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Estates & Wills & Trusts

Family dispute involving Tom Benson



By [Charles Ticker](#)

Thomas Milton "Tom" Benson is the billionaire owner of the New Orleans Saints (football) and the New Orleans Pelicans (basketball) teams. He is a world-famous and vastly successful businessman and philanthropist.

Mr. Benson is currently involved in a family dispute over the future control of the Saints and the Pelicans. His daughter Renee Benson, and her children Rita LeBlanc and Ryan LeBlanc are opposed to Mr. Benson's decision to sever ties with them and to leave full ownership of the Saints and Pelicans to his wife of 10 years, Gayle Benson. Apparently, Mr. Benson announced that he was cutting ties with the trio in January.

Shortly thereafter, his daughter and her two children sought to have Mr. Benson declared mentally incompetent to control his business. The matter was recently before Justice Kern Reese of the New Orleans Court. Justice Kern Reese heard eight days of testimony from various psychiatrists, Benson's wife Gayle, Renee Benson, Rita LeBlanc, and Ryan LeBlanc. The decision of Justice Kern Reese on whether or not Mr. Benson has adequate mental capacity to control his business empire will soon be available.

Late life marriages often draw a lot of scrutiny from relatives. This is especially true if any relatives are suddenly being disinherited or removed from the succession plan or will of an elderly testator. The disgruntled relatives may attempt to challenge any changes to the succession plan or will through various means. If the testator was pressured or coerced by his or her new spouse, it may be argued that [undue influence](#) may have been a factor in the decision making process.

If the testator is elderly, or he or she has shown signs of decreasing mental capacity, then an argument may be made that the testator did not have the required mental capacity to modify his or her succession plan. In either scenario, the proper court process must be engaged by the aggrieved parties seeking legal recourse. Very expensive [estate litigation](#) and a bitter family dispute may follow. If the parties have the resources to litigate, they may be less inclined to settle the matter out of court. A family dispute can be an emotionally challenging and psychologically draining process. Given the amount of money at stake in the Benson family dispute, it is likely that an appeal will follow irrespective of what Justice Kern Reese's decision is.

For more news on the Tom Benson Family Dispute dispute click [here](#).

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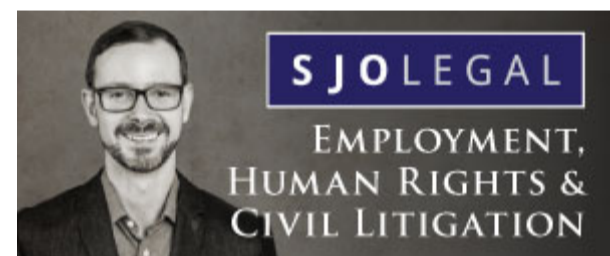
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