

Taking time out for a little life admin



legal

By **MELISA SLOAN**

THE FESTIVE season and year-end break is an opportune time to reflect on the year that was and also look forward to the opportunities that the new year brings.

It's also a time for a slower pace of life, to do some life admin and review the tasks we want to tick off in the new year.

Here are some things that may resonate with you.

Make sure your family is taken care of

For many of us, our family is at the core of our existence, and we want to make sure they are taken care of if something happens to us.

The reality is that although we have good intentions, life gets busy, and although something sits on our to-do list, we may not act on it until it's too late.

To prevent this from happening to you, book an appointment with an estate planning lawyer for the new year.

They will be able to assist you in putting in place a comprehensive Will that reflects your wishes and makes sure your family is looked after if something happens to you.

Once you have the appointment, take some time to think about who should receive your assets and who should undertake important roles such as executor or children's guardian.

Compile your important documents

Compiling all your important documents in one place will make it easier for those left behind when you are no longer here.

Many of us have it on our to-do list, so set a day aside to collate all those important documents and have that wonderful peace of mind once it's all done.

Important documents can include House Titles, Wills, Power of

Attorney documents, Binding Death Nomination, Trust Deeds, Insurance Policies, Letter of Wishes to executors and loved ones, passwords, details of your assets and liabilities, and trusted advisors.

Check that your parents have their affairs in place

The festive season is when many of us catch up with family; for some of you, it may be a considerable time since you last saw your parents or elderly relatives.

Ask them whether they have wills and powers of attorney and whether they reflect their current wishes.

They may have meant to update or implement them for the first time but never got around to it.

It is imperative that these documents are put in place whilst your parents are still able to put them in place, as should they lose capacity, they also lose the ability to put these documents in place, which invariably will lead to long-term complications and stress for you.

Take note of your parents and check they are really okay

If you are spending time with parents or elderly relatives that you have not seen for a period of time, have a good chat with them to check in with them and see how they are doing.

You may chat with them weekly on the phone, but sitting with them in their home environment and seeing them engage and move can provide a different perspective from weekly chats.

Do they comprehend all that is going on around them?

Do they feel comfortable in their own home?

Is there any sign of things that need to be repaired?

They may not be managing in their own homes but may be reluctant to tell you because they are fearful of the future consequences, particularly if they are reluctant to leave.

If your observations confirm that they can no longer live independently in their own homes, it's an opportune

time to discuss the options available to them and provide them with some security and comfort regarding their future.

Create beautiful memories

This festive season, be present, embrace the opportunity to spend special times with your family and loved ones, enjoy each other's company, engage in storytelling, and reflect on the year that was.

It's also a time to remember those special loved ones who are no longer here, who hold a special place in our hearts and the wonderful times that you shared.

Taking the time to do some life admin will prepare you well for the new year ahead.

It allows you to reflect, plan, and ensure that you and your loved ones are taken care of.

What better start to 2025 could we wish for than that?

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