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Fall Newsletter from Pusateri & Pusateri, P.C.



Attorney Updates

We are pleased to announce the addition of another attorney to strengthen our litigation staff. **Attorney Shelley Harvey** joined Pusateri & Pusateri, P.C. in September 2011.

Attorney Harvey is a 2008 graduate from Northeastern University School of Law. She will focus in the areas of civil litigation and workers' compensation.

Attorney Gina Wilson was appointed as co-chair of the Worcester County Bar Association Housing Court Committee.

Seminars at Our Office

After January 1, 2012, we will be offering seminars at our office for those who are interested. Ideas for seminars include:

- Residential real estate 101
- Reverse mortgages
- Basic estate planning
- Family law basics

Please let us know what seminars you are interested in, and if you

Family Law: Alimony Reform Signed into Law

On September 26, 2011, Governor Deval Patrick signed An Act Reforming Alimony in the Commonwealth which makes significant changes to alimony law in Massachusetts. The effective date of the Act is March 2, 2012. In the past, the Courts had significant discretion in awarding alimony, while the new Act provides a clear calculation for alimony payments. The Courts still obtain some discretion, but there is more certainty in terms of payment calculations.

Alimony is now terminated upon death; upon cohabitation (living with another person for a period of 3 months) of a recipient spouse; upon the payor attaining full retirement age (retirement age to be eligible to receive full retirement benefits); and remarriage of the recipient spouse.

General term alimony is now paid as follows:

- If marriage is 5 years or less, then alimony shall not continue for longer than ½ the length of the marriage;
- If marriage is more than 5 years but less than 10 years, then alimony is no more than 60% of the length of the marriage;
- If the marriage is more than 10 years but less than 15 years, then alimony is no more than 70% of the length of the marriage;
- If the marriage is more than 15 years but less than 20 years, then alimony is no more than 80% of the length of the marriage;
- If the marriage is more than 20 years, alimony can be ordered for a lifetime.

Anyone currently paying alimony who seeks modification under the new Act may file under the following time limits:

- If the marriage was 5 years or less - on or after March 1, 2013;
- If the marriage was more than 5 years but less than 10 years - on or after March 1, 2014;
- If the marriage was more than 10 years but less than 15 years - on or after March 1, 2015;
- If the marriage was more than 15 years but less than 20 years - on or after September 1, 2015;
- Any payor who has reached full retirement age or who will reach full retirement age on or before March 1, 2015 may file a modification on or after March 1, 2013.

have any other suggestions!

Please contact our office if you have any questions about alimony reform.

Estate Planning: Probate Law Changes

In January 2009, the Massachusetts Legislature enacted the new Uniform Probate Code (MUPC). Although certain provisions of the MUPC pertaining to guardians and conservators came into effect on July 1, 2009, most changes are scheduled to take effect on January 2, 2012.

The MUPC has an impact on the probate process and is designed to simplify the process of settling a decedent's affairs in a manner consistent with the decedent's intent.

If you are interested in developing or revising your estate plan to take advantage of the new MUPC, please contact our office.

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