

10 Questions to Ask When Hiring a Fiduciary or Daily Money Management Company

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Choosing a fiduciary or daily money management company is one of the most important decisions you can make in life. These individuals or companies may have access to your financial records, medical records, bank account information, credit cards, estate plans, investment accounts, copies of social security cards, driver's licenses, passports, insurance cards, birth certificates, etc. Deciding on who you are ultimately going to trust is not a decision to make lightly. Through my own experiences I have come up with 10 questions to ask or things to look for when interviewing a fiduciary or daily money management company.

1. What type of services do they provide and how long have they been in business? Ultimately as with all things in life, you can't buy experience or wisdom. This is especially true in this line of work.
2. Are they properly insured? Do they have errors and omissions insurance? If they have employees, do they have a third-party dishonesty bond? Do they have general liability insurance? These are all reasonable protections for both the client and the company or person providing the service.
3. Do they have employees? If not, you may want to ask how they handle vacations and holidays or if there is a back-up plan in place for unforeseen health issues that may arise? If they have employees, do they do national background checks or credit checks on all new hires to ensure they are hiring the right people?
4. How much longer do they anticipate working? What is their exit strategy in the event something was to happen to them? When do they plan to retire?
5. Can they provide a reference list or list client testimonials?
6. Do they have the appropriate certifications for their profession? If they are providing fiduciary services, are they a National Certified Guardian? If they are providing daily money management services, are they a certified Professional Daily Money Manager? This is important as it demonstrates that they have passed a national exam to cover certain topic areas. They are also required to have a certain number of continuing education hours each year which ensures that they are keeping up on the latest trends and information in their field.
7. Are they active members of their respective national associations? For the fiduciary profession, we have the National Guardianship Association and for daily money management we have the American Association of Daily Money Managers. Both associations have codes of ethics and standards of practice that their members are required to adhere to.

8. Request a copy of their C.V. or resume which typically outlines, education, certifications, accolades, and community involvement.
9. Do they work out of their home or have an office? In either case, it's important to know what security measures are taken to protect your personal information. How do they handle visitors, do they have a security system or alarm, what protections are in place for their software and computers?
10. Request a copy of their service agreement or contract. How do they bill for services? Do they charge for travel time, mileage, out of pocket expenses, or staff conferences?
11. Whether you are the client, a family member or a trusted professional who has a client who needs these services, it's important to do your due diligence.