look a little different.



Here are some valuable estate planning strategies to consider in this new environment.

Keeping Your Options Open

The OBBBA made permanent the higher estate and gift tax exemption levels originally created under the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, which were set to expire at the end of 2025. Beginning in 2026, the exemption will be \$15 million per person (\$30 million for married couples) adjusted for inflation. The result: You and your family have more room to make thoughtful choices about how to structure your legacy.

Even with these higher thresholds, it's important to build flexibility into your plan. Laws and family needs can shift over time, and proactive strategies that allow for adjustments can help ensure your estate plan is responsive to change no matter what the future brings.

Trusts That Can Evolve with You

Trusts remain an essential tool in estate planning—and under the OBBBA, trusts designed with adaptability in mind can be especially effective.

For example, a [Spousal Lifetime Access Trust \(SLAT\)](#) allows you to move assets out of your estate while still keeping access through your spouse. In a similar way, an [Irrevocable Life Insurance Trust \(ILIT\)](#) helps ensure life insurance proceeds pass outside your estate, providing liquidity for your heirs without adding to your taxable estate.

Trusts can also include features like limited powers of appointment or a trust protector, which allows someone you designate to adjust terms if tax laws or your family needs should change.

Even if you already have existing trusts in place, it's worth taking a fresh look to make sure they will work the way you intend when it matters most. Check whether your beneficiary designations are current, your buy-sell or insurance agreements still reflect your goals and your trust structures remain aligned with your overall plan.

Planning Across Generations with Flexibility

Smart estate planning involves thinking beyond just the next generation: It's about ensuring your wealth supports both your children and your family for decades to come.

Traditional estate planning tools can help your legacy stretch across lifetimes. Generation-skipping trusts allow you to transfer assets directly to grandchildren or great-grandchildren, reducing the chance that wealth is taxed multiple times as it passes down. Some families also use upstream gifting, transferring assets to parents or grandparents who may be able to pass them down more efficiently.

The OBBBA is a reminder to focus not only on where your wealth goes, but also on how adaptable your plan is along the way. Strategies that allow for later adjustments—such as disclaimers or “wait-and-see” provisions—are increasingly valuable. These tools can help ensure your estate isn't locked into decisions that may not be right for your family in the future.

By blending proven vehicles with versatile approaches, you can help ensure your estate plan carries your legacy forward for your family.

Giving Back with Purpose

Charitable giving is one of the most meaningful ways families can align their wealth with their values. With the

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OBBBA, the rules will change in 2026: Only donations that exceed 0.5% of your adjusted gross income (AGI) will be eligible for an itemized deduction.

That makes timing more important than ever. If you're planning a large gift, making it before the end of 2025 may maximize its impact. Another option is “bunching” contributions into a single year through tools like donor-advised funds (DAFs) or charitable trusts, so you only face the 0.5% floor once instead of every year.

Remember that using charitable giving vehicles like DAFs and charitable trusts can make your giving more strategic—they allow you to support the causes that matter to you while also making your estate plan more efficient.

Review Your Plan with Fresh Eyes

Estate planning—like all financial planning— isn't a one-time exercise.

Use this moment to revisit the basics: ensure that your estate planning strategies provide the right balance of protection and flexibility. Regular reviews can help confirm your plan reflects your goals today, remains responsive for tomorrow and makes the most of the changes brought by the new law.

Planning with Confidence

Whether it's keeping your options open, using flexible trusts, planning across generations or strategic giving, intentional estate planning can help protect your wealth and leave a lasting legacy for your family. Connect with your wealth advisor to explore which approaches are best for you and your family.