

BUSINESS

# More are thinking about wills, forcing lawyers to make a way

**By Erik Larson, Malathi Nayak and Edvard Pettersson**  
BLOOMBERG

The rising death toll from the coronavirus pandemic is prompting more people, from young health care professionals to the elderly, to prepare their wills in a hurry — a task being complicated by social distancing and fear of catching the bug. That has lawyers in the U.S. improvising with some offbeat measures.

Neil Fang, an New York estate lawyer, said one wealthy couple in their 50s was so spooked by the outbreak that they rushed to complete their will last weekend, meeting him in the law firm's parking lot while wearing face masks and plastic gloves. The couple signed the will on the hood of their slate gray Porsche Carrera, while Fang and his law partner looked on as the state's two legally required witnesses.

“We kept a distance of about six to 10 feet the whole time,” Fang, who's practiced law for about 25 years, said in a phone interview.

Joseph Cooter, an estate planning lawyer in Oakland, California, has seen an uptick in business with inquiries from clients young and old. He said he typically sits down with clients in their homes. But now he

**“When the pandemic is over, if all my clients are still alive, I’ll have them come in and we’ll do it properly.”**

*Regina Kiperman, a New York estate lawyer*

carries protective gear and a foldable card table in his car. “Going forward, gloves are certainly a good idea and masks as well. I don't have any masks and I'm not sure how I would get one,” Cooter said.

Rebecca Goldfarb, an estate planning attorney in Los Angeles, said she witnesses the signing of documents through a window between her office and a meeting room where her clients are.

“We tell them to bring their own pen so they don't have to use ours,” Goldfarb said.

But for millions of people who are likely to lose their jobs as the economy falters, wills and estate planning, which can cost several thousand dollars, aren't a top priority, said Amy Harrington, a probate attorney in San Francisco.

“People are just paying what they consider essential,” Harrington said.

Others are still willing to go through the process, but

without leaving their homes for any reason. Regina Kiperman, a New York estate lawyer, said she's using Zoom teleconferencing, acting as witness while her clients sign the documents remotely. Her husband, who's also stuck at home, sometimes acts as the legally required second witness. The only hitch is that remote witnessing isn't really legal in New York, she said.

“When the pandemic is over, if all my clients are still alive, I'll have them come in and we'll do it properly,” she said in a phone interview. “If they're not, then at least I'll have something.”

That underscores the need for legalizing electronic signatures for wills, Kiperman said.

Young health care professionals worried about dying as a result of their industry's key role in fighting the outbreak, are also rushing to draft wills, said John O'Grady, a San Francisco-based estate planning lawyer.

“There are some people who are panicking,” O'Grady said in an interview.

“Even if they wanted to notarize, how would you do it?” O'Grady asked. “Would an older adult want a notary to come into their home? Would they want to put their life on the line to sign the document which is about planning their death? There's some irony there.”

# Achy backs drive push for ergonomic chairs

**By Matthew Boyle**  
BLOOMBERG

With tens of millions of Americans suddenly working from home, staffers at companies that make and sell office chairs don't have time to sit down.

“I can't talk now, sorry,” Ben Henderson, a senior sales executive at Office Chair @ Work, a New Jersey-based online discounter, said. “I'm unbelievably busy.”

In the past two weeks, sales of Herman Miller Inc.'s Aeron chairs — the gold standard of ergonomic workplace seating — have spiked fivefold at Office Chair @ Work, while demand for Steelcase and other well-known brands has doubled. Online searches for the term “office chair” increased 150 percent between March 9 and March 20, according to web data provider SEMrush, mirroring the increased traffic in what Steelcase Inc. says it's seen at its online showroom in recent weeks. Office superstore Staples says working from home is “the new normal” for many.

Newly homebound workers have rushed to outlets like Best Buy Co. for monitors and wireless headsets, but the right chair can be the difference between working comfortably and productively or suffering through Zoom teleconferences in agony with an aching lower back. The right seat becomes even more important as our working days are typically a few hours longer when we toil at home, according to data from virtual private network service provider NordVPN Teams.

A spokeswoman for Design Within Reach, the purveyor of stylish decor that Herman Miller acquired in 2014, said that many Americans “are finding that their homes



Associated Press

**Aeron chairs designed by Herman Miller Inc. are among the top-selling models in high demand as more people are forced to work from home.**

aren't properly equipped to handle a sustained work from home routine.”

Both Design Within Reach and Steelcase have recently responded by offering customers 15 percent off purchases of home office products. That's enticed shoppers like Matt Crowley, Chief Executive Officer of Boston-based Vesper Technologies, which makes intelligent microphones that are found in Samsung voice-activated TV remotes and other devices.

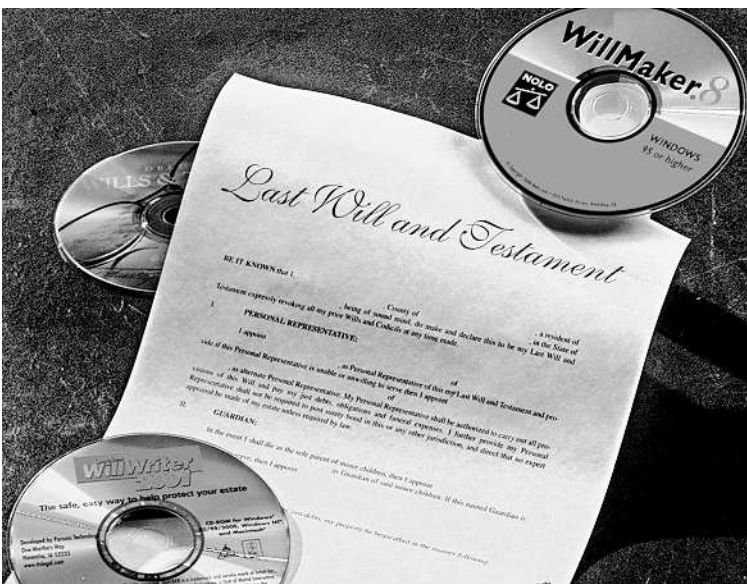
“I almost never normally work from home,” said Crowley, but he's there for the foreseeable future now that Massachusetts has ordered all non-essential businesses to close. Crowley already bought himself a keyboard, monitor and a wrist pad for his home setup, but one of the casters on the old office chair he was using just broke, sending ball bearings spilling all over his sunroof-turned-office. So he's in the market for a new model.

“I picked out one chair, but my wife said it was hideous,” he said. “So it's back to the drawing board.”

For about \$550, Crowley could grab the same Aeron chair with fully adjustable arms, tilt limiter and adjustable lumbar support that Bryan Gil- denberg, senior vice president of commerce at Omnicon Retail Group, just bought from Office Chair @ Work. That's about half what a similar model costs at Design Within Reach, even with the 15 percent discount that began this week.

Less expensive models are available at retailers like Staples, Office Depot and of course Amazon.com Inc., where searches for the phrase “office chair” rose 22 percent over the past four weeks, according to Stackline, an e-commerce data analytics firm.

“I was holding off buying a new one, but I will be primarily working from home for a long time,” Gildenberg said.



**Wills are one of those things people procrastinate about. Who wants to think about dying and how their assets and children, if they have any, will live without them?**

Mike Cardew / TNS



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| BIDS & PROPOSALS  | BIDS & PROPOSALS | BIDS & PROPOSALS | LEGAL NOTICES   | LEGAL NOTICES |
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| <p><b>REQUEST FOR COMPETITIVE SEALED PROPOSALS</b></p> <p><b>2020 Matzke Road: Site Clearing &amp; Grubbing Package</b></p> <p><b>CYPRESS-FAIRBANKS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT</b></p> <p><b>Cypress-Fairbanks ISD Proposal No. 20-03-5470R-RFP</b></p> <p>The Cypress-Fairbanks Independent School District will accept Base Competitive Sealed Proposals until 2:00 P.M. on Tuesday, April 21, 2020 at the Cypress-Fairbanks Independent School District Windfern Administrative Annex, 12510 Windfern Road, Houston, Texas 77064 for the 2020 Matzke Road: Site Clearing &amp; Grubbing Package project. A Pre-Proposal Conference will be held on Monday, April 13, 2020 at 10:00 A.M. at the above location. Proposal Evaluation Criteria are published in the "Instructions to Offerors" section of the proposal documents. Plans and specifications will be released after Monday, April 6, 2020, and are available to general contractors from the following address upon deposit of \$150.00 per set and submittal of a fully executed Contractor's Qualification Statement, AIA Document A305 to: PBK Architects, Inc., 11 Greenway Plaza, 22nd Floor, Houston, Texas 77046, 713-965-0608. The Owner reserves the right to waive any informalities and to reject any or all proposals.</p> |                  |                  | <p><b>TEXAS COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY</b></p> <p><b>NOTICE OF APPLICATION AND PRELIMINARY DECISION FOR TPDES PERMIT FOR MUNICIPAL WASTEWATER RENEWAL</b></p> <p><b>PERMIT NO. WQ0015432001</b></p> <p><b>APPLICATION AND PRELIMINARY DECISION.</b> Harris County Municipal Utility District No. 525, c/o Smith, Murdaugh, Little &amp; Bonham, L.L.P., 2727 Allen Parkway, Suite 1100, Houston, Texas 77019, has applied to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) for a renewal of Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (TPDES) Permit No. WQ0015432001, which authorizes the discharge of treated domestic wastewater at a daily average flow not to exceed 390,000 gallons per day. TCEQ received this application on December 19, 2019.</p> <p>The facility is located approximately 2.8 miles west northwest of the intersection of Foley Road and Farm-to-Market Road 2100, in Harris County, Texas 77532. The treated effluent is discharged to an unnamed tributary, thence to Lake Houston in Segment No. 1002 of the San Jacinto River Basin. The unclassified receiving water use is minimal aquatic life use for unnamed tributary. The designated uses for Segment No. 1002 are primary contact recreation, public water supply, and high aquatic life use. All determinations are preliminary and subject to additional review and/or revisions. This link to an electronic map of the site or facility's general location is provided as a public courtesy and is not part of the application or notice. For the exact location, refer to the application. <a href="https://tceq.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=d5b9ac44afbc468bddd360f8168750f&amp;marker=-95.124444%2C29.955555&amp;level=12">https://tceq.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=d5b9ac44afbc468bddd360f8168750f&amp;marker=-95.124444%2C29.955555&amp;level=12</a></p> <p>The TCEQ Executive Director has completed the technical review of the application and prepared a draft permit. The draft permit, if approved, would establish the conditions under which the facility must operate. The Executive Director has made a preliminary decision that this permit, if issued, meets all statutory and regulatory requirements. The permit application, Executive Director's preliminary decision, and draft permit are available for viewing and copying at Harris County Public Library - Crosby Branch, 135 Hare Road, Crosby, Texas.</p> <p><b>PUBLIC COMMENT / PUBLIC MEETING.</b> You may submit public comments or request a public meeting about this application. The purpose of a public meeting is to provide the opportunity to submit comments or to ask questions about the application. TCEQ holds a public meeting if the Executive Director determines that there is a significant degree of public interest in the application or if requested by a local legislator. A public meeting is not a contested case hearing.</p> <p><b>OPPORTUNITY FOR A CONTESTED CASE HEARING.</b> After the deadline for submitting public comments, the Executive Director will consider all timely comments and prepare a response to all relevant and material, or significant public comments. Unless the application is directly referred for a contested case hearing, the response to comments will be mailed to everyone who submitted public comments and to those persons who are on the mailing list for this application. If comments are received, the mailing will also provide instructions for requesting a contested case hearing or reconsideration of the Executive Director's decision. A contested case hearing is a legal proceeding similar to a civil trial in state district court.</p> <p><b>TO REQUEST A CONTESTED CASE HEARING, YOU MUST INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING ITEMS IN YOUR REQUEST:</b> your name, address, phone number; applicant's name and proposed permit number; the location and distance of your property/activities relative to the proposed facility; a specific description of how you would be adversely affected by the facility in a way not common to the general public; a list of all disputed issues of fact that you submit during the comment period; and the statement "I/we request a contested case hearing." If the request for contested case hearing is filed on behalf of a group or association, the request must designate the group's representative for receiving future correspondence; identify by name and physical address an individual member of the group who would be adversely affected by the proposed facility or activity; provide the information discussed above regarding the affected member's location and distance from the facility or activity; explain how and why the member would be affected; and explain how the interests the group seeks to protect are relevant to the group's purpose.</p> <p>Following the close of all applicable comment and request periods, the Executive Director will forward the application and any requests for reconsideration or for a contested case hearing to the TCEQ Commissioners for their consideration at a scheduled Commission meeting.</p> <p>The Commission may only grant a request for a contested case hearing on issues the requestor submitted in their timely comments that were not subsequently withdrawn. If a hearing is granted, the subject of a hearing will be limited to disputed issues of fact or mixed questions of fact and law, not issues of relevant and material water quality concerns submitted during the comment period. TCEQ may act on an application to renew a permit for discharge of wastewater without providing an opportunity for a contested case hearing if certain criteria are met.</p> <p><b>EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ACTION.</b> The Executive Director may issue final approval of the application unless a timely contested case hearing request or request for reconsideration is filed. If a timely hearing request or request for reconsideration is filed, the Executive Director will not issue final approval of the permit and will forward the application and request to the TCEQ Commissioners for their consideration at a scheduled Commission meeting.</p> <p><b>MAILING LIST.</b> If you submit public comments, a request for a contested case hearing or a reconsideration of the Executive Director's decision, you will be added to the mailing list for this specific application to receive future public notices mailed by the Office of the Chief Clerk. In adult law you may request to be placed on: (1) the permanent mailing list for a specific applicant name and permit number; and/or (2) the mailing list for a specific county. If you wish to be placed on the permanent and/or the county mailing list, clearly specify which list(s) and send your request to TCEQ Office of the Chief Clerk at the address below.</p> <p>All written public comments and public meeting requests must be submitted to the Office of the Chief Clerk, MC 105, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, P.O. Box 13087, Austin, TX 78711-3087 or electronically at <a href="http://www14.tceq.texas.gov/epic/eComment/">www14.tceq.texas.gov/epic/eComment/</a> within 30 days from the date of newspaper publication of this notice.</p> <p><b>INFORMATION AVAILABLE ONLINE.</b> For details about the status of the application, visit the Commissioners' Integrated Database at <a href="http://www.tceq.texas.gov/gato/cid">www.tceq.texas.gov/gato/cid</a>. Search the database using the permit number for this application, which is provided at the top of this notice.</p> <p><b>AGENCY CONTACTS AND INFORMATION.</b> Public comments and requests must be submitted either electronically at <a href="http://www14.tceq.texas.gov/epic/eComment/">www14.tceq.texas.gov/epic/eComment/</a>, or in writing to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, Office of the Chief Clerk, MC-105, P.O. Box 13087, Austin, Texas 78711-3087. Any personal information you submit to the TCEQ will become part of the agency's record; this includes email addresses. For more information about this permit application or the permitting process, please call the TCEQ Public Education Program, Toll Free, at 1-800-687-4040 or visit their website at <a href="http://www.tceq.texas.gov/gato/pep">www.tceq.texas.gov/gato/pep</a>. Si desea información en Español, puede llamar al 1-800-687-4040.</p> <p>Further information may also be obtained from Harris County Municipal Utility District No. 525 at the address stated above or by calling Ms. Brook Pope, Senior Project Engineer, EHRA Engineering, at (713) 337-7489.</p> <p>Issuance Date: March 9, 2020</p> |               |

**ADVERTISEMENT FOR SUBCONTRACTOR PROPOSALS**

Lone Star College – Health Professions Center (HPC)

Tellepsen Builders, L.P., serving as CMAR for Lone Star College, in accordance with Texas Government Code 2269, requests Guaranteed Maximum Price proposals from the following trades for the Kingwood Campus - Health Professions Center: Ornamental Metal Railings, Wayfinding Sign age & Graphics, Dental Suite Equipment, Building Automation Controls, Data & Telecommunications Backbone Cabling, Electronic Safety & Security and Pavement Markings. Note: Proposals for all other scopes of work were solicited previously and awarded subsequently.

It is the policy of Lone Star College and Tellepsen Builders, L.P., to actively seek the involvement of Historically Underutilized Businesses (HUB) in its construction projects. Lone Star College and Tellepsen Builders, L.P., recognize probable subcontracting opportunities for HUB in the proposal package. HUB certification forms, as required by the package documents, shall accompany each proposal that is submitted. Proposals submitted without all required information, and in the order and manner specified, may result in the proposal being considered non-responsive.

**Proposals are due to Tellepsen Builders, L.P. at 2:00 P.M. local time on Thursday 16, April 2020.** Complete bid forms and proposals are to be uploaded to the Smart Bid Net System. To receive your invitation to Smart Bid, please contact Paul Bain by email at [pbain@tellepsen.com](mailto:pbain@tellepsen.com) or phone at 281-272-4922. If you are unable to upload your proposal, please contact Paul Bain to discuss alternative delivery methods. **Late Proposals will not be accepted.**

All proposals shall remain valid for 90 days. The owner, CM at Risk and Architect reserve the right to reject any and all bids, to waive any informalities and irregularities in the proposal process and to make awards in the best interest of Lone Star College.

Project Documents are available at the following locations for respondents to review for preparation of their Proposals:

- Tellepsen's Houston Office - 777 Benmar, Suite 400, Houston, TX 77060
- SmartBidNet- By Invitation

Contact Paul Bain at (281-272-4922) or [pbain@tellepsen.com](mailto:pbain@tellepsen.com) for information.

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**REQUEST FOR COMPETITIVE SEALED PROPOSALS**

**ELEMETARY SCHOOL TRAFFIC IMPROVEMENTS – HAMILTON & REED, HUCKABEE PROJECT NO. 1732-09-01, PROPOSAL NO. 19-11-5449R-RFP CYPRESS-FAIRBANKS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT**

The Cypress-Fairbanks Independent School District will accept Com-petitive Sealed Proposals until 2:00 P.M. on Thursday, April 02, 2020 at the Cypress-Fairbanks Independent School District Purchasing Office, Windfern Administrative Annex, 12510 Windfern Road, Houston, Texas 77064. A Pre-Proposal Con-ference will be held Wednesday, March 25, 2020 at 10:00 A.M. at the above location. Proposal Evalua-tion Criteria are published in the "In-structions to Proposers" section of the proposal documents. Plans and specifications will be released Mon-day, March 23, 2020, and will be available from Huckabee at [www.huckabee-inc.com/construction/](http://www.huckabee-inc.com/construction/) upon request. The Owner reserves the right to waive any informalities and to reject any or all proposals.



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