

***Planning Ahead***



***Lisa C. Alexander, Esq.***  
*Jakle & Alexander, LLP*

**Estate Planning – Planning to be Remembered**

All powers of attorney end at death, including the power of an agent appointed to make health care decisions under an Advance Health Care Directive. But there is one exception: After death, the health care agent still has the power to direct disposition of remains, including organ donation. The health care agent can arrange for a funeral or other memorial service or celebration, authorize cremation or arrange for burial.

Most people making an Advance Health Care Directive spend little time making their wishes known about funeral or memorial arrangements. Failure to do so can leave grieving and vulnerable loved ones with no direction. I will always remember the brother of a deceased client asking me with heart-breaking poignancy: “Didn’t my sister say anything about what she wanted? I don’t know what to do.” Or what if there are pre-paid arrangements for cremation or a burial plot somewhere that nobody knows about?

Besides the question of what you might want as a remembrance of you, is there a source of funding for your funeral or memorial, cremation or burial. “Pre-need” arrangements can be made and paid for during lifetime. Or there may be life insurance money or a designated bank account available to cover the cost. The last thing we want is to burden our loved ones with funeral and burial expenses.

We don’t like to think about death. Even with the certainty of death and taxes, we don’t want to believe it will happen to us. But taking some time to consider and then write up your thoughts about the arrangements you would like can be a tremendous gift. It may surprise you to find you actually have strong feelings about the kind of funeral or memorial you would hope for. Our loved ones want to honor our wishes and it would be so comforting to them if we would make our wishes known and provide the direction they will be looking for, before we die.

**Lisa C. Alexander is an attorney at Jakle & Alexander, LLP. She can be reached by calling 310-656-4310 or by emailing her at [alexander@jaklelaw.com](mailto:alexander@jaklelaw.com).**