

SPECIAL NEEDS FINANCIAL PLANNING **HOUSING** CHECKLIST



The Special Needs Financial Planning Team to Shepherd Financial Partners

Cynthia R. Haddad, CFP® | John W. Nadworny, CFP® | Alexandria Nadworny, CFP®

www.specialneedsplanning.com

Shepherd Financial Partners

1004 Main Street, Winchester, MA 01890 Tel 781.756.1804 Fax 781.729.4356

Special Needs Financial Planning Housing CHECKLIST

Based upon the Five Factors of Special Needs Planning™

From *The Special Needs Planning Guide: How to Prepare for Every Stage of Your Child's Life*, ©2007, Brookes Publishing

The planning process may seem overwhelming — we have been there both personally and professionally. While all checkpoints may not be applicable to every situation, here are our Special Needs Planning™ pointers.



GOVERNMENT BENEFIT FACTORS

Prior to turning 18:

- Limit assets in child's name to \$2000 or less
- Research all government agencies that may provide support

Upon 18th birthday:

- Apply for SSI and Medicaid
- Apply for Section 8
- Apply for Health Insurance Premium Reimbursement
- Determine which is best: Adult Family Care or Personal Care Assistant
- Never say never when determining eligibility or how a program applies to your situation: program rules are complicated and sometimes misunderstood



LEGAL FACTORS

Age 18:

- Analyze guardianship vs. guardianship alternatives
- Create or review your estate plan
- Establish a Special Needs Trust, if appropriate
- Name trustees, successor trustees, and guardians
- Update and coordinate beneficiary designations for insurance, retirement plans and annuities with your estate plan
- Review gifting strategies
- Review property and casualty insurance coverage, make sure you have an umbrella policy
- Determine housing ownership. Options include: trust, child, parents, LLC, etc.
- If you are teaming up with other families, develop an operating agreement with all partners involved. This may include other families, agencies and other professionals.
- If personally hiring staff, create an employee manual, formalize payroll (W2 vs. independent contractors:1099)



FAMILY AND SUPPORT FACTORS

- Have an independent evaluation to determine child's skills and abilities to help determine the supports required
- Determine the costs of various housing options
- Hiring an agency vs. going it alone; decide the best option for your situation
- Engage brothers and sisters
- Explore Community Mapping: identifying supports beyond paid staff including social/recreational, hobbies/interests, and employment
- Listen to your child, it's his/her life—create or update his/her person centered plan



EMOTIONAL FACTORS

- Are you ready to let go?
- Is your child ready to go?
- Update or create a Letter of Intent
- Communicate a clear vision for your child's future



FINANCIAL FACTORS

THE 3 STEPS OF PULLING IT TOGETHER

1. Addressing the parent's personal financial security

- Create a balance sheet, net worth, and cash flow statement
- Analyze your finances to determine what you can afford
- Develop tax planning strategies for retirement vs. non-retirement assets
- Build the most appropriate investment portfolio
- Determine how long your savings will last
- Select optimum Social Security benefit for parents
- Explore tax deductibility of support costs
- Review life, disability, long term care and health insurance

2. Determining the child's potential contributions

- List the government benefits your child receives
- Determine your child's earnings
- Supplemental needs trust income, if applicable

3. Combine steps 1 & 2 to develop an integrated plan to provide continuous funding

- Make an appointment with an experienced financial planner. Talk with us.

FIND THE BEST HOUSING OPTION THAT WORKS

- Explore different housing support options
 - Individualized supports
 - Group homes
 - Shared living
- Identify optimum staff to individual ratio
- Consider hiring an agency to select potential roommates and staff to remove emotions
- Determine cost sharing arrangements, if multiple families
- Select most appropriate physical structure:
 - House
 - Multi-family
 - Apartment
 - In-law apartment
 - Housing complex
- Develop a plan to pay for the property:
 - Mortgage vs no mortgage
 - Down payment amount
 - Use savings or refinance a current residence



WE CAN HELP

This list is not exhaustive but designed to serve as a guideline to get you started in the planning process. An important way we can help is by **asking the right questions**, **defining what you can do** and, if possible, **how you can make it happen**.

The Special Needs Financial Planning Team to Shepherd Financial Partners

Cynthia R. Haddad, CFP®

John W. Nadworny, CFP®

Alexandria Nadworny, CFP®

www.specialneedsplanning.com



We've talked about housing options and provided the checklist. Now it's time to build the infrastructure to carry forward your vision.

No one can replace a parent... **It takes a Team To Carry On.**TM

- Family, Friends and Professionals
- Trustees
- Guardians
- Certified Financial Planner ProfessionalsTM
- Attorneys
- Accountants
- Care Managers / Case Managers

We have been through the cycle of life with many of our clients and have defined a process for creating a Team To Carry OnTM. Circumstances may change and your thinking about your team may change but it is important to GET STARTED.

Talk with us.



A specialty practice to Shepherd Financial Partners

1004 Main Street, Winchester, MA 01890

Tel 781.756.1804 Fax 781.729.4356

www.specialneedsplanning.com

Financial planning and investment advice offered through Shepherd Financial Partners, LLC, a registered investment advisor. Securities offered through LPL Financial, member FINRA/SIPC. Special Needs Financial Planning, Shepherd Financial Partners and LPL Financial are separate entities. This information is not intended to be a substitute for specific individualized tax or legal advice. We suggest that you discuss your specific situation with a qualified tax or legal advisor.