



LAW SOCIETY
OF SOUTH AFRICA



PRESS RELEASE

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ATTORNEYS TO DRAFT WILLS FOR FREE DURING NATIONAL WILLS WEEK: 17 to 21 SEPTEMBER 2012

From 17 to 21 September 2012 attorneys participating in the National Wills Week will draft basic wills for members of the public free of charge. Attorneys' firms throughout the country are participating in the National Wills Week project.

'A valid will allows you, as the testator, to decide who should inherit your assets and property in the event of your death. It allows you to appoint an executor of your choice for your estate and also a guardian for your minor children,' say Law Society of South Africa (LSSA) Co-Chairpersons Jan Stemmett and Krish Govender. They add: 'Having a will protects your loved ones and ensures that there is no delay in settling your estate. It also ensures that your executor will act according to your wishes as set out in your will.'

Why should an attorney draft your will?

An attorney has the necessary knowledge and expertise to ensure that your will is valid by complying with all the legal requirements in the Wills Act and also that it complies with your wishes. An attorney can also advise you on any problem which may arise with your will and assist your executor. Often a will is not valid because the person who drafts it does not have the necessary legal knowledge to ensure that the requirements of the Wills Act are met.

What could happen to your estate if you die without a valid will?

If you die without leaving a valid will, your assets will be distributed according to the provisions of the Intestate Succession Act. These provisions are generally fair and ensure that your possessions are transferred to your spouse and children, and where

applicable, to siblings, parents, and if required, then to the extended family in terms of degrees of relationships.

But, the following problems may arise if you die without leaving a will:

- Your assets may not be left to the person of your choice.
- It can take a longer time to have an executor appointed. The executor who is appointed may be somebody you may not have chosen yourself.
- There could be extra and unnecessary costs.
- There could be unhappiness and conflict among members of your family because there are no clear instructions on how to distribute your assets.

During Wills Week from 17 to 21 September 2012, attorneys participating in the National Wills Week project will draft a new, basic will for members of the public for free. Attorneys will not amend or redraft existing wills.

Attorneys participating in the National Wills Week project will display posters with their contact details so that members of the public can make appointments with participating attorneys in their area.

Where to find an attorney to write your will:

The contact details of attorneys participating in the National Wills Week project can be accessed on the LSSA website at www.LSSA.org.za.

Alternatively, call the provincial law society in your area:

Gauteng, Mpumalanga, Limpopo, North-West – Law Society of the Northern Provinces (012) 338 5800

Cape provinces – Cape Law Society (021) 443 6700

Free State – Law Society of the Free State (051) 447 3237

KwaZulu-Natal – KwaZulu-Natal Law Society (033) 345 1304

Law Society of South Africa – (012) 366 8800

The National Wills Week is an initiative of the Law Society of South Africa and its six constituent members: the Black Lawyers Association, the Cape Law Society, the KwaZulu-Natal Law Society, the Law Society of the Free State, the Law Society of the Northern Provinces and the National Association of Democratic Lawyers, representing South Africa's 21 000 attorneys.

ISSUED ON BEHALF OF THE LAW SOCIETY OF SOUTH AFRICA

by Barbara Whittle

Communication Manager, Law Society of South Africa

Tel: Barbara Whittle (012) 366 8800 or 083 380 1307

E-mail: barbara@LSSA.org.za

Website: www.LSSA.org.za