

Do I have to register my will somewhere?

There is no central database for wills in South Africa. A will consequently does not have to be registered anywhere. The will does not have to be filed in a certain place. As long as the will complies with the formality requirements of the Wills Act, it will be valid.

No one may know about a will you signed. Your deceased estate would then be wound up in terms of your previous will, if there is one. Alternatively, it would be administered in terms of the Intestate Law of Succession.

Therefore, you should ensure that your loved ones are aware of the will and know where to find the original one. The original will must be sent to the master of the high court after your passing.

I would suggest that you use an attorney to draft your will and keep the original will in safe custody. Most attorneys do this free of charge – the drafting and the safe custody. It would help if you also told your closest family where your will is and preferably also give them a copy of it.

Some people prefer treating a will as a private and confidential document even in respect of their beneficiaries. I disagree with this. My advice is to have a transparent approach instead. This will make it easier for your executor to take care of your affairs after your death because beneficiaries are already prepared to an extent.

Once someone has passed away, the original will must be lodged at the master's office with certain prescribed forms. The master's office then registers the will and the deceased estate and stores certain details in a central database.

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Do you have a will? Or is your will outdated and needs to be revised? Click on [this link](#) and fill in the form to enable us to draw up a will for you. It won't take you longer than 5 minutes. This service is provided to you free of charge.