MICHOLE L. EASTERLY

Shareholder

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Overview

Michole Easterly is a seasoned shareholder who focuses on advising high-net-worth individuals and families on comprehensive trust and estate planning strategies. With a meticulous approach, Michole collaborates closely with clients to develop tailored plans aimed at safeguarding considerable assets and business interests, while also facilitating the seamless transfer of wealth across generations. Her experience encompasses a wide array of services, including drafting intricate estate planning documents such as wills, revocable trusts, and various other instruments designed to mitigate estate and gift taxes. She excels in structuring family wealth plans that incorporate sophisticated techniques to minimize tax liabilities, optimize asset transfers, and leverage corporate structures for valuation discounts.

Furthermore, Michole provides invaluable guidance in business planning endeavors, ranging from entity selection and tax planning to the formation of partnerships, LLCs, and corporations. Her proficiency extends to navigating complex investment opportunities across diverse industries, including technology, real estate, and professional sports, where she advises clients on the most tax-efficient structures for their investments. Moreover, Michole is adept at establishing charitable trusts and tax-exempt organizations, leveraging her expertise to navigate regulatory requirements and optimize tax benefits for philanthropic

Practices

Estate, Trust and Wealth Planning
Corporate, Business Transactions and Tax

Education

- J.D., University of Houston Law Center
- B.S., University of Texas

Admissions & Certifications

- Texas
- United States Tax Court

initiatives. As a trusted advisor, she is deeply committed to ensuring her clients' financial legacies endure and adeptly administers uncontested guardianships, trusts, and estates. Michole also provides expert witness opinions in family law cases involving complex trusts and property distributions. With a blend of legal acumen and strategic foresight, Michole remains committed to guiding clients toward their long-term financial objectives with precision and care.

Experience

- Planning and drafting estate planning documents and assisting clients in planning for large estates, including wills, revocable trusts, generation skipping transfer trusts, life insurance trusts, prenuptial and postnuptial agreements, family limited partnerships, charitable organizations, and various other estate planning techniques.
- Family wealth planning, including implementing strategies to minimize estate and gift taxes, preserve wealth, utilizing lifetime transfers of assets and restructuring of family limited partnerships and other entities.
- Facilitate successive gifting transactions from older generations and leverage of corporate structures to obtain valuation discounts.
- Business planning, including entity selection and design, business tax planning, formation of limited partnerships, limited liability companies, and corporations, drafting buy-sell agreements, deferred compensation agreements, and providing for business entity sales and purchases, and succession planning.
- Assisting clients with investment opportunities including securities, private equity, venture capital, hedge funds and other alternatives in the technology, real estate, energy, fine arts and professional sport industries, as well as assisting with documentation, highlighting business and legal risks and making recommendations on the most tax advantageous structure for such investments.
- Establishing charitable trusts, tax-exempt organizations, including non-profit corporations, public charities and private foundations, and preparing Form 1023-Application for Recognition of Exemption, as well as participating in examinations of charitable organizations by the Attorney General.
- Acting as both an officer and board member of multiple private family foundations.

- Prepare and review Form 706, estate tax returns, and Form 709, gift tax returns, provide advice regarding estate, gift, and generation-skipping transfer taxes, as well as participating in Form 706 and Form 709 audits by the Internal Revenue Service and negotiating favorable settlements.
- Administering uncontested guardianships, trusts and estates of decedents.
- Expert witness designation in family law cases involving complex trusts and the community property versus separate property character of trust distributions and undistributed income during marriage.

Related Experience

- Provided transaction advisory and corporate governance counsel for privately held companies, including entity choice and tax efficiency.
- Prepared, reviewed, and negotiated contracts, commercial leases, subscription agreements, purchase and sale agreements and ancillary documents such as employment agreements, guaranties, promissory notes and security agreements.
- Performed due diligence on real estate purchases, including survey and title review.

Affiliations

- State Bar of Texas
- State Bar of Texas, Real Estate, Probate and Trust Law Section
- Houston Bar Association, Probate, Trusts and Estates Section
- Houston Estate and Financial Forum