



Providing Flexibility for Charitable Bequests

Utilizing the Estate Distribution Instruction Form

Faithful Christians desire to leave meaningful and lasting legacies for future generations. Consequently, many have chosen to include their churches, ministries, and missionaries to some degree in their estate plans. This is often done by naming these charities in their will or Revocable Living Trust, or as primary or contingent beneficiaries on life insurance policies, annuities, or retirement plans such as IRAs, 401(k)s, and 403(b)s.

Yet, from time to time, God changes our hearts' desires by aligning us with new opportunities in which to engage in His work. If so, can we avoid spending the additional time, effort, and expense of an attorney visit simply to change our charitable beneficiaries?

Yes. A number of years ago, I was working with a couple in the Pittsburgh area to update their wills. They supported a large number of ministries and other worthy charities, and they wanted to continue their support through a provision in their wills.

As we began to discuss this topic, they pulled out a very long list of organizations they were supporting. There must have been at least sixty or seventy! Some names were crossed out, as their desires changed or an organization closed its doors. New ones were being added regularly, and the list was constantly evolving.

As we considered the way in which they might name these ministries in their wills, the challenges became obvious. Suppose they drafted their new wills and wanted to make changes the very next week? Or suppose they wanted to change the percentages each would receive? Would they have to schedule another appointment with their attorney to modify their wills? Would they want to do this every time they wanted to make a change to their list of ministries?

While many of us may have a favorite ministry or two that we support, it's common that we have several that we may wish to include in our estate plans. And it's important to have practical a way in which to name our ministries in our wills while having the flexibility to easily make changes.

Enter the Estate Distribution Instruction Form.

Dallas Seminary Foundation has created a tool designed to help with this challenge. We call it our “Estate Distribution Instruction Form.”

Here’s how it works.

- 1.** Decide which ministries you would like to name, along with approximate amounts or percentages you would like to give to each. You would record this information on the Estate Distribution Instruction Form.
- 2.** Name “Dallas Seminary Foundation” as a beneficiary of your charitable gifts in your will, IRA beneficiary designation, or other source of estate gifts.
- 3.** Complete and sign the Estate Distribution Instruction Form and send it to Dallas Seminary Foundation, giving us written permission to oversee the distribution of your ministry gifts.
- 4.** Upon death, Dallas Seminary Foundation would receive and distribute your gifts to your various ministries according to the instructions you provided.

This flexible approach to giving provides options. When changes occur, you may not need to visit your attorney to draft new documents. You can simply communicate your new desires to the Dallas Seminary Foundation by providing us with an updated Estate Distribution Instruction Form. View the Estate Distribution Instruction Form now by clicking [EDI for Individual](#) or [EDI for Couple](#).