

## Is it Time For your Will's Checkup?

Almost everyone is familiar with the need for an annual physical checkup. In addition to our bodies, time takes its toll on some other very important parts of our lives. Though it does not receive nearly the attention of an annual visit to the doctor, your will should be reviewed on a regular basis.

More than 50% of the people in the United States pass away without a will. This is an alarming statistic since it means the government will decide who inherits your property if you pass away without a will. Even more alarming is the fact that a large percentage of the wills in existence are either invalid or out of date.

Let's face it. Things change! If you or someone you love hasn't updated their will or estate plan recently, now is the time to schedule a "wills checkup." Here is a helpful checklist of things to consider when determining if your will is in good health:

1. **Family Changes.** Have you had any family changes since writing your will? Births, deaths, marriages and divorce can impact the appropriateness of a will. Do you have family members or loved ones who might be disinherited?
2. **Change in Address.** Have you moved to another state? If you move from one state to another, the move may invalidate your will. Check for different requirements between states regarding witnesses, property holdings, etc. Contact a local estate planning attorney who is familiar with your state's laws.
3. **Change in Income.** Have you had any changes in property or income? Do you still own the property gifted to your beneficiaries? Do you possess the funds to satisfy your personal or charitable bequests?
4. **Tax Changes.** Have there been changes in tax law since writing your will? It is not uncommon for a major review of wills and trusts to be necessary following the passage of tax legislation. Is your will tax-current?
5. **Change of Heart.** Have you had a change of heart? Does a change in a relationship with a person or organization require a change in the way you would like your assets distributed?

Like a physical checkup, your will should receive a checkup frequently and certainly in the wake of any significant change in your circumstances. If you don't have a will in place, now is the time to talk to an attorney. For more information on planning for your future, please give us a call at 843-792-0002 or write us by using the "[Contact Us](#)" button on our [website](#) at [www.MUSCgiving.org](http://www.MUSCgiving.org). We are happy to provide you with free information that can help you in your planning.