

## **1. Setting Up a Michigan Last Will and Testament**

**A Will is relatively simple to create. Here's how:**

### **Steps to Create a Will in Michigan**

#### **1. Decide on Your Beneficiaries**

- **Who will inherit your assets?**
- **You can distribute your property among family, friends, or charities.**

#### **2. Choose an Executor (Personal Representative)**

- **This person will manage your estate, pay debts, and distribute assets after you pass away.**
- **Choose someone responsible and trustworthy.**

#### **3. Appoint a Guardian (If You Have Minor Children)**

- **If you have children under 18, name a guardian to care for them.**

#### **4. List Specific Gifts (Optional)**

- **You can designate who gets personal items, money, or real estate.**

#### **5. Write and Sign the Will**

- **Michigan requires you to be at least 18 years old and of sound mind when signing.**
- **Your Will must be signed in front of two witnesses, who must also sign.**

#### **6. Store the Will Safely**

- **Keep it in a safe but accessible place (not a safe deposit box).**
  - **Inform your executor where to find it.**
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## **2. Setting Up a Michigan Revocable Family Trust**

**A Revocable Trust avoids probate and offers more control over your assets. Here's how to create one:**

### **Steps to Create a Trust in Michigan**

#### **1. Choose a Trustee**

- **You (the "Grantor") usually act as the Trustee while you're alive.**

- **Name a Successor Trustee to take over if you become incapacitated or pass away.**
2. **Draft the Trust Document**
    - **The document outlines:**
      - **Who the beneficiaries are.**
      - **How the assets will be distributed.**
      - **Who will manage the Trust after your death.**
    - **A lawyer can help, but online legal services offer templates.**
  3. **Sign the Trust Agreement**
    - **Michigan does not require witnesses, but it must be notarized.**
  4. **Transfer Assets into the Trust ("Funding the Trust")**
    - **You must retitle assets in the name of the Trust, including:**
      - **Real Estate: A new deed is needed.**
      - **Bank Accounts & Investments: Contact your bank.**
      - **Vehicles: Michigan allows vehicles to be owned by a trust.**
      - **Personal Property: A list can be included in the Trust.**
    - **Any assets not placed in the Trust may still go through probate, so be thorough.**
  5. **Create a Pour-Over Will (Backup for the Trust)**
    - **A Pour-Over Will ensures any remaining assets not in the Trust are transferred to it after your death.**
  6. **Keep the Trust Updated**
    - **Regularly update it as circumstances change (new assets, marriage, divorce, etc.).**
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### **Do You Need Both a Will and a Trust?**

- **If you only have a Will, your estate goes through probate.**
- **If you only have a Trust but forget to transfer assets into it, those assets still go through probate.**
- **A Will + Trust combination offers the best protection and flexibility.**