



## Joshua Rubenstein Quoted by *NBC News* on Lessons from Celebrity Estate Disputes

July 30, 2026

In the *NBC News* article, "What the Chadwick Boseman and Malcolm-Jamal Warner estate disputes reveal about planning for death," Joshua S. Rubenstein, partner and global chair of the Private Wealth Department at Katten, commented on two high-profile celebrity estate battles that estate planners say reflect the most common mistakes fueling family conflict after death. The disputes, Chadwick Boseman's brothers seeking to remove his widow as estate administrator after he died without a will, and Malcolm-Jamal Warner's widow pursuing a \$1.2 million claim over a decades-old, unupdated estate plan and prenuptial agreement, illustrate the risks of inadequate or outdated planning. Joshua, a longtime estate planning lawyer, noted that lengthy estate disputes have plagued a slew of famous actors and musicians through the decades, including Jimi Hendrix, Amy Winehouse, Prince, James Dean and Aretha Franklin, and observed that many celebrities are not often advised to organize their estates and do not think to do so themselves. He warned that this, combined with statistical trends showing celebrities often die earlier than the general public, can lead to outsize risks.

Joshua and other experts encourage people not only to make a will in the first place, but also to update it after every major life event. This includes marriage, the birth of a child or a sudden change in wealth. As he put it, "a lot of people view doing a will like getting a root canal, as something that they think is going to be painful. And they put it off as long as possible, not realizing, actually, once it's done, how comforting it is to know that if anything happened, you've taken care of it."

["What the Chadwick Boseman and Malcolm-Jamal Warner estate disputes reveal about planning for death," \*NBC News\*, July 27, 2026](#)

---

### CONTACTS

For more information, contact your Katten attorney or any of the following attorneys.



**Joshua S. Rubenstein**

+1.212.940.7150

[joshua.rubenstein@katten.com](mailto:joshua.rubenstein@katten.com)

Attorney advertising. Published as a source of information only. The material contained herein is not to be construed as legal advice or opinion.

©2026 Katten Muchin Rosenman LLP.

All rights reserved. Katten refers to Katten Muchin Rosenman LLP and the affiliated partnership as explained at [katten.com/disclaimer](https://katten.com/disclaimer).