Reinhart

Kelsey L. Berns

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Kelsey L. Berns is a shareholder in Reinhart's Trusts and Estates Practice where she advises wealthy individuals and families on a wide range of estate planning matters, such as complex wealth transfer planning, charitable planning strategies, and tax planning. Kelsey has considerable experience implementing estate plans designed to avoid probate, reduce or eliminate transfer taxes (including gift, estate, and generation-skipping transfer taxes), and maximize income tax planning. She often advises clients on tax-planning strategies, both during lifetime and at death, and understands the necessity of working closely with other advisors to craft plans that meet a family's tax and non-tax objectives.

After death, Kelsey counsels fiduciaries in the trust/estate administration process and assists with the preparation of tax returns, implementation of post-mortem planning techniques, and negotiations with the IRS. She also works with clients to develop charitable planning strategies, including the establishment of private family foundations or other charitable giving vehicles, such as donor-advised funds and charitable trusts.

Kelsey often works with clients who are relocating from Wisconsin to Florida or reside in both states throughout the year. Licensed in both Wisconsin and Florida, Kelsey understands the complex property and tax issues that can arise with new or dual residencies and works with clients to maximize the protections and benefits both states offer. In addition, she frequently assists with the drafting and implementation of prenuptial agreements, marital property agreements, and other agreements governing the property rights of both married and unmarried couples. Her clients appreciate her personable yet professional disposition, and she enjoys building long-lasting relationships with her clients. Kelsey's educational training and legal experience enable her to represent her clients effectively and develop creative strategies tailored to her clients' needs.

Education

- B.A., summa cum laude, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
- J.D., cum laude, University of Wisconsin Law School

Bar Admissions

Wisconsin, Florida

Practices

- Trusts and Estates

Services

- Family-Owned Business
- Succession Planning
- Arizona/California/Florida/Illinois/South Dakota Law Consultations
- Charitable Contributions and Planning
- Estate Planning
- Gift and Estate Tax Audits
- Prenuptial Agreements/Marital Agreements
- Retirement Planning/IRA Planning
- Trust and Estate Administration
- Trust Services

Matters

- Regularly counsels wealthy individuals and families with respect to estate, gift and generation-skipping transfer tax issues

- Frequently counsels large corporate fiduciaries with respect a variety legal matters under the Wisconsin Trust Code, including fiduciary duties and powers and trust interpretation, reformation and termination.

- Assists corporate fiduciaries and individuals with complex trust and estate administrations

- Assists clients with planning and executing lifetime gifts and preparing corresponding gift tax returns

Honors & Affiliations

Honors

- Selected for inclusion in Wisconsin Super Lawyers – Rising Stars Edition

- "Ones to Watch" by *Best Lawyers in America* (2024, 2023, 2022, 2021)

Affiliations

- Adjunct Professor, Use of Trusts in Estate Planning, University of Wisconsin Law School

- Milwaukee Bar Association

Presentations

- "SECURE 2.0 Act & New Estate Planning Opportunities," Wisconsin Association of Charitable Gift Planners, March 2023
- “2021 Tax Law Reform: Planning in Uncertain Times,” Planned Giving Council of Eastern Wisconsin, November 2021
- "The SECURE Act: Everything You Need to Know," Wisconsin Association of Charitable Gift Planners, March 2020
- "The SECURE Act: Everything You Need to Know," Walworth County Estate Planning Council, March 2020
- "The SECURE Act: Everything You Need to Know," Planned Giving Council of Eastern Wisconsin, February 2020
- "Business Succession Planning," Waukesha County Estate Planning Council, November 2019
- "The SECURE ACT & RESA - What You Need to Know," Children's Hospital Annual Tax and Charitable Planning Seminar for Professionals, November 2019
- "Trust Administration Trending Topics," Trusts & Estate Section of the Milwaukee Bar Association, April 2019
- "Charitable Giving After the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act," Trusts & Estate Section of the Milwaukee Bar Association, April 2019
- "Charitable Giving After the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act," Planned Giving Council of Eastern Wisconsin, March 2019

Presentations

- Author, "Maximize Your Family’s 529 Account: Strategies for Excess Funds" (Blue Magazine, December 2023)
- Author, “Is What’s Mine, Ours? Understanding Community Property” (Blue Magazine; February 2022)