

Planning Smart

Interest Rate, Inflation, Real Estate & Cryptocurrency



Cryptocurrency in Canada: Risks & Regulations

Assentt Client Portal Tips: How to Make the Most of it

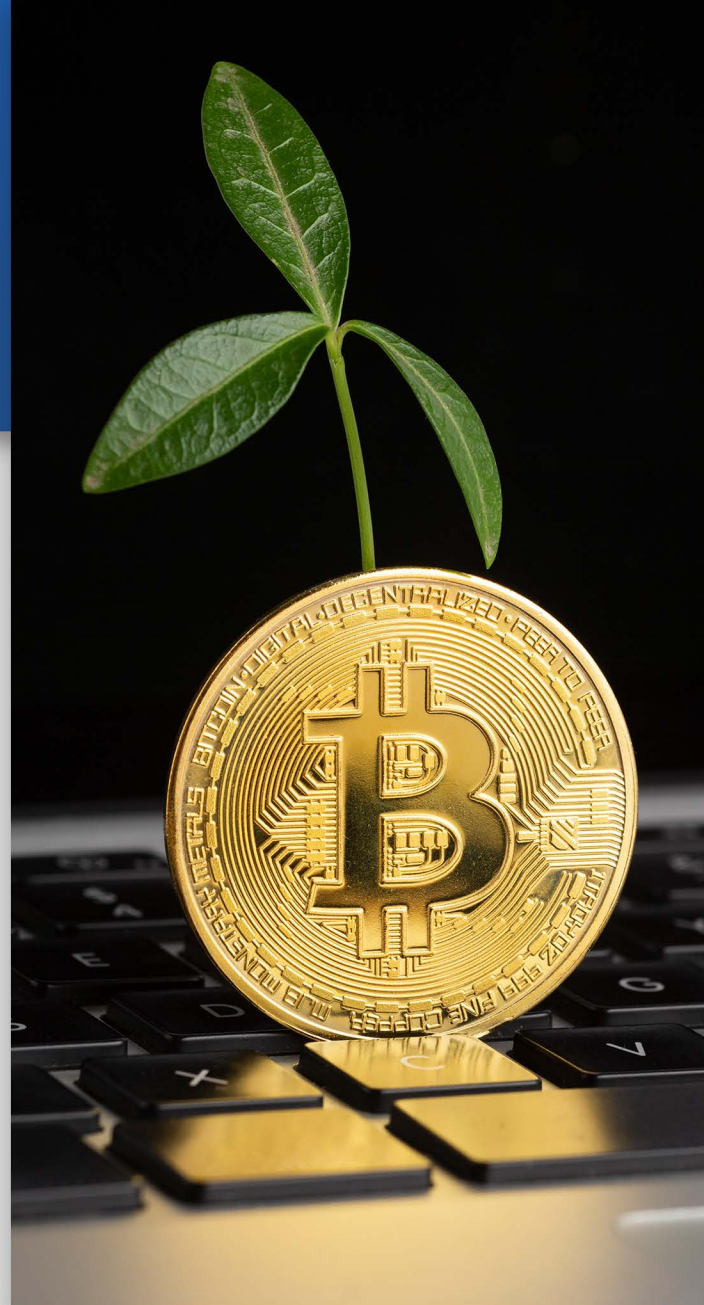
August Tax Tidbits, Interest Rate Outlook, Real Estate Trend 2025, Cryptocurrency in Canada, The Inflation Survival Toolkit, Estate Planning, Rate Pulse and Tax Deadlines

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President's Message

Dear Assentt Wealth Family,

As we head into Fall 2025, it's more important than ever to stay informed and prepared for the financial shifts ahead. In this edition, we explore the Interest Rate Outlook and what it could mean for your savings, loans, and investments. Our Real Estate Price Watch provides valuable insights into property trends across the country, helping you make smart choices in a changing market. We also introduce tools designed to put your financial well-being front and center: from the 5-Minute Financial Health Checkup to Stress-Test Your Financial Plan, we're here to help you navigate uncertainty with confidence and clarity.

We're also excited to spotlight the Assentt Client Portal — your secure, all-in-one hub for managing your financial life. Whether you need to review documents, track progress, or stay in touch with your advisor, the portal gives you greater visibility and control, all at your fingertips. As we face rising prices and ongoing inflation concerns, our Inflation Survival Toolkit rounds out this issue with practical guidance to protect your purchasing power. At Assentt, we're proud to combine personalized advice with smart technology to help you achieve peace of mind — now and into the future.

Balbir Singh Saini

Balbir Singh Saini, CPA,CGA
President, Assentt



Our Services

At Assentt, we specialize in Financing, Mortgage, Leasing, and Tax & Accounting Solutions tailored to your unique needs. Our seasoned experts are committed to guiding individuals and businesses through the evolving landscape of financial planning and compliance with clarity and confidence.



Financing

Asset Based Financing, Canada Small Business Loan, Business Purchase & Sale, Working Capital Loan, Business Plan & Projections and Truck Loan



Mortgage & Leasing

Equipment Leasing, Private Mortgage, Commercial Mortgage, Residential Mortgage and Equipment Refinancing



Tax & Accounting

Accounting & Taxation, USA Tax & Accounting, Govt. Audit Representation and Audit & Review Engagement

Digital Services Tax Repealed

The government has officially repealed the Digital Services Tax, initially designed to target tech giants operating in Canada. The move eases tensions with U.S. trade partners and provides relief to cross-border businesses. Clients in e-commerce or digital media should stay informed as Canada aligns more closely with international tax frameworks.



CRA Moves to Online-Only Benefits Communication

Effective this year, CRA will stop mailing benefit notices to over 500,000 Canadians. If you or your family rely on paper statements for programs like the CCB or GST/HST credits, it's time to set up your My CRA Account online to avoid missing key updates.

Rental Losses Denied for Family Rentals

In a recent case, rental loss claims were denied where a taxpayer rented a home to a relative at below-market rent. CRA viewed the arrangement as personal, not commercial. If you rent to family, ensure the terms reflect a true business relationship—or expect limited tax benefits.

Using Corporate Vehicles? Watch Out

The CRA reassessed a business owner for using a corporate-owned vehicle for personal errands. Even casual, non-business use can trigger significant taxable benefits and penalties. Keep logs, restrict personal use, and speak with your advisor about best practices for compliance.

Return of Insurance Premiums = Taxable

Some life insurance plans include a “return of premium” feature. But beware: the CRA considers these payments taxable in certain cases. What you think is a refund could show up as unexpected income. Review your policy language carefully.

Shareholder Loan Rules Tightened

CRA has clarified its guidance on shareholder loans, including how and when interest is deemed. If funds are taken from a corporation without proper structure, the amounts may be treated as income—even with good intentions. Review loans before year-end to avoid surprises.

RRSP Over-Contributions: No More Excuses

A recent case saw the CRA deny relief for RRSP over-contributions, even though the taxpayer claimed it was an honest error. The court found the mistake to be “unreasonable.” The lesson? Track your limits carefully and verify before contributing—there may be no second chance.



Mobile Homes & First-Time Buyer's Credit

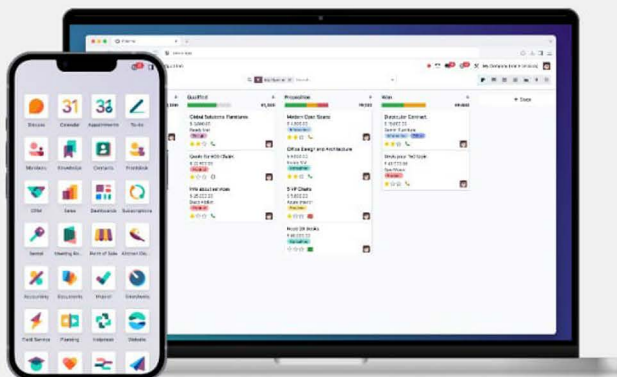
A taxpayer who bought a mobile home on leased land was denied the First-Time Home Buyers' Credit. Why? Because they didn't own the land or have a registered legal interest in the property. This is a crucial nuance for clients in the modular or trailer home space.

Introducing Assentt Client Portal

Welcome to Assentt Team and Client Portal

Empowered to Succeed, Connected to Thrive.

Sign-in



Stay Connected Anytime, Anywhere

The Assentt Client Portal is designed to make managing your financial life easier, faster, and more secure. Whether you're at home, at the office, or on the go, the portal gives you 24/7 access to your documents, messages, and updates—all in one place. No more digging through emails or waiting for office hours; everything you need is just a few clicks away.

Secure Document Sharing

Your financial information deserves the highest level of protection. The portal uses bank-grade encryption to keep your documents safe while making it simple to send and receive files. You can securely upload tax slips, receipts, and forms directly to your advisor, and download completed documents without delay.

Secure Document Sharing

The built-in messaging system allows you to communicate directly with your Assentt advisor team without relying on unsecured email. You can track the progress of your requests, see when documents have been reviewed, and get notifications of important updates—helping you stay informed every step of the way.

Organized and Paper-Free

With the Client Portal, everything is neatly stored and searchable. Your past returns, financial plans, and important correspondence are archived in one place, reducing clutter and ensuring you can quickly find what you need. It's an easy step toward a more organized, paperless financial life.

The Ticketing System

Built into your Client Portal is a simple ticketing system that lets you submit questions or requests for anything from tax updates to accounting tips, financing inquiries, or general advice. Each ticket is routed to the right expert on our team and tracked from start to finish, so nothing gets lost in email chains. You'll receive timely updates and have a complete record of past requests—making it easier to follow up and act on the information you receive.

How to Get Started

Getting set up is simple. You'll receive a personalized invitation link from our office to create your secure login. Once registered, you can access the portal from your computer, tablet, or smartphone.



Watch the Intro Video

Hosted by:
Balbir Singh Saini
President, Assentt Capital Corp.

Interest Rate Outlook: Fall 2025

Where Are Rates Headed—and What Should You Do About It?

As we move into the second half of 2025, Canadian interest rate watchers are closely monitoring the Bank of Canada (BoC) for cues on where borrowing costs are headed. After aggressive rate hikes in 2023 and early 2024 followed by measured cuts earlier this year, many clients are now asking: Will rates fall further this fall—or are we staying put for a while?

Where we stand now

The BoC's current overnight rate sits at 2.75%, following two consecutive 25-basis point cuts earlier in the year. Inflation has cooled significantly, with core CPI trending toward the 2% target, and wage growth showing signs of stabilizing. However, economic growth has slowed, and consumer spending is softening in key sectors.

The central bank is walking a tightrope: cut too fast, and inflation could reheat; hold too long, and Canada risks a deeper-than-expected slowdown.



Fall Rate Forecasts

Most economists are predicting 1–2 more modest rate cuts by December, bringing the overnight rate to 2.25%–2.50%. However, a full return to ultra-low rates is not expected.

Short-term rates (e.g. lines of credit, variable mortgages) may edge down slightly.

Long-term fixed mortgage rates are already pricing in future cuts, and may remain stable or even fall modestly.

What Should You Be Doing?

Homeowners & Borrowers

If you're carrying variable-rate debt, you may see some relief this fall. But avoid betting on rapid declines—plan with caution. For fixed-rate mortgages, this could be a good opportunity to compare renewal offers.

Investors

Lower rates tend to support dividend stocks, REITs, and growth sectors. However, market volatility could increase if rate cuts signal broader economic weakness.

Business Owners

Consider reviewing lending terms now. If you're planning expansion, equipment purchases, or refinancing, this fall may offer a strategic entry point.

Savers & Retirees

If you rely on fixed-income products, review GIC ladders and bond portfolios proactively. Locking in decent rates now could help weather future declines.

Final Word

Interest rates may continue to ease gradually through the fall, but the days of emergency-level lows are behind us. Instead of waiting for a dramatic shift, it's smart to act within this window of relative stability. Whether you're looking at mortgage renewals, refinancing, or investment adjustments, the current environment still offers room to make proactive moves.

This is also a good time to check the alignment between your goals and your financial strategy. Are you holding too much cash? Is your debt structured tax-efficiently? Are you prepared if rates don't drop further? These are strategic conversations worth having now. A brief planning session this fall could make a lasting difference as we head into 2026 with greater clarity and resilience.



Canadian Real Estate Price Watch

Real Estate Watch – Where Are Prices Headed

As summer winds down and the Canadian housing market prepares for its traditional fall activity surge, the overall tone remains one of cautious adjustment rather than rapid change. The pandemic-era frenzy has been replaced with a more measured environment, where buyers are taking their time, sellers are recalibrating expectations, and investors are scrutinizing deals more closely than they have in years. According to the CMHC's summer outlook, national average prices are expected to decline by around two percent in 2025, with the most notable pullbacks happening in Ontario and British Columbia's high-priced metropolitan areas. Recovery, if it comes, is expected to be slow, with most forecasters pointing to 2026 as the earliest point for any significant upswing.

Part of the reason for this subdued forecast lies in the macroeconomic backdrop. Persistent trade tensions — most visibly in the form of U.S. tariffs—are filtering into household sentiment, discouraging major purchases. Prospective buyers are wary of making long-term commitments in an environment where job security and cost-of-living pressures remain front of mind. These concerns have been compounded by a slowdown in housing construction. Elevated building costs, rising financing expenses for developers, and overall economic caution have prompted a slowdown in new housing starts, leading CMHC to reduce its projections through 2027. In normal times, restricted supply would be expected to push prices upward, but in today's market, softer demand is counterbalancing that supply-side pressure.

Regional variation is another defining characteristic of the current housing market. Alberta and Quebec, benefiting from stronger relative affordability and, in Alberta's case, a steady influx of interprovincial migrants, are faring considerably better than their more expensive counterparts. These provinces are seeing steadier sales activity, and in some local markets, modest price increases. In contrast, urban centres like Toronto, Vancouver, and Victoria remain in a prolonged cooling phase. Here, high home values—even with mortgage rates slightly lower than last year—continue to weigh heavily on affordability, meaning that any demand recovery is likely to be gradual and uneven.

For buyers, this evolving landscape presents both opportunities and challenges. On one hand, slower price appreciation and the potential for further interest rate cuts by the Bank of Canada later this year could make homeownership more accessible than it has been in recent years. The pace of transactions has slowed, giving buyers more room to negotiate and conduct due diligence without the pressure of bidding wars. On the other hand, broader economic uncertainty means that entering the market should be done with a clear, long-term plan rather than short-term speculation.

Sellers, too, are adjusting to the new reality. While properties in sought-after neighborhoods or with unique features are still attracting attention, the days of routinely achieving sales well above list price are largely over in most markets. Sellers are being advised to price homes realistically, ensure properties are well-presented, and be prepared for longer listing times. For some, delaying a sale until conditions improve in 2026 may prove to be the better strategy—particularly if they have flexibility in their timing.

Investors face their own set of considerations. The current climate is less about chasing broad market appreciation and more about identifying specific opportunities where fundamentals are strong. Rental markets in cities with tight vacancy rates continue to offer stable income potential, though rising operating costs and changing regulations require careful management. The key for investors in the months ahead will be to focus on cash flow, location resilience, and a clear understanding of local economic drivers.

In short, Canada's housing market is in a period of recalibration. It is neither in crisis nor poised for an immediate boom, but rather working through a transition toward greater stability. For buyers, sellers, and investors alike, this pre-fall period is an opportune moment to take stock, review financial and real estate strategies, and align plans with both current realities and future expectations. With thoughtful preparation and professional guidance, participants in today's market can position themselves to take advantage of the opportunities that will emerge when conditions shift again in 2026 and beyond.

Cryptocurrency in Canada

Crypto Regulation, Risks & Real-World Use (2025)

Canada's cryptocurrency market is entering a new, more disciplined era. The days of loosely governed exchanges and minimal oversight are fading, replaced by a regulatory framework designed to protect investors, increase transparency, and bring digital assets into the mainstream.



The CSA's Role in Platform Oversight

The Canadian Securities Administrators (CSA) now require most crypto trading platforms to register and operate under dealer-style rules. This means stricter custody requirements, ongoing disclosure obligations, and robust compliance monitoring. Stable coins legally called value-referenced crypto assets—can only be offered if specifically approved by regulators, and they must be backed by high-quality, verifiable reserves.

Federal Compliance and Global Reporting

At the federal level, exchanges and wallet services must register with FINTRAC as Money Services Businesses, follow anti-money laundering rules, and keep detailed transaction records. For investment products, updated National Instrument 81-102 rules now govern public crypto-asset funds such as ETFs and mutual funds, ensuring consistent standards for custody, valuation, and oversight. Looking ahead, Canada will adopt the OECD's Crypto-Asset Reporting Framework (CARF) in 2026, which will require platforms to automatically share tax-related data internationally—a major step toward global transparency.

How the Market is Adapting

These changes are already reshaping the market. Coinbase has become the first major global exchange to register in Canada under the CSA's restricted dealer framework. Others, such as Binance, have chosen to exit rather than adapt. The result is a smaller but more compliant marketplace—offering better investor protections, though not eliminating risk.

Investment Routes for Canadians

For Canadians seeking exposure, two main routes exist. Regulated ETFs and funds offer an easy, brokerage-based option with familiar reporting for tax purposes. Direct ownership via CSA-registered platforms provides access to specific coins but requires greater personal responsibility for security and record-keeping. In both cases, any sale, swap, or purchase with crypto is a taxable event, and recent CRA guidance now clarifies when mining income is considered taxable and how pooled arrangements are treated for GST/HST.

The Road Ahead

Long-term, the integration of crypto into Canada's regulated financial system could open the door for more institutional participation. Pension funds, insurance companies, and asset managers have been cautious to date, but as the regulatory framework matures, these large players may begin offering crypto-linked products. This would expand access, add liquidity, and potentially reduce volatility—though it may also lead to more correlation with traditional markets.

Final Takeaway

For individual investors, success in this space will depend on disciplined allocation, careful platform selection, and a willingness to adapt to changing rules. Treating crypto as a high-risk satellite position in a broader portfolio, rather than a core holding, remains a prudent approach. Above all, strategies should be reviewed regularly with a qualified advisor who can align crypto exposure with overall financial goals.

Crypto in Canada is no longer the "wild west." It's a regulated, higher-bar environment where investor protection is stronger, but risks—like volatility, liquidity crunches, and operational issues—remain. For those who choose to participate, the best approach is to keep allocations modest, select compliant platforms, maintain meticulous records, and review strategies regularly.

Stress-Test Your Financial Plan

Why Stress-Testing Matters

A financial plan is not just a snapshot of your current wealth—it's a roadmap for the years ahead. But life is rarely linear. Markets fluctuate, interest rates shift, costs rise unexpectedly, and personal circumstances change. Stress-testing your plan means running “what-if” scenarios to see how it holds up under different conditions. This proactive approach helps you anticipate challenges before they become crises.

Common Scenarios to Test

One of the most important scenarios is a market downturn. What happens if your portfolio loses 15–20% in a year? Will your retirement still be on track? Another is interest rate movement—both increases and decreases—which can affect mortgage payments, borrowing costs, and investment yields. You should also simulate income loss, whether from job changes, illness, or a business slowdown. Lastly, factor in unexpected expenses, such as medical costs, home repairs, or helping family members financially.

How to Run a Stress Test

Start by identifying your financial goals—retirement age, income needs, major purchases—and your time horizon. Then, with the help of your advisor, model different negative events individually and in combination. The goal isn't to create fear, but to uncover vulnerabilities. For example, you may find that a 10% market decline coupled with a temporary income drop still keeps you on track—if you adjust spending or draw from cash reserves.

Building Resilience into Your Plan

A strong plan has multiple shock absorbers. This can include emergency savings to cover at least three to six months of expenses, diversified investments that don't all move in the same direction, and insurance coverage for health, disability, and life risks. Even tax planning plays a role—knowing when to draw from RRSPs, TFSAs, or non-registered accounts can help manage your income more efficiently in a downturn.

The Planner's Advantage

Stress-testing works best as an ongoing process, not a one-time exercise. Markets, tax rules, and your own life goals evolve over time. An advisor can help you update your scenarios annually or after major life events. This ensures your plan stays aligned with reality, and that you have actionable steps ready for both opportunities and challenges.

From market downturns to rising interest rates, unexpected expenses to income changes—life will test your finances. Learn how to put your plan through real world scenarios now, so you can face the future with clarity, confidence, and a strategy that's built to last.



Long-Term Value of Preparedness

A well-stress-tested plan often leads to better decision-making, even in good times. Knowing your risk limits allows you to invest with confidence instead of reacting emotionally to short-term volatility. It can also reveal opportunities—such as accelerating debt repayment or increasing savings—when conditions are favorable.

Your Next Steps

Set a date to review your plan with your advisor and run through at least three stress scenarios. Document the outcomes and the adjustments needed in each case. Over time, these exercises will not only strengthen your financial safety net but also give you peace of mind that you're prepared for whatever life throws your way.

Bottom line: A financial plan is only as strong as its ability to adapt. By stress-testing regularly, you can face the future with more clarity, confidence, and control—no matter what comes your way.

The Inflation Survival Toolkit

Understanding Inflation's Impact

Inflation quietly erodes the purchasing power of every dollar you earn, save, and invest. Over time, this can affect your lifestyle, your savings goals, and your retirement security. While the pace of price increases in Canada has cooled from its recent highs, many households are still feeling the pinch at the grocery store, the gas pump, and when renewing mortgages. Building an “inflation survival toolkit” is about creating strategies and habits that help you protect, and even grow, your financial resilience during periods of rising costs.



Prioritize Essential Spending

The first step is a clear-eyed look at your budget. Separate needs from wants, and focus on keeping core expenses—housing, food, transportation, utilities stable and manageable. This might mean switching service providers, negotiating rates, or making energy efficient upgrades to reduce utility bills. Even small recurring savings can help offset the impact of rising prices over time.

Strengthen Your Income Side

While cost-cutting is important, increasing income can be just as powerful. Consider upskilling, exploring side income streams, or negotiating salary adjustments—especially if your pay hasn't kept pace with inflation. For retirees, reviewing income sources like pensions, RRIF withdrawals, and annuities ensures you're maximizing what's available without taking on undue risk.

Invest with Inflation in Mind

Long-term, certain assets tend to hold their value better during inflationary periods. Equities in sectors with pricing power, real estate, infrastructure, and inflation-linked bonds (like Real Return Bonds) can help offset the loss of purchasing power.

Diversification remains critical—spreading the investments across asset classes reduces the risk of being overly exposed to any single factor.

Tame Interest Costs

If you carry debt, inflation can sting twice—once through higher living costs, and again if interest rates rise in response. Prioritize paying down high-interest credit cards and loans. For variable-rate debt like lines of credit or mortgages, consider whether locking into a fixed rate makes sense for stability.

Keep Your Plan Flexible

Inflation isn't static—it ebbs and flows with the economy. Reviewing your financial plan at least annually ensures it reflects current price trends, interest rates, and your personal goals. Adjusting early gives you more options and avoids last-minute financial stress.

The Bank of Canada's Watchful Eye

The Bank of Canada continues to monitor inflation closely, adjusting its interest rate policy to maintain price stability. While rates may gradually ease if inflation continues to slow, periods of volatility are still possible. Understanding how these shifts affect borrowing costs, investment returns, and even currency values can help you make more informed financial decisions.

Staying Disciplined Under Pressure

Inflationary periods can tempt people into reactive spending or risky investments in search of higher returns. A well-structured plan, grounded in realistic assumptions and disciplined budgeting, helps you stay on track. Avoid chasing trends and focus on the long-term habits—consistent saving, controlled spending, and prudent investing—that build resilience regardless of the economic climate.

Bottom line:

Inflation is a reality we can't control, but we can control our response. By focusing on spending discipline, income growth, smart investing, and flexible planning, you can protect your purchasing power and maintain financial confidence—no matter what the economy delivers next.

Fall 2025: It's Time to Update Your Estate Plan?

What Changed in the Last Year & Common Mistakes

Why Annual Updates Matter

An estate plan is not something you prepare once and forget—it's a living document that should evolve with your life, family, and financial situation. Even if you haven't experienced major life events, legislative changes, tax rules, or shifts in asset values can affect how your estate will be distributed. Reviewing your plan annually ensures your wishes remain clear, legally sound, and tax-efficient.

What's Changed in the Past Year

Several developments in the past 12 months make this a smart time to revisit your estate plan. Provincial probate fee adjustments in some jurisdictions could affect the cost of settling estates. Updates to federal tax rules for trusts, especially those involving graduated rate estates, may change how income is taxed after death. In addition, new CRA guidance has clarified reporting requirements for bare trusts, which could impact certain property or joint account arrangements. Even real estate market changes can alter how much of your estate is tied up in a single asset.

Common Mistakes to Avoid

One of the most common mistakes is failing to update beneficiaries on registered accounts such as RRSPs, RRIFs, and TFSAs. Life changes—marriage, divorce, births, or deaths—can leave outdated instructions that conflict with your current wishes. Another oversight is not coordinating your will with other documents like powers of attorney or advanced healthcare directives, leading to gaps in authority if you become incapacitated. And for business owners, not having a clear succession plan can cause unnecessary tax burdens and operational challenges for heirs.

The Role of Asset Titling

How you hold assets—joint tenancy, tenants-in-common, corporate ownership, or trusts—can significantly affect how your estate is settled and taxed. Joint tenancy with right of survivorship allows assets to pass directly to the surviving owner, avoiding probate, but it can also create tax issues or disputes. Tenants-in-common ensures your share follows your will, though it's usually subject to probate.

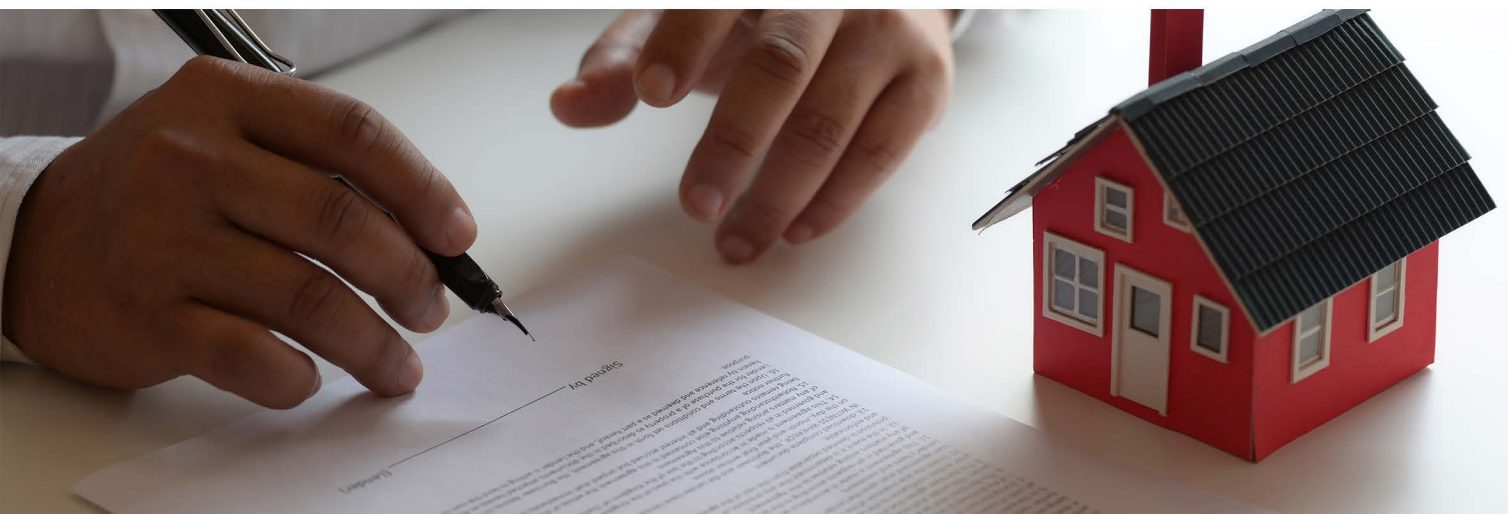
Business holdings, investment accounts, and real estate may benefit from specific ownership structures to align with your goals. For example, private corporation shares can offer tax advantages, while trust ownership can provide control and protection. Reviewing asset titles with your lawyer or advisor helps ensure they match your estate plan, minimize taxes, and prevent costly delays.

Digital Assets and Modern Considerations

In today's world, digital assets—online accounts, cryptocurrency, intellectual property—must be addressed in your estate plan. Without clear instructions, these assets can be lost or inaccessible to heirs. Similarly, if you own property in another country, you may need a secondary will or local legal arrangements to avoid lengthy cross-border probate.

Your Next Steps

Set a recurring annual date to review your estate plan with your advisor, lawyer, and accountant. Update beneficiary designations, re-confirm executors and powers of attorney, and review asset valuations. Life changes fast, and your estate plan should keep pace to ensure your legacy is preserved exactly as you intend.



Rate Pulse

BANK PRIME RATE – 4.95%

Prime Mortgage (Insured)

🔑 Variable Rate - 4.25%

🔑 Fixed Rate - 4.19%

Prime Mortgage (Conventional)

🔑 Variable Rate - 4.55%

🔑 Fixed Rate - 4.49%

Alternative Mortgage

🔑 1 year - 5.44-6.09%

🔑 2 Year - 5.24-5.89%

Private Mortgage

🔑 First Mortgage - 8%

🔑 Second Mortgage - 12%

Commercial Mortgage

🔑 Prime - 5%

🔑 Alternative - 9%

Business Loan

Business Purchase

(Variable Open Loan)

7.95%

* Rates are general in nature and subject to change.
You can book an appointment with our office
to review your file.

Canadian Tax Deadlines

August 15 - Payroll Remittance

September 15 - Payroll Remittance

September 15 - Personal Tax Adv. Payment

September 30 - Corporation Tax Adv. Payment

September 30 - GST/HST Inst. Payment



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