



LOCATIONS

NEW JERSEY

Cherry Hill
425 Route 70 West
Cherry Hill, NJ 08002
856.616.2923

Turnersville
215 Fries Mill Road
Turnersville, NJ 08012
856.616.2923

Hamilton
100 Horizon Center Blvd.
Hamilton, NJ 08619
609.807.3300

PENNSYLVANIA

Philadelphia
1515 Market Street
Suite 1200
Philadelphia, PA 19103
215.546.5800

Lower Bucks County
Seven Neshaminy Interplex
Suite 116
Trevose, PA 19053
215.546.5800

Main Line
150 N. Radnor Chester Road
Suite F-200
Radnor, PA 19087
610.710.4220

Doylestown
Park Terrace
275 S Main St. #6
Doylestown, PA 18901
267.288.5765

Malvern
101 Lindenwood Drive
Suite 225
Malvern, PA 19355
610.710.4220

www.rothkofflaw.com
info@rothkofflaw.com

FAX
856.616.2991

TOLL FREE
877.475.1101

When the Legal Question Is Really a Life Question

By Jennifer Hruslinski, Esq., M.S.W.



Families often begin searching for legal help for aging parents when something has already gone wrong: a fall, a diagnosis, a hospital stay that turns into a discharge plan no one feels ready for. In elder care law, the legal issue is rarely the whole story. More often, it is the first signal that a much larger life transition is underway. The life transition affects not just finances or documents, but relationships, caregiving capacity, and the future itself.

My path into elder care law was shaped by an interdisciplinary education that taught me to see legal problems in their social and human context. I studied sociology at The George Washington University, earned my law degree from The Catholic University of America, and later completed a master's in social work with a concentration in aging at the University of Pennsylvania. That training continues to inform me on how I advocate today.

This work is personal—and it shaped how I understand the cost of not planning. My father died without an estate plan, and I saw firsthand how uncertainty compounds grief and stress for the people left behind. I also had a grandmother who required long-term care for seven years. Watching my family navigate care decisions over time—often without clear guidance—reinforced for me that planning is not just about documents. It is about protecting

people during the most vulnerable chapters of their lives. Unanswered legal questions do not stay legal for long. They become emotional, financial, and relational crises.

A life care planning law firm is, at its core, an elder care law firm—but it goes far beyond what most people think of as traditional legal services. At

Rothkoff Law Group, families receive legal representation and advocacy related to Medicaid and Veterans' benefits, asset protection, special needs planning, guardianship, and estate administration.

Additionally, we work with families over time. We help them navigate hospitals, rehabilitation centers, nursing homes, assisted living, independent living communities, home care, and hospice. We also step in during sudden health crises, when families are overwhelmed and unsure where to turn.

In those moments, families do not just need legal answers—they need orientation. They need someone who can

take a blur of information and turn it into a sequence: what needs attention now, what can wait, what the next chapter is likely to look like, and how to make decisions that align with the client's goals. They need a plan that accounts for both the legal and human realities of what's happening.

Most people come to Rothkoff Law Group after a fall, a diagnosis, or a hospitalization

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Thank You for Helping Rothkoff Law Group “Share The Love”

Rothkoff Law Group “Shared the Love” with seniors living in local long-term care communities last Valentine’s Day. Local schools, families, and members of the community supported this initiative by creating handmade Valentine’s cards for the team at Rothkoff Law Group to distribute. Thank you to all the school students and the community for helping to share the love with seniors in area long-term care communities.



When the Legal Question Is Really a Life Question *(Continued from front page)*

that turns into a rehabilitation stay—when it becomes clear that the current arrangement is no longer sustainable. They are often exhausted, making high-stakes decisions under time pressure while navigating unfamiliar systems.

I work with people like Judy, a visually impaired older adult who was scammed out of \$14,000 by a “senior planning” company promising assistance with Medicaid when she was not financially eligible for Medicaid. I also work with people like Warren, who can no longer manage his wife’s dementia care needs on his own—helping him secure respite care, protect assets, and build a supportive team while finding the best possible care for his wife.

Together, these stories reflect the same reality: when planning ignores timing, caregiving limits, and human vulnerability, the consequences are real and lasting.

I serve as a resource—guiding people toward what *does* exist, being honest about what does not, and continuing the work of improving the lives of older adults and individuals living with disabilities. Rothkoff Law Group is a team of advocates—attorneys, geriatric social workers, and public benefits specialists—working together every day to educate, problem-solve, and find solutions.

One of the defining aspects of Rothkoff Law Group’s approach is its commitment to education. Clear, accurate information is not treated as

a marketing tool—it is central to the firm’s mission. When families understand what a path forward truly requires—logistically, financially, and emotionally—they can stop guessing. They can plan.

Coming from an advocacy background, I do not view education as “nice.” I view it as protective. It protects clients from rushed decisions they later regret. It protects caregivers from burnout. It protects families from miscommunication that turns into conflict. And it challenges the belief that documents alone can solve complex care issues. Information, used well, is one of the most effective forms of protection we can offer.

Jerry Rothkoff Testifies Before the NJ Senate Health, Human Services, and Senior Citizens Committee

The goal of Rothkoff Law Group is not just to work inside the convoluted long-term care system. Our goal is to also advocate to improve the system of care for older adults. That was exactly what Jerry Rothkoff was doing on March 16, 2026 in Trenton, NJ. Jerry testified on behalf of NJ NAELA (National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys) on a nursing home financial transparency bill before the NJ State Senate Health, Human Services, and Senior

Citizens Committee. The S-2980 bill would require nursing homes to disclose financial transactions with related-party companies. Thank you for all who testified, including powerful testimony from multiple nursing home residents and other consumer advocates. The bill was passed out of the Committee and now moves to the full Senate for a second reading, where it may be debated, amended, and voted on.



NJ Senate Committee hearing in Trenton. Jerry is seated at far left.

“Facing the Wind” Documentary Screening

Thank you to everyone who joined us for our screening of the “Facing the Wind” documentary in Voorhees, NJ on March 5, 2026. We are deeply grateful to the professionals, families, and caregivers who took the time to be part of such a powerful and meaningful evening.

This moving and eye-opening viewing of the film sparked reflection, conversation, and connection among all who attended. The evening concluded with an insightful live Q&A session with producer Tony Heriza, documentary spouse Linda Szypula, and Dr. David Irwin of Penn Medicine FTD Clinic, whose perspectives added even greater depth to an already unforgettable experience.

We are honored to share moments like these with a community that cares so deeply about supporting and understanding the journeys of caregivers and families. Thank you for being part of it, and thank you to our co-hosts: Suncrest Hospice; CarePatrol Franchise Systems, LLC; Life Force Senior Care; and CareOne, with additional support from Penn Memory Center.



Pictured left to right: Jerold E. Rothkoff, Esq.; Tony Heriza, Producer; Linda Szypula, Documentary Spouse; and Dr. David Irwin of Penn Medicine FTD Clinic.

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The success of our firm is a direct reflection of our clients and the referral sources who have supported us. Therefore, we actively welcome your referrals as well as your input regarding the contents of this newsletter. We also welcome comments on the quality of legal services our offices provide.

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Richard Newman, Esq., Named PAELA Member of the Year



We are proud to share that Rothkoff Law Group attorney Richard Newman, Esq., has been named the 2026 Pennsylvania Academy of Elder Law Attorney's (PAELA) Member of the Year. This recognition reflects more than two decades of commitment to elder law, as well as Rich's leadership within PAELA as President-Elect and Program Chair. His work with the organization, and with Rothkoff Law Group, continues to support both families and the broader elder law community across Pennsylvania.

We are grateful for the care and thought he brings to this field and proud to see his contributions recognized by his peers. Congratulations!