



Two-Thirds of BC Parents Don't Have a Will – March 2018 Ipsos Survey

Make a Will Week is April 8 to 14

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Kelowna, BC – A new online survey of 800 BC residents found that 66% of parents of children 18 or younger do not have a Will, which leaves the family vulnerable to outside decision-makers, delays and conflict if something were to happen to one or both parents.

The survey was conducted in March 2018 by Ipsos for BC Notaries in preparation for “Make A Will Week,” which the Province of British Columbia has declared for April 8 to 14, 2018. The mandate of “Make a Will Week” is to encourage the many British Columbians who don't have a current Will to prepare one, and to encourage families to discuss the topic and future planning.

The survey also showed that overall only 44% of BC adults have a Will in place and only 57% of homeowners have a current Will.

“We know that too many people pass without a Will in place because Notaries help families navigate the bureaucracy and uncertainty created for those left behind,” said Rhoda Witherly, President of BC Notaries and a Notary in Prince Rupert. “Even for us, this finding that two-thirds of parents with dependent children don't have a Will is surprisingly high and a concern for these families.”

If there is no Will in place, or the Will is not properly prepared, custody of any children under 18 and property distribution may not occur as the deceased intended. Furthermore, if the Public Guardian and Trustee is brought in to administer the estate, the Province may then decide on the future of dependent children and assets.

“Many people put off creating a Will, which can create stress and conflict amongst family members after a person's death. This in turn can lead to increased costs to the estate and unexpected outcomes for children and beneficiaries,” said Daniel Boisvert, a Notary in Tsawwassen. “A legal Will gives clear direction as to the guardianship of the children, rather than this important decision being made by the courts or government.”

“The costs of administering your estate may also be higher if a current and legal Will does not exist. One of the kindest things you can do for your family and loved ones is to have a Will in place, so it's one less thing they need to worry about it after you're gone,” said Tarja McLean, a Notary in Kelowna.

“Creating a Will can typically be done in two short meetings. During the first meeting, we will discuss a general overview of your assets and your intentions for their distribution. The second meeting finalizes your plan and your paperwork,” said Jennifer O'Donnell, a Notary in Penticton. “A good way to start the process is to think about who you would want to care for your children, inherit your home and any other assets, and then visit a local Notary, who can assist you in preparing a proper and legal Will.”

Most people find that creating a Will leads to important discussions and decisions, and brings families closer by creating more certainty and peace of mind for everyone. It also creates peace-of-mind that assets will be distributed to family, friends and charitable organizations according to the Will-maker's wishes.

BC Notaries represents more than 360 highly-trained Notary professionals. Most Notaries have locally owned and operated offices and all provide personal assistance to clients around the province. Individuals, families and businesses seek the services of BC Notaries for a wide range of non-contentious legal matters, including residential and commercial real estate transfers, mortgage refinancing, Wills and advanced healthcare planning, powers of attorney, and other important documents.

To find a Notary near you and for more information, please visit www.notaries.bc.ca. The Notary Tradition of Trust spans 2000 years. Notaries began practicing in British Columbia over 100 years ago. They continue to serve their valued clients and their communities across the province.

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Editors: Local Notaries are available in many areas of BC to discuss Will planning.

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