Helping Aging Loved Ones Manage and Protect Their Finances: Your Checklist

HANCOCK WHITNEY PRIVATE WEALTH MANAGEMENT

April 2025

The need to assist a loved one with their finances as they age can be a sensitive and complex issue. To help ensure your loved one's financial security, it is important to be proactive, communicate openly, and make sure all legal and financial documents are complete and in place. Here is a checklist to guide you through the process:

Prepare for the Transition

- ❑ Have a candid conversation about finances early
  - ▸ Discuss your loved one's financial situation openly, including their income, expenses, debts, and both financial and tangible assets.
- ❑ Confirm their financial goals
  - ▸ Understand what they want to achieve with their finances in their later years (e.g., leaving a legacy, ensuring long-term care).
- ❑ Discuss any financial concerns
  - ▸ Address any fears about outliving their savings, potential fraud, or their ability to make sound financial decisions as they age.
- ❑ Identify their wishes in the event of incapacitation
  - ▸ Discuss who will help manage and protect their finances, including day-to-day banking, managing investments, and managing bills, if they can no longer do so.
  - ▸ Determine what role you or another trusted individual will have with your loved one's finances prior to incapacitation.

Gather and Organize Financial and Legal Documents

- ❑ Power of Attorney (POA)
  - ▸ Ensure that a financial power of attorney is established, allowing you or another trusted individual to make decisions if your loved one becomes incapacitated.
- ❑ Healthcare Proxy and Living Will
  - ▸ These documents should clearly outline your loved one's medical preferences and designate someone to make healthcare decisions on their behalf.
- ❑ Estate plans and other legal documents
  - ▸ Ensure you have access to important documents, including wills, trusts, tax returns, life insurance policies, retirement accounts, investment portfolios, and property deeds. If a last will and testament has not been put in place, consult an attorney to have one drafted before it is too late.

Assume Responsibilities for Daily Finances and Banking

- ❑ Take inventory of financial accounts
  - ▸ Gather account numbers, passwords, and key information. Evaluate the need to add a co-signer or authorized user on financial accounts to ease future management. Banks typically have strict measures in place to control who can access accounts.
- ❑ Identify sources of income
  - ▸ Understand total income from Social Security, pensions, investments, rental income, and annuities.
- ❑ Set up automatic bill pay for recurring expenses
  - ▸ Avoid late fee penalties and potential overpayment.
- ❑ Monitor accounts with transaction alerts
  - ▸ Set up alerts to detect unexpected transactions and look out for red flags.
- ❑ Educate your parents and loved ones on common scams and potential fraud
  - ▸ Discuss phone, email, and online fraud schemes that often target seniors.
- ❑ Sign up for credit monitoring
  - ▸ Enroll your loved one in credit monitoring services to detect any unusual financial activity.
- ❑ Implement financial controls
  - ▸ Consider setting withdrawal limits, authorizing dual signers for large transactions and exploring identity theft protection services.

Establish Your Role in Managing Your Loved One's Financial Life

- ❑ Establish a relationship with your loved one's financial advisors
  - ▸ Schedule a joint meeting to introduce yourself and your role, understand the big picture and ask about future planning and decision-making.
- ❑ Review beneficiary designations
  - ▸ Check that all beneficiaries on accounts, insurance policies, and retirement plans are up to date.

- ❑ Enroll or review existing Medicare plans
  - ▸ Consider a resource such as Healthpilot to help determine the Medicare plan that is the right fit for your loved one.
- ❑ Evaluate current life, long-term care or disability insurance policies
  - ▸ Understand coverage and process to file claims.
- ❑ Discuss need for professionally managed investments
  - ▸ Avoid the stress of having to make investment and trading decisions.
- ❑ Schedule family meetings
  - ▸ Facilitate family meeting to clarify roles and expectations, avoid misunderstandings and ensure your loved one's wishes are respected.

Resources

- ❑ Hancock Whitney Financial & Retirement Planning
  - ▸ Work collaboratively with a Hancock Whitney Advisor to create customized financial plans tailored to goals, expectations and concerns.
  - ▸ Meet regularly with an advisor to discuss progress and make changes as your priorities change.
  - ▸ Prepare for the unexpected with strategies to mitigate risk.
- ❑ Hancock Whitney Wealth Manager
  - ▸ Easily view all account balances, performance, and transactions in one place, regardless of financial institution.
  - ▸ Establish and track budgets for any credit cards or checking accounts. Manage household expenses.
  - ▸ Securely store important documents digitally such as: wills, trusts, power of attorney, and insurance documents.
  - ▸ Create a list of important contacts to upload to your document vault for easy access at all times.
- ❑ Hancock Whitney Insights
  - ▸ Blogs and articles with valuable insights to help you navigate through this process.
  - ▸ Insights related to estate planning, market performance, economic updates, taxes, financial planning, and banking.

How Hancock Whitney Wealth Management can help

The Hancock Whitney team has deep experience working with wealth transition planning and we are here to answer questions, provide insights and guide you and your loved ones.

Get started today by contacting your Hancock Whitney Advisor.