

## Special Needs Trust

We work hard to take care of our families, especially those that need our help the most. But what happens to them after we've gone? Discussing your estate planning needs with experienced Indianapolis Estate Planning Attorney Barbara J. Baird can help you get everything arranged to protect the interests of yourself, and your beneficiaries, especially your beneficiaries with special needs. Dealing with beneficiaries with special needs is a circumstance that requires a top-notch estate planning attorney to help you establish a "Special Needs Trust".

Leaving funds to individuals with special needs may sometimes prevent them from qualifying for important benefits under the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Medicaid programs. These limited benefits programs will not provide them with the assets that would allow them to enjoy a better quality of life, above and beyond the government's assistance with food and housing costs. But if parents leave any assets to a child (grown or not) who is receiving public benefits, they run the risk of disqualifying the beneficiary from receiving this assistance. Fortunately, the government has established guidelines allowing assets to be held in trust, called a "Special Needs Trust" or "Supplemental Needs Trust".

A Special Needs Trust should be established as early as possible, but no later than the beneficiary's 65th birthday. One benefit of having the Trust in place is that if the beneficiary becomes the recipient of gifts, bequests or a settlement from a lawsuit, these funds can be transferred to the Special Needs Trust without affecting that individual's eligibility for government benefits. You should

also establish a Special Needs Trust to protect your disabled beneficiary from potential creditor harassment. This protects your disabled beneficiary from losing these funds in a lawsuit as well. Because the funds in the Special Needs Trust are not counted as "available assets" for the purposes of government benefit eligibility, more of this money can be used for those extra expenses that will allow your disabled beneficiary to enjoy a better quality of life. Indiana Special Needs Trust Lawyer Barbara J. Baird will help you get everything in order so that you can be sure your disabled child or beneficiary will be taken care of.

Whatever your circumstance, it is important that you seek a qualified Indianapolis Special Needs Trust Attorney who can make the process of taking care of your disabled beneficiary easy and straightforward.