



# PROFESSIONAL ADVISOR NEWSLETTER

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

MAY 2026 TRENDING TOPICS

**YOUR PARTNER IN STRATEGIC PHILANTHROPY PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY SERVICES.** Empowering Financial Growth and Community Impact



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Starved Rock Country Community Foundation

 **GREETINGS FROM SRCCF!**

## WE'RE HERE FOR YOU – MAY 2026 TRENDING TOPICS

Greetings!

At the SRCCF, we're honored to work alongside attorneys, CPAs, and financial advisors who help clients turn charitable intentions into meaningful impact. Whether you're navigating clients' complex life events, exploring advanced planning strategies, or responding to changes in the tax landscape, your role is critical in shaping outcomes that benefit both your clients and the community.

This month, we're taking a closer look at two topics that may be gaining traction in your client conversations—from the often-overlooked implications of divorce on charitable assets, to the evolving realities of tax law changes.

Calling it splits: What happens to charitable assets in a divorce?

Philanthropy is deeply personal—but in a divorce, charitable assets can raise complex legal and financial questions. It's important to consider how donor-advised funds, trusts, and other charitable vehicles may be treated when a marriage ends, and how proactive planning can help avoid surprises.

Wake up call: OBBA changes and client conversations

You may already be well-versed in recent tax law changes—but many clients are just now starting to pay attention. The community foundation keeps you up to date on key developments

affecting charitable giving and offers practical reminders to help guide your client conversations in a shifting landscape.

As always, it is our honor to be your first call when matters of charitable giving arise during your client meetings. The community foundation is our region's home for charitable giving, and it is our pleasure to work with you and your clients to help improve the lives of everyone who lives here. We look forward to our next conversation!

Pamela Beckett, Founder  
Interim CEO

## MAY 2026 TRENDING TOPICS

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### CALLING IT SPLITS: WHAT HAPPENS TO CHARITABLE ASSETS IN A DIVORCE?

**As you work with charitable clients over the course of your career, you'll likely help dozens of married couples structure charitable gifts in wills and trusts, establish charitable remainder trusts, and everything in between.**



But what happens to charitable assets in the event of divorce? Over the last few years, in the wake of high-profile divorces, more and more advisors have been pondering this question. It's certainly worth considering so you can be prepared if—and likely when—you encounter such a situation. It's especially important as women play an increasingly important role in a couple's philanthropy.

For many couples, philanthropy is deeply personal and closely tied to shared values developed over time. What's more, advisors who engage both partners on all planning matters, including charitable giving, are more likely, according to research to grow their practices and earn client referrals.

But from a legal standpoint, charitable giving during marriage is not purely personal—it is often

subject to the same rules that govern other marital assets. In community property states, for example, assets acquired during marriage are generally considered jointly owned, and spouses owe fiduciary duties to one another regarding the use of those assets. That framework can create complications when one spouse makes a significant charitable gift without the other's knowledge or consent. Indeed, unilateral gifts of community property may be challenged, and in some cases, the full value of the gift may be attributed back to the donating spouse in a divorce proceeding. This may be a surprising outcome for clients who assume that charitable intent alone resolves any questions about ownership or control.

The implications extend beyond outright gifts. Philanthropic vehicles such as donor-advised funds, private foundations, and charitable trusts can also become points of negotiation in divorce. These structures may no longer be considered part of the marital estate once funded, but questions about control, governance, and ongoing advisory privileges can still create tension between spouses.

For attorneys, CPAs, and financial advisors, the takeaway is clear: charitable planning does not exist in a vacuum. Conversations about significant gifts—especially those made during marriage—should include coordination with legal counsel and, where appropriate, documentation of mutual intent. Encouraging clients to align on charitable decisions in advance can help avoid disputes later and preserve both financial and philanthropic goals.

**As always, remember that the SRCCF is here for you! Whether a client is considering a current gift, establishing a charitable vehicle, or navigating a complex life transition such as divorce, the community foundation can serve as a resource to help implement the recommendations of legal and tax counsel in a way that is both effective and durable. Anytime you are talking with a client about charitable giving, give us a call! Including the community foundation early in the conversation can help ensure that your clients' charitable intentions are carried out smoothly, even when circumstances change.**

**For many attorneys, CPAs, and financial advisors, the tax law changes under the One Big Beautiful Bill Act are old news. That is not the case for many of your clients!**



While you've been busy reading dozens of articles and evaluating how the changes will impact your clients, many of your clients are just now learning about the changes, especially as issues came to the forefront for them during tax season. Even if you've been talking with clients about the changes for months, don't stop. For many clients, now is the first time they'll really be listening.

#### **HERE ARE THREE THINGS TO KNOW:**

—Mainstream media is picking up the pace in its coverage of charitable planning techniques. For example, the Wall Street Journal recently published an article about donor-advised funds as a tool for tax savings and community impact. Many clients may not realize that the SRCCF offers donor-advised funds, along with other options for structuring a charitable giving plan to support their favorite causes and address critical community issues. Be sure to reach out to the us whenever a client asks you about setting up a donor-advised fund.

—Thoughtful planning is especially important in light of the new floor on itemized charitable deductions. Starting in 2026, to be eligible for a deduction, a client's qualified deductions must exceed 0.5% of adjusted gross income, essentially raising the threshold at which charitable giving produces a tax benefit. This could make it advantageous for some of your clients to "bunch" charitable contributions through a donor-advised fund, allowing the client to front-load donations into a single tax year to cross the threshold.

—At the same time, under a "cap" provision in the new law, if a client is in the 37% federal income tax bracket, itemized charitable deductions are now capped at the 35% tax rate. In simplified terms, depending on other factors, this means that if a client donates \$10,000, the

tax break would be \$3,500 instead of \$3,700. In short, the floor and the cap add extra complexity to helping clients plan their charitable contributions.

–The new tax laws have changed the landscape for not only your clients who itemize deductions but also for those who do not itemize. Non-itemizers are now eligible for an “above the line” deduction of \$1,000 for single filers and \$2,000 for joint filers. Be aware, however, that the new deduction for non-itemizers does not apply to noncash gifts or gifts to donor-advised funds. Because both noncash gifts and gifts to donor-advised funds are important tax planning tools for many clients, this limitation is worth noting in your discussions.

–Finally, remember that donating appreciated stock held for more than one year is usually more tax-efficient than writing a check. That’s because it allows your client to avoid capital gains tax on the appreciation. What’s more, clients who itemize deductions will be eligible to claim a tax deduction for the full fair market value.

**Please reach out to us anytime. We know the new tax laws add a lot to your plate, and we are always happy to point you in the right direction as you conduct research and offer counsel to your clients. And remember, you don’t have to jump headfirst into the complexity during your client discussions. Even talking about philanthropy in the simplest terms can help strengthen your client relationships and grow your practice.**

**STARVED ROCK COUNTRY  
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION**

*Connecting People Who Care  
With Causes That Matter*

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**THANK YOU FOR THE OPPORTUNITY  
TO WORK TOGETHER!**

