

# THOMAS S. LEEBRICK, PC

## TOP LAWYER IN ELDER LAW

BY MEGAN NORCROSS

**W**hat happens when we reach the end of our life? What tough decisions will have to be made about our care and what will happen with all of our assets after we're gone?

While these questions are difficult ones, the answers represent a reality that we will all face one day.

For those ready to tackle their end-of-life plans, skilled attorneys such as Tom Leebrick will help navigate the legal waters.

*“There’s a client demand for elder care services and, I think, as my practice has matured, my clientele has also matured,” said Leebrick, who has been practicing law in the Lynchburg area for over 30 years. “[My clients] need wills, power of attorneys, advanced medical directives—these are all documents that are important and can be potentially time- and money-saving if those documents are prepared versus if they’re not prepared.”*

A native of Lynchburg, Leebrick attended E.C. Glass High School and went on to study at the University of Virginia for his undergraduate degree. From there, he moved to Alabama to receive his law degree from Cumberland School of Law in 1985. After graduation, Leebrick returned to his hometown and began practicing law—he has been working here ever since.

As an elder lawyer, Leebrick often assumes the role of an advisor and counselor.



*“You have to educate the client because they don’t know much about the law,” explained Leebrick. “And here they are in the middle of this process where the law is involved and you need to educate them to raise their comfort level—to give them the confidence that they can do this on their own.”*

End-of-life directives, trusts and estate planning are sometimes difficult conversations to have and often individuals don’t have them with their family and loved ones. In fact, it’s estimated that 60 percent of adults in the U.S. lack a will or any estate planning. That lack of communication and planning could result in a lot of confusion and potentially a lot of heartache for loved ones. >>



Leebrick refers to himself as a bit of a dying breed in the legal space. Where most lawyers will stay focused on their specific practice area, Leebrick hones his skills on general practice law first, which equips him to properly advise his clients no matter the need.

“I think that people should evaluate their situations and confront end-of-life issues sooner rather than later,” advised Leebrick. “I think everybody needs to have a will and a power of attorney.”  
*(Read more about power of attorney on the following pages.)*

***According to Leebrick, it's never too early to start considering end-of-life planning or, at the very least, a will and power of attorney. While he recommends individuals create a will when they get married and join their finances, he advises that individuals should at least create a will and name a power of attorney when they have children.***

But sometimes Leebrick's work is a bit more complicated than the drafting of legal documents. Oftentimes, for example, estate issues are interwoven with other family law issues—meaning more than one facet of the law comes into play.

“My practice involves the general practice of law. If you don't have a fair grasp on various areas of law, it's difficult to advise your clients,” explained Leebrick.

***“Think of law like a chess board,” said Leebrick. “Every time you make a move, it may make an impact on other areas. It's important [to understand general law] because law is so interrelated. A family law issue may have an impact on estate planning. Likewise, a bankruptcy issue may have an impact on family law or estate planning.”***

Despite the chess-like maneuvering that sometimes comes with the job, Leebrick finds great joy in the challenges.

“When someone comes in and they have a problem, I can help them simplify that problem. It's very rewarding,” said Leebrick. “All problems have solutions. Sometimes it takes a while to figure out the best solution, but there are solutions.”

Taking the time to create a will and name a power of attorney, at the least, is just as much about your family as it is about you. These simple documents have the power to ease an incredible burden from friends and family and help to ease a transition in a way that best benefits and impacts everyone involved.

Leebrick concluded, “That's what a will is all about.” 📌