

## Overview:

### *Family Committees, Councils, & Governance*

#### **I. Definition & Purpose**

- A. Family Governance refers to the formal framework through which multigenerational families make joint decisions, preserve legacy, and manage shared wealth and/or businesses.
  - 1. A family constitution or mission statement often serves as the cornerstone of governance as it articulates shared values, goals, and guiding principles to unify current and future generations.

#### **II. Potential Structures**

- A. *Family Assembly*
  - 1. Involves all adult family members (including spouses, if desired).
  - 2. Typically convenes annually (1–2 days), blending education, social interaction, and business briefings.
- B. *Family Council*
  - 1. A representative body (often elected) that provides a formalized way for family members to perform governance functions. In addition to managing family governance, councils provide an avenue for communication, strategic planning and implementation, and general decision making.
    - a) Term limits may be imposed depending on family dynamics.
- C. *Committees*
  - 1. Smaller, task-specific groups focused on particular needs or projects such as education, philanthropy, succession, or protective oversight.
  - 2. Committees might be standing or created to accomplish a specific goal.

#### **III. Governance Best Practices**

Whether governance takes the form of annual assemblies or more structured family councils with sub-committees, the following practices may be implemented for efficiency and better familial relations.

- A. *Effective Communication*
  - 1. Hold regular meetings that encourage transparency, mutual respect, and open dialogue.
- B. *Role Clarity*
  - 1. Clearly define roles, responsibilities, and succession among family, trustees, and advisors.
- C. *Decision-Making Protocols*
  - 1. Establish formal voting rules, committee charters, and bylaws to ensure cohesive and accountable governance.
- D. *Values-Driven Framework*
  - 1. Root all governance practices in shared family values, ensuring alignment on long-term priorities.
- E. *Generational Engagement*
  - 1. Integrate younger adults gradually through assemblies, education, or mentorship committees.

#### **IV. Implementation Roadmap**

- A. *Draft a Family Constitution or Mission Statement*
  - 1. Use it as the “charter” for family governance, guiding all structures and decisions. This can focus on practical guidelines and incorporate family values and goals.
- B. *Establish Council and Committees*
  - 1. Define scope, membership, terms, and meeting cadence, electing representatives where appropriate.
- C. *Set Regular Family Assemblies*
  - 1. Combine learning, policy alignment, and social bonding in annual gatherings.
- D. *Clarify Governance Tools*
  - 1. Implement bylaws, agendas, decision rules, and protocols that fit the family’s size and complexity.