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## Instructions - How to create a Michigan statutory will

### Step 1: Prepare your form

Use the Do-It-Yourself Will tool to prepare your Michigan Statutory Will.

### Step 2: Make a Plan to Sign Your Will: Find Witnesses

At least two witnesses must watch you sign your will and then sign themselves. If you have a third person who is willing to be a witness, three witnesses is even better.

Witnesses must be 18 or older. You should choose responsible adults. If someone challenges your will later, witnesses may need to confirm you were mentally capable and signed freely.

### Step 3: Sign Your Will in Front of Your Witnesses

You may need to sign your will in several places, depending on the choices you made in the form. **Your witnesses must watch you sign the will** in each of the following places:

* **Cash Gifts to Persons or Charities (Section 2.1)**: If your will includes specific cash gifts, sign on the line in this section to confirm those gifts. If you did not include cash gifts, leave the signature lines blank.
* **All Other Assets (Section 2.3)**: Sign next to your selected option for how your remaining property should pass after specific gifts are distributed. You chose one of two options when completing the form: either all remaining property goes to your heirs, or it splits equally between your heirs and your spouse's heirs. An arrow in the left margin shows which signature line to use based on the choices you made in the DIY Will tool.
* **Bond (Section 3.3)**: Sign next to your selected option for whether your personal representative must post a bond. A bond is money that protects your estate if your personal representative or conservator mishandles your money or property. An arrow in the left margin shows which signature line to use based on the choices you made in the DIY Will tool.
* **Definitions and Additional Clauses (Section 3.4)**:Sign and date your will in this section. This signature confirms that the entire document represents your final wishes.
* **List Disposing of Tangible Personal Property**: If you completed the separate "List Disposing of Tangible Personal Property" page, sign and date the bottom of that page as well. Note: This list does not require witness signatures.

### Step 4: Have Your Witnesses Sign the Will

Your witnesses should sign immediately after watching you sign. You must have at least two witnesses. It is better to have three witnesses.

The witnesses must print their name, sign, and write their address. They do not need to review and understand the will. Their signature means that they believe you have mental capacity and signed the will freely without anyone unfairly influencing you. Ask them to make sure their printed name and address are neat so that a judge can read it and contact them, if needed.

### Step 5: Destroy Your Old Will, If You Had One

If you have an older will, signing the new will makes the old will invalid. To be clear about which will you want to use, destroy the old one or write "Void" on every page. If you filed your old will with your county probate court, remove the old will and file the new one there in its place. Some courts may allow you to remove the old will and replace it with the updated will without charging again. Other courts may charge a new filing fee.

If anyone has a copy of your old will, give them copies of your new will and destroy the old copies.

### Step 6: Keep Your Will in a Safe Place and Tell Family and Loved Ones Where to Find It

Store your will securely and make sure your family knows where it is. Your loved ones can only follow your wishes after you die if they know about your will and can find it.

You can file your will with the county probate court where you live for $25. The court can’t give copies of the will to anyone except you while you are living. After you die, your family can bring your death certificate to get a copy.

If you don't file with the court, put your will somewhere safe and tell your family where it is. Some people use bank safe-deposit boxes but be aware that banks need a court order before letting anyone open your box after you die. This means extra paperwork.

No matter where you choose to store your will, you might also want to give a copy to the person you named as personal representative.