GRISSOM PLUMMER LAW

HOW POWER OF ATTORNEY DOCUMENTS CAN HELP WHILE YOU'RE TRAVELING

Travel often brings excitement and new experiences, but it can also create unexpected challenges—especially if an emergency arises while you're away from home. Whether you're traveling for business, taking a family vacation, or spending an extended period out of state or abroad, having the right estate planning documents in place can provide valuable peace of mind.

One of the most important documents to consider before traveling is a **Power of Attorney (POA)**.

What Is a Power of Attorney?

A Power of Attorney is a legal document that allows you to appoint someone you trust—called your agent or attorney-in-fact—to act on your behalf if you are unable to manage certain financial or legal matters yourself.

Depending on how the document is prepared, your agent may be authorized to:

- Manage your bank accounts and pay bills.
- Handle real estate transactions.
- Sign legal or financial documents.
- Communicate with financial institutions.
- Manage business affairs while you're unavailable.
- Address time-sensitive financial obligations.

Without a valid Power of Attorney, your loved ones may have difficulty assisting you during an emergency, even if they have your best interests at heart.

Why Is a Power of Attorney Important Before Traveling?

Many people assume that because they're healthy, they don't need a Power of Attorney. However, unexpected situations can occur at any time. A medical emergency, accident, or travel delay could leave you temporarily unable to manage important financial matters.

Imagine that while you're traveling:

- A mortgage payment or utility bill is due.
- A real estate closing requires your signature.
- Your bank needs authorization to complete a transaction.
- An insurance claim or financial issue needs immediate attention.

If you have a properly executed Power of Attorney, the person you've appointed can help manage these matters without unnecessary delays.

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Don't Forget Your Healthcare Documents

Along with a Financial Power of Attorney, many travelers also benefit from having:

- Healthcare Power of Attorney – Allows someone you trust to make medical decisions if you are unable to communicate your wishes.
- Advance Directive (Living Will) – Provides instructions regarding your healthcare preferences if you become seriously ill or incapacitated.

Together, these documents help ensure that both your financial affairs and healthcare decisions can be managed according to your wishes.

Choosing the Right Person

Your appointed agent should be someone you trust completely. This person should be:

- Responsible and dependable.
- Willing to act in your best interest.
- Able to make decisions during stressful situations.
- Familiar with your financial and personal wishes.

Many people choose a spouse, adult child, sibling, or trusted friend, but the right choice depends on your individual circumstances.

Review Your Estate Plan Before You Travel

If you're planning an extended trip or simply haven't reviewed your estate plan in several years, now is a great time to make sure your documents still reflect your wishes.

Major life changes—such as marriage, divorce, the birth of a child, retirement, or the purchase of new property—may require updates to your Power of Attorney and other estate planning documents.

Grissom Plummer Law Is Here to Help

At Grissom-Plummer Law, we help individuals and families create estate plans that provide confidence and peace of mind—whether they're at home or traveling.

Our team can help you determine which Power of Attorney documents best fit your needs and ensure that your estate plan continues to protect you and your loved ones through every stage of life.

Planning today can make all the difference tomorrow.

Quick Tip

Before your next trip, ask yourself:

✔️ Do I have a current Financial Power of Attorney?
✔️ Have I named someone I trust?
✔️ Do I have a Healthcare Power of Attorney and Advance Directive?
✔️ Have I reviewed my estate plan within the last 3–5 years?

If you answered "no" to any of these questions, it may be time to review your estate plan.

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