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## THE "P" WORD: FOUR REASONS NOT TO FEAR A PRENUP

To many couples, the word *prenup* connotes a visceral sense of impending doom. The mere mention of the word conjures feelings of infidelity, greed, and mistrust. And with Hollywood couples making prenups just to break up months later, this initial gut reaction is understandable. The reality, however, is that a prenuptial agreement, like any contract, can provide security and peace of mind to partners who are about to experience a significant life event: marriage. Here are four reasons why every couple should consider a prenuptial agreement:

### 1 PRENUPTIAL AGREEMENTS PROTECT WHAT NEEDS TO BE PROTECTED

Prenuptial agreements are not just for Kim Kardashian and Kanye West. Regardless of how much money a couple earns, each partner deserves to know he or she is protected. Moreover, a prenuptial agreement can cover much more than just assets and income. Prenuptial agreements may contemplate just about any matter that is important to a couple: alimony, division of debt, the making of a will and end-of-life decisions, and how to manage a family business, to name a few. Importantly, the main subject a prenuptial agreement may not address

is child support, which is calculated strictly by Florida statute. Prenuptial agreements are also essential for second and subsequent marriages where there are children from a previous marriage, inheritances, business relationships, and estate planning considerations to protect.

### 2 PRENUPTIAL AGREEMENTS DO NOT PREDICT DIVORCE

By far the largest misconception about prenuptial agreements is that they guarantee divorce. To the contrary, the rate of divorce among couples who enter into a prenuptial agreement is the same as the rate of divorce among those who do not. The difference is that those who discuss a prenuptial agreement tend to better understand not only their own, but their partner's financial situation. This lends to better communication about complex financial decisions and, therefore, greater happiness during marriage.

### 3 PRENUPTIAL AGREEMENTS SAVE TIME, MONEY, AND ANGUISH

It is better to think of a prenuptial agreement as an insurance policy rather than an omen of things

to come. Nothing is more unimaginably frustrating, costly, and time-consuming than a contested divorce. Prenuptial agreements save on all three fronts by disposing with the vast majority of issues prior to a potential split. The cost of drafting a prenuptial agreement is a bargain compared to the potential legal fees of a contested divorce, which can cost as much as 10 times more than a prenuptial agreement.

### 4 A WELL-CRAFTED PRENUPTIAL AGREEMENT IS FAIR

Many spouses-to-be fear being taken advantage of in a prenuptial agreement. The purpose of a prenuptial agreement is to treat both spouses fairly by outlining their rights and obligations in the event of a divorce.

Prenuptial agreements contemplate the most difficult questions a marriage can face. Whether or not a couple ultimately decides to enter into a prenuptial agreement, it is important to discuss the matter openly both with each other and with an experienced family attorney. Contemplating a prenuptial agreement can be intimidating. A skilled family attorney can sit down with you to discuss your options.