

What does a trusts and estates lawyer do?

Trusts and estates lawyers draft estate planning documents, such as wills, trusts, powers of attorneys, and advanced medical directives. In addition to estate planning, they are involved in the estate administration of a decedent. Both estate planning and estate administration involve transfer tax and income tax ramifications, and many trusts and estates lawyers have tax expertise.

Trusts and estates can also overlap with elder law, which deals with wealth preservation issues, including Medicaid qualification, long term care insurance, and social security or disability benefits. Elder law is a growing field, and attorneys with expertise in the legal issues faced by the elderly will be in high demand over the next two decades.

Where can I practice trusts and estates law?

Trusts and estates lawyers generally work in small, mid-sized and large law firms. They also work for tax enforcement agencies such as the Internal Revenue Service or in financial institutions.

How can I get a job as a trusts and estates lawyer?

Take trusts and estates and income tax courses during your second year of law school. It is important to take these courses because they serve as prerequisites for other classes, such as planning for families and seniors, estate and gift tax, estate planning, elder law and income taxation of trusts and estates. Consider concentrating in estate planning while in law school, obtaining the estate planning certification and/or getting an LL.M. in Taxation at UB. Work as an intern or law clerk with a trusts and estates practice while in your second and third year of law school. Join the Estates and Trusts Section of the MSBA, join the practitioners' listserve, and attend events and programs.

Where can I find more information?

American Academy of Estate Planning Attorneys - <http://www.aaepa.com/>

American Bar Association's Real Property, Trust and Estate Law Section -

http://www.americanbar.org/groups/real_property_trust_estate.html

American College of Trust and Estate Counsel - <http://www.actec.org/public/AboutACTEC.asp>

National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys - <http://www.naela.org/Public/>

National Network of Estate Planning Attorneys - <http://www.nnepa.com/public/>

National Senior Citizens Law Center - <http://www.nslc.org/>

Senior Law - www.seniorlaw.com

Society of Trust and Estate Practitioners - <http://www.step.org/>

Trusts & Estates: Essential Information and Strategies for Advisors to the Wealthy -

<http://wealthmanagement.com/welcome-trusts-estates>

Who teaches trusts & estates law at UB?

Wendy Gerzog

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