This booklet is not legal advice. It only provides general information about writing a Will. Please consult a lawyer for specific legal advice.

**DEFINITIONS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Affidavit</td>
<td>A written statement sworn before a Commissioner or Notary Public. Examples of affidavits required for writing Wills are included in this package.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assets</td>
<td>Any item of value such as money, a house, jewelry, vehicles, boats, firearms, harpoons, clothing, real estate, stocks / bonds, a business, or other similar possessions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Beneficiary</td>
<td>A person you leave your belongings and money to when you die.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Codicil</td>
<td>An extra document containing an addition, explanation or modification to an existing Will. It does not replace an existing Will. For example; you may write a codicil if you decide to add or remove a beneficiary on your Will.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debts</td>
<td>Monies or things owed, such as outstanding utilities, taxes, mortgage, things borrowed, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term</td>
<td>Definition</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Estate</strong></td>
<td>Everything you own, and also everything you owe someone else.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Executor</strong></td>
<td>The person you choose to carry out the instructions of your Will, and carries out all the tasks related to Estate Administration. This should be someone you trust. You may appoint two or three people as joint Executors or appoint one Executor with alternates in case the first Executor cannot manage your estate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Guardian</strong></td>
<td>The person you choose in a Will to look after your minor children. The Children’s Law Act has provisions for guardianship applications. In which case, the court determines who the guardian should be and generally appoints the person designated in the Will.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Heir</strong></td>
<td>This has the same meaning as beneficiary. It also means someone who has the legal right to receive a portion of a person’s estate because of a legal relationship.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intestate</strong></td>
<td>Dying without a Will.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Legacy</strong></td>
<td>The gift someone receives from the instructions in a deceased person’s Will. Gifts include money, property or personal items. Another word for this is “bequest”.</td>
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</table>
Probate

A court procedure where a Will is proved to be valid or invalid. May also refer to the legal process where the estate of the deceased is administered.

Public Trustee

A government official who may look after the estate if the Executor is unable or unwilling to act under a Will. Or, if the Will is complicated or a person dies without a Will.

Residue

The assets remaining after all debts and costs of administration are paid, which goes to the beneficiaries.

Testator

A male who has written a Will or has died leaving a Will.

Testatrix

A female who has written a Will or has died leaving a Will.

Witness

A person who signs a Will indicating they saw the Testator/Testatrix sign the Will. A formal Will must have two witnesses. Your witnesses cannot be married or common law to you. Your witnesses cannot be beneficiaries, heirs, or Executors of the Will. Witnesses must also be over 19 and mentally capable.
A Will is a legal document with instructions on how to distribute your property, belongings, and money after you die. A Will can also appoint a guardian for your underage children and specify the type of funeral you want. A Will is the safest way to tell people your wishes and give instructions. It allows your family to follow your wishes after your death. Wills are enforceable in the Nunavut Court of Justice. You can find an example of a Will in Appendix A. You may use it as a template to write your own Will.

In your Will, you appoint an Executor who makes sure your wishes are carried out after your death. An Executor may distribute property, arrange a funeral, appoint a guardian for underage children, or appoint a trustee to look after the Estate. Your Executor is responsible for Estate Administration. Estate Administration can be a lengthy process with many steps, including:

- Distributing property;
- Making funeral arrangements;
- Appointing a guardian for underage children;
- Appointing a trustee to look after the Estate.
Identifying, securing and dealing with assets;

○ Obtaining letters probate or administration from the court;

○ Identifying and paying valid debts;

○ Filing tax returns;

○ Dealing with any legal issues; and

○ Identifying, locating and distributing your estate to the rightful heirs and/or beneficiaries.

What are the requirements for making a valid Will?

Your Will must meet the following requirements:

○ Your Will must be in writing. It can be typed or handwritten.

○ You must be over 19 years old when making the Will.

* You may be under 19 years of age if you are:

  - Married; or

  - A member of the Canadian Forces or a member of the RCMP.

○ You must make the Will voluntarily.

○ You must be mentally capable of managing your affairs and making decisions.

○ You must agree with the contents of the Will at the time the Will is written.
You cannot be misled or tricked into writing the Will.

You decide how to distribute your assets and you cannot be pressured into distributing assets to certain people.

Your Will must be signed by you, or signed on your behalf due to illness or disability.

Your Will must be signed in front of two Witnesses.

The Witnesses must sign the Will in front of you, and all Witnesses must be:

1. Over 19 years old;
2. Mentally capable;
3. Not a beneficiary or heir in your Will;
4. Not married to you;
5. Not the Executor;

Each Witness must provide an Affidavit of Execution. The Affidavit of Execution is equivalent to the Witnesses swearing under oath that they saw you sign your Will. You can find this document in Appendix C. It can be provided with the Will or after you die.
All of the instructions you choose to include in your Will should be as clear, precise and detailed as possible. This allows anyone who reads your Will to understand what assets you are referring to and to identify the persons you are including in your Will.

### Who can be a Witness?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acceptable</th>
<th>Unacceptable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A person who:</td>
<td>A person who:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- 19 years old;</td>
<td>- 19 years old;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Is over 19 years old;</td>
<td>- Is under 19 years old;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Is mentally capable and not intoxicated;</td>
<td>- Is mentally incapable or intoxicated;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Is not married or in a common law relationship with you;</td>
<td>- You are married to or in a common law relationship with;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Does not receive any part of your Estate upon your death; and</td>
<td>- Gets part of your Estate upon your death; and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Is not your Executor.</td>
<td>- Is your Executor.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Can I write a Will in Inuktitut?

ᐃ, ᐆᐊᓗᒃ ᖃᐅᓯᒪᓐᓂᒃ ᖃᓄᐃᑦ ᐅᓂᒃᑳᖅᑲᕐᔪᐊᖆᒃ ᗐᑐᖅᓲᔾᔨᔾᔪᑎ化进程ᑲᑦ.  ᓂᓕᓻᕐᔪᐊᖆᒃ ᐅᓂᒃᑳᖅᑲᕐᔪᐊᖆᒃ ᖃᓄᐃᑦ ᐅᓂᒃᑳᖅᑲᕐᔪᐊᖆᒃ ᗐᑐᖅᓲᔾᔨᔾᔪᑎ化进程ᑲᑦ.  ᐊᒃᑭᒃ ᐳᓪᓗᒃ ᗐᑐᖅᓲᔾᔨᔾᔪᑎ化进程ᑲᑦ.

Yes, you can write your Will in any of Nunavut’s official languages.

When does a Will take effect?

A Will takes effect upon your death. You can change your Will at any time. Your last Will is the document which is filed with the court during the Probate period.

What happens if I die without a Will?

If you die without a Will, a spouse or child may file documents in the Nunavut Court of Justice to request that they be appointed to administer your Estate. If no family member steps forward, the office of the Public Trustee may administer your Estate. The Rules of the Court establish who has a right to administer your Estate.

If there is no Will, the courts use the Intestate Succession Act to decide who inherits your possessions or assets. This Act lists the legal heirs according to...
their relationship to you. A spouse takes a preferential share before the rest of your assets are divided among other relatives and children. Any child who you have given up for adoption will not inherit from your estate. On the other hand, a child who you have adopted will be included with your other natural children.

**What happens to assets I own together with someone else?**

If you own assets jointly with someone, they do not form part of your estate. This means if you and your spouse own a house as joint tenants, or have a joint bank account, they go directly to your spouse.

**Can I write a new Will or change my existing Will?**

Yes. You can write a new Will at any time or change your existing Will by signing a separate document called a Codicil. The Codicil must meet the following requirements to be valid:

- It must be in writing;
- It must refer to the Will you are changing, and to the specific clauses you are changing within the Will; and
- It must be signed by you and two Witnesses (they do not have to be the same two Witnesses in your Will).
You can also void a Will by destroying the original or by writing a new Will. A new Will voids any old Wills.

What happens if I get married after writing my Will?

If you get married after writing a Will, the Will is canceled unless it states the person’s name and your plan to get married.

What should I do with my Will after writing it?

Your Will must be kept in a safe place where it is fireproof, waterproof and tamper proof. The Executor must know where it is. Your Will can be kept at the Nunavut Court of Justice by filing it with the Court Registry in Iqaluit, Nunavut.
For more information or to consult a lawyer:

Office of the Public Trustee
P.O. Box 1000, Station 560
Iqaluit, NU X0A 0H0
(866) 294-2127 or (867) 975-6338
Email: PublicTrustee@gov.nu.ca.

Legal Services Board of Nunavut
Three regional legal aid offices serving Nunavummiut

Maliiganik Tukisiiniakvik
Iqaluit
Phone: 1 (867) 979-5377
Fax: 1 (867) 979-4346
Toll free: 1 (866) 202-5593

Keewatin Legal Services Centre
Rankin Inlet
Phone: 1 (867) 645-2536
Fax: 1 (867) 645-2217
Kitikmeot Law Centre

Cambridge Bay
Phone: 1 (867) 983-2906
Fax: 1 (867) 983-2570
Toll free: 1 (866) 240-4006

Law Society of Nunavut
Offering a referral service for lawyers practicing in Nunavut

Nunavut Court of Justice, Court Registry

The Court Registry is open for filing Monday through Friday, from 9:00 am - 12:00 pm and from 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm.
APPENDIX A: Sample Will

The Will of
[Your Full Name]

My address is as follows: [Full Mailing Address]

I REVOKE all former Wills, Codicils, or other Testamentary Dispositions made by me at any time and declare this to contain my Last Will and Testament.

NOTE: This is a sample. It contains basic clauses usually found in a Will. You may use this as a template while adding or removing any clauses, depending on your situation. Please consult a lawyer if you have specific legal questions.

Refer to the notes in Appendix B for more explanations about each clause.
I APPOINT [Name, Place of Residence, and Relationship to You] to be the Executor of my Will.

If my Executor does not survive me or is unwilling or unable to act as my Executor, I appoint [Name, Place of Residence, and Relationship to You] as an alternate Executor.

I GIVE all my property to my Executor, and direct them to proceed as follows:

(a) to pay my just debts, income taxes, funeral expenses and testamentary expenses;

(b) to distribute my property and the residue of my estate as described in this Will.

I AUTHORIZE my Executor to use his full discretion in the realization of my estate, with power to sell any part of my estate upon terms at his discretion as is necessary to pay my debts or to divide the value of the assets among the beneficiaries.

I AUTHORIZE my Executor, if any person becomes entitled to any share in my estate before attaining the age of majority, to hold and keep invested this share, and to use his discretion in using the capital or income of this share for the benefit of this person until he attains the age of majority.
I AUTHORIZE my Executor to make any payment for any person under the age of majority to a parent or guardian of such person whose receipt shall be a sufficient discharge to my Executor.

I APPOINT [Name, Place of Residence, and Relationship to You] as Guardian for my Children.

I HEREBY GIVE (or BEQUEATH) the following items to the persons named below. [For each beneficiary: Name, Place of residence, relationship to you, and a description of the Asset given].

Beneficiary No. 1: Name, Place of residence, relationship to you, and a description of the Asset given

Beneficiary No. 2: Name, Place of residence, relationship to you, and a description of the Asset given

Beneficiary No. 3: Name, Place of residence, relationship to you, and a description of the Asset given
[You may list as many beneficiaries as you like.]

I DECLARE that any items or property not distributed or retained shall form the residue of my estate.

I GIVE AND TRANSFER the residue of my estate to [Name, Place of Residence, and Relationship to You and how you want the residue divided].

If the beneficiary of the residue of my estate predeceases me or does not survive me for a period of thirty (30) days, I give and transfer the residue of my estate to [Name, Place of Residence, and Relationship to You].

My funeral arrangements shall be as follows: [Describe the funeral arrangements you would like].

Wherever the context requires or permits, the singular number shall be read as if the plural were expressed, and the masculine gender as if the feminine was expressed, and the provisions herein shall be read with all the grammatical changes necessary.
IN WITNESS WHEREOF I have set my hand to these [Total number of pages] pages at the [City or Hamlet] of [Name of City or Hamlet] in the Territory of Nunavut, made this [Date] day of [Month], [Year].

SIGNED, PUBLISHED, AND DECLARED by the said Testator / Testatrix, [Your Name], as and for his or her last Will and Testament, in the presence of us, who, at his or her request, in his or her presence, and in the presence of each other, have here subscribed our names as witnesses.

_________________________________
Signature of witness

_________________________________
Signature of witness

_________________________________
Print name

_________________________________
Print name

_________________________________
Address

_________________________________
Address

_________________________________
Occupation

_________________________________
Occupation
APPENDIX B: Explanatory Notes

**Heading:** Write your names as shown on your birth certificate, NTI and SIN cards and title(s) to real properties. If your name is spelled differently on these documents please write each different spelling. If you are commonly known by a different name or nickname you should include this in your Will.

This is the place to specify if you are making a Will in contemplation of a marriage. This is also the section to explain any certificates or documents which you have included with your Will.

**Clause 1:** Here you confirm this is the last Will you made and the only one that can be used to carry out your wishes.

**Clauses 2.1 and 2.2:** Your Executor is the person you choose to carry out the instructions in your Will. They are responsible for paying your debts and giving any gifts you have indicated in your Will. Your Executor should be someone you trust. You can appoint two or three people as Joint Executors (meaning they administered your estate together). Or you can appoint one Executor with alternates should the first Executor be unable or unwilling to administer your estate.
Clauses 2.3 and 2.4: Your Will gives the power to the Executor to make decisions about your estate and the division of your assets in order to make sure your wishes are carried out in the best interest of your estate.

Clauses 2.5 and 2.6: Your Executor cannot give any money or assets to minor children. If any minors inherit your assets, these clauses allow the Executor to either invest the money until the child reaches the age of majority (or a higher age that you can determine), or give the inheritance to the minor’s guardian. You may decide in advance and use only one of the two clauses, or include both to let the Executor decide what is in the best interest of the child when dividing your estate.

Clause 3: This person becomes the Guardian for all your natural and adopted children who are under the age of 19 at the time of your death. You may appoint more than one Guardian or an alternate Guardian. You may also specify different Guardians for different children. However, because your situation might change by the time your Will takes effect, this could make the clause more difficult to apply.

Clause 4.1: This person becomes the Guardian for all your natural and adopted children who are under the age of 19 at the time of your death. You may appoint more than one Guardian or an alternate Guardian. You may also specify different Guardians for different children. However, because your situation might change by the time your Will takes effect, this could make the clause more difficult to apply.
Clause 4.1: Make a list and describe in as much detail, and as specifically as possible, what items you would like to give and to whom. This can include anything you own, such as a specific amount of money, the contents of a bank account or investment fund (in this case, name the bank and include the account number), a physical item, or any other property. You may also specify any debts owed to you that you wish to release and forgive. Make sure you provide enough detail about each Beneficiary, so they can be easily identified.

Clauses 4.2 and 4.3: These clauses make sure anything you have not mentioned in the previous clause will be distributed according to your wishes. Please list the name of the person and his or her title or relationship to you, if applicable. You may also list more than one person and state how you want the residue of your estate divided between them.

Clause 4.4: It is best to include an alternate Beneficiary to the residue of your estate, especially if you have mentioned only one person in the previous clause.

Clause 5: In this clause you would specify in as much detail as possible any preferences or arrangements you would like carried out for your funeral.
APPENDIX C: Affidavit of Execution (Witnesses)

Instructions: this form is to be sworn by one of the witnesses who attested to the Will of the testator / testatrix.

IN THE NUNAVUT COURT OF JUSTICE

IN THE ESTATE OF __________________________.

(If the testator / testatrix is known under different names, state the names of the testator/testatrix in the following order:

1) Name of testator/testatrix on his/her Will, and
2) Any other names of the testator/testatrix)

AFFIDAVIT OF EXECUTION OF WILL OR CODICIL

I, [Name of Witness], of the [City or Hamlet] of [Name of City or Hamlet], in Nunavut, [Occupation], MAKE OATH AND SAY THAT:

I know [Name of testator/testatrix] of the [City or Hamlet] of [Name City or Hamlet], in Nunavut, [Occupation].
Instructions: If the testator signed the Will or Codicil himself or herself, use paragraph 2A in your Affidavit and delete paragraph 2B. If a third party signed the Will or Codicil on behalf of the testator at the testator’s request, use paragraph 2B in your affidavit and delete paragraph 2A. Delete any unnecessary paragraphs.

On or about the [Day] day of [Month], [Year], I was personally present and did see the paper writing, which is attached and marked as Appendix “A” to my Affidavit, signed by the testator, as [His or Her] last Will, by signing [His or Her] name at the foot or end of the paper writing.

OR

On or about the [Day] day of [Month], [Year], I was personally present and did see the paper writing, which is attached and marked as Appendix “A” to my Affidavit, signed by a third party for and on behalf of the testator at [His or Her] request, as and for [His or Her] last, by signing the name of the testator in the presence of the testator, who was physically unable to sign [His or Her] name or make [His or Her] mark.

At the time the Will (or Codicil) was executed, the testator had attained the age of 19 years and, in my opinion, the testator was of sound mind, memory and understanding.
The Will (or Codicil) was executed by the testator in the presence of myself and [Name of the Other Witness] of the [“City” or “Hamlet”] of [Name of City or Hamlet], in Nunavut, [Occupation of the other witness] and that we were both present at the same time. After the Will (or Codicil) was executed, [Name of the Other Witness] and I did, in the presence of the testator and of each other, attest and subscribe the Will (or Codicil) as witnesses.

Instructions: If the testator made his or her mark, was blind or did not fully understand the language in which the Will or Codicil was written, use paragraph 5 in your affidavit.

Before the Will (or Codicil) was executed by the testator, the Will (or Codicil) was explained to [Him or Her] by [Name of the Person who explained the Will to the Testator] in my presence, and the testator at that time appeared to perfectly understand it.
Instructions: If alterations or irregularities appear on the face of the Will or Codicil or if the date of execution was omitted, use paragraph 6 in your affidavit.

The paper writing that is attached as Appendix “A” to my affidavit, bearing the date of [Day] day of [Month], [Year], and purporting to be the last Will of the deceased, has been examined by me and I have particularly observed [State alterations or irregularities, if any, and the general plight and condition of the Will or Codicil, or any other matter, that must be accounted for], and I say that the [Will or Codicil] is now in all respects in the same condition as when it was signed by the deceased and the witnesses [If there are any differences elaborate].

SWORN BEFORE ME at the [City/Hamlet] of [Name of City/Hamlet] in Nunavut, this [Date] day of [Month], [Year].

__________________________________
_________________ ___________
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A Commissioner for Oaths in affidavit
and for Nunavut*

My commission expires: 

Print name: 

*If this document is sworn outside Nunavut, it must be sworn by a Notary Public.