

About Carol Mellor

Carol Mellor has over 30 years experience as an attorney, including over twenty years of concentration in wills and estate administration, elder law, civil rights and discrimination litigation.



Ms. Mellor graduated cum laude from New York Law School in 1974. She is a member of the New York State Bar, United States

District Court for the Eastern and Southern Districts of New York, and the United States Court of Appeals Second and Third Circuits.

Ms. Mellor has authored legal texts on various topics of criminal law and served as an Adjunct Sociology Professor at Bloomfield College for over 10 years. She has worked as an advocate and litigator for those who have been discriminated against. These experiences and her knowledge of the legal challenges faced by non-traditional families, including gay and lesbian couples, has prompted her to devote a portion of her practice towards assisting these persons in protecting themselves against presumptions made by the law. She works with her clients to develop comprehensive plans using legal documents to ensure that they have planned for the future and that their wishes are carried out.



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*Wills and
Advance
Directives*



*Estate
Administration*



*Planning for
Families of
Choice*



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Areas of Practice

Wills and Advance Directives

- Simple and Complex Wills
- Revocable and Irrevocable Trusts
- Powers of Attorney
- Health Care Proxies
- Living Wills
- Medical Authorizations



As our lives have become more complex, planning for illness and death must accommodate and reflect these complexities. New choices in living arrangements-domestic partners, unmarried couples, second (and third) marriages, gay and lesbian couples with children-have become common. Yet the laws of New York do not provide protection for families of choice. Now, more than ever, plans must be in place so that your choices on issues that arise at times of illness or death are made known and fulfilled.

If you do not make your choices known, the law steps in and makes choices for you based on legal assumptions. Many times, the choices the law makes are not the same as those you would make. A few simple documents can assure that those closest to you-the people you choose-are the ones who can act for you. Without these documents, the court may need to appoint a guardian for you-an expensive procedure which may result in a stranger taking over your affairs.

Estate Administration

- Probate of Estates
- Administration of Estates
- Implementation of Trust Plans
- Transfer of Assets



When a loved one dies, the survivor is often overwhelmed by the paperwork involved in transferring the assets to the survivor or other persons to whom the decedent chose to leave his or her property. The transfer can occur in many ways.

- Probate of a will
- Jointly held property
- Property held in trust
- Intestacy

In addition to the transfer of property, the survivor must deal with estate taxes, the possible need for appraisals, the sale of assets, payment of debts, and questions regarding funeral and burial arrangements. Legal assistance can lessen the burden of all of these issues and make the transition easier.

Planning For Domestic Partnerships and Families of Choice

- Trusts
- Transfer of Assets
- Life Estates
- Family Agreements



The law presumes that we all marry someone of the opposite sex, only marry once, have one or more children and that we all get along. If you are part of a traditional family, many choices that need to be made in an emergency have been made for you by law. Usually those choices are in agreement with what you yourself would wish.

But many of us are in relationships that do not fit into these neat boxes. We are in same-sex relationships, or have been married more than once, or have never married, or are estranged from one or more of our children, or have children from more than one marriage.

If your situation is not traditional, it is essential that you execute a series of documents to ensure that matters concerning your health, property and death will be handled in the manner which you choose and not according to the presumptions of law.