1. Why Funding Your Michigan Revocable Living Trust Is Absolutely Essential

So You Set Up a Trust—Now What?

You’ve taken a smart step: you created a Revocable Living Trust in Michigan. Great move! It can help you avoid probate, keep things private, manage your assets if you become disabled, and make life much easier for your family when you're gone.

But here's the catch: your trust only works if you fund it.

What Does 'Funding' a Trust Mean?

“Funding” your trust simply means transferring your assets into it.

Think of your trust as an empty safe. Creating the trust is like building the safe and putting your name on it. But unless you put your valuables inside, the safe won’t protect anything.

That’s what happens when people create a trust but forget to transfer (or “fund”) their assets. The trust can’t manage or distribute what it doesn’t own.

What Happens If You Don’t Fund Your Trust?

If you forget or delay funding your trust:
- Assets stay in your name alone – and must go through probate if you die.
- Your family may face court delays, costs, and headaches.
- Your wishes might not be followed exactly—especially if assets end up divided by Michigan’s default intestacy laws.
- Assets might not be protected if you become incapacitated.

In short: the trust can’t help if you don’t use it.

What Should Be Funded into Your Trust?

You should transfer as many of your assets as possible, including:
- Real estate (your home, cottage, farmland)
- Bank accounts (checking, savings, CDs)
- Investments (brokerage accounts, stocks, bonds)
- Business interests
- Personal property (antiques, collections, equipment)
- Vehicles, if appropriate
- Even digital assets (login credentials, cryptocurrencies)

Some assets (like retirement accounts or life insurance) may not be re-titled to the trust but should name the trust as a beneficiary or contingent beneficiary.

Why It Matters in Michigan

Michigan’s probate process, while not the worst in the country, still takes time, costs money, and becomes public record. A properly funded trust allows your estate to be handled quickly and privately, without court supervision.

Bottom Line

A trust without assets is like a suitcase with nothing inside. You’ve done the hard part—now finish the job. Funding your trust is what makes it work, and it can save your family time, money, and stress.

Your future self—and your loved ones—will thank you.