



Darin Donovan

Partner

Redwood Shores

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Darin Donovan practices in all areas of estate planning and wealth management. Darin's clients include high-net-worth individuals and families, small business owners, private foundations and charitable nonprofits, and executives and venture capitalists in the tech sector.

His work includes:

- Estate planning
- Gift trust planning
- Charitable planning
- Estate and trust administration
- Post-mortem tax planning
- Probate
- Disputed estate and trust matters
- Nonprofit entity formation and counseling

Darin is also a Family Wealth Management Adjunct Professor at the Santa Clara University School of Law.

Areas of Focus

Services

[Private Client Services](#)

[Closely Held & Family Businesses](#)

Experience

- Advised a venture capitalist starting a new fund in the complex transfer of interest in the fund to a trust for the benefit of the client's children. The client was able to transfer significant wealth for the benefit of his children without triggering the punitive "special valuation" gift tax rules, without using the client's lifetime exemption from gift tax and without causing recognition of income and gain on the sale of the interest.
 - Advised client on the structure of their charitable gift allowing the donation to be acknowledged currently by the charity, provided the donor with the security of ongoing positive cash flow, a charitable deduction against income tax and a deferral of capital gains on the appreciated property contributed to the trust.
 - Assisted client by preserving her interest in a house left to her in a poorly-worded trust by bringing an action in the probate court and ultimately settling the distribution of the estate.
 - Negotiated an errant trustee's resignation without resort to litigation and helped to defeat the client's brother's claim against a \$30 million trust ensuring that the client's father's wishes were upheld.
 - Assisted client in retaining litigation counsel on a wrongful death claim, worked with the client's litigators to negotiate a settlement preserving the client's assets while avoiding trial.
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Credentials

Education

- University of California - Berkeley, J.D.
- University of California - Berkeley, B.A., English Literature and Fine Art

Bar Admissions

- California (1995)

Court Admissions

- U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California

Recognition

- Selected among *The Best Lawyers in America*®, Trusts & Estates, 2024
- *Chambers High Net Worth Guide*, "Leader in their Field," 2017-2018

Professional Activities

- Silicon Valley Chapter of the Society for Trust and Estate Practitioners (STEP), Board Member and Secretary

Community Involvement

- The Peninsula School in Menlo Park, Advisor and Former Board of Directors
- Hillsdale High School Foundation, Co-creator and Advisor