Joshua Rubenstein Quoted in *Citywealth* on Sudden Client Death and Contingency Planning

October 1, 2026

Citywealth quoted Katten Private Wealth Partner and Global Chair Joshua S. Rubenstein in the article "Sudden Client Death: When the Plan Meets Reality." The article examines what happens to the estates, businesses, foundations, disputes and reputations of wealthy families when someone dies without warning. Joshua points to the early deaths of Chadwick Boseman and Malcolm-Jamal Warner, and the disputes that followed, as reminders that "sudden death and simultaneous death, while statistically rare, happen in larger numbers than you would think, and can be cataclysmic if not planned for and included in one's regularly updated dispositive documents."

Several of Joshua's points are especially relevant to a private wealth audience. He stresses that "there should always be contingency, or 'wipeout,' bequests and designations of successor executors and trustees in place in case immediate family members and trusted advisors all die at the same time." On family businesses, he advises that "even a young to middle-aged owner of a large family business should have contingency management and leadership designations in place." He also explains that some US relief provisions allow families to pay estate taxes over 15 years to avoid a "fire sale" of business assets, but only if they structure the assets to qualify, though "there is no substitute for planning."

Most notably, he recommends that ultra-high-net-worth and celebrity clients retain a media advisor or crisis manager and have positive obituaries written in advance to protect the value of their estates. "Estate planning is like playing chess," he said. "You must plan multiple moves ahead, as you cannot control, and must be prepared for, whatever the next move may be."

“Sudden Client Death: When the Plan Meets Reality,” *Citywealth*, September 30, 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

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.