

Wills for Heroes Pennsylvania



Protecting Those Who Protect Us



IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR FIRST RESPONDERS AND MILITARY VETERANS

The Pennsylvania Bar Association Young Lawyers Division is proud to partner with the *Wills for Heroes* Foundation and the Philadelphia law firm of Ballard Spahr LLP to provide free estate planning services to Pennsylvania's first responders and military veterans.

As a police officer, firefighter, paramedic, other first responder or military veteran, you have risked your life to assure the safety of your fellow citizens. Unfortunately, some brave heroes lose their lives in the line of duty, leaving grieving families behind. That's why the *Wills for Heroes* program provides free Wills and other estate planning documents to you and your spouse or significant other.

Why You Need a Will

For many first responders and military veterans, thinking about a Will is an uncomfortable reminder of the dangers of your service. Yet, if you die without a Will, generally state laws decide who receives what property from your estate. Loved ones can be left with tedious paperwork, difficult decisions and financial hardship.

By having estate planning documents in place, you lay out a plan in advance. You get to decide how your property will be distributed, who will be the guardians of your children and who will settle and manage your estate. A Living Will makes decisions about your health care and whether to allow doctors to withhold or withdraw life-sustaining procedures in the event of a coma, terminal condition or a persistent vegetative state.

How Wills for Heroes Works

Wills for Heroes is the only pro bono (free) legal services program of its kind in the United States. The program brings volunteer lawyers directly to the first responders and military veterans and produces planning documents in about one hour. *Wills for Heroes* volunteers use laptop computers loaded with HotDocs® by LexisNexis®, an outstanding document assembly program specifically designed for the *Wills for Heroes* program.

What You Should Do To Prepare for Your Wills for Heroes Appointment

- Before your appointment, you will need to complete an estate planning questionnaire, which can be found at www.pabar.org/public/yld/Projects/willsforheroesyld.asp. This planning tool allows you to think through and discuss a number of important decisions with your loved ones.
- When you arrive for your appointment, you will sign in, and then you will meet with a volunteer attorney who will input information from your questionnaire into the HotDocs® template.
- The attorney will review the draft estate planning documents with you to make sure you understand them and agree to the plan. Please feel free to ask any questions at this time or to seek a more thorough explanation of your estate plan if any portion of it is unclear.
- When the documents are finalized, you will sign them in the presence of on site witnesses and a notary, so that when you leave your appointment your documents are effective immediately.
- When you take the documents home, make sure you make a copy and store the original in a safe place, such as a safe deposit box or fireproof file cabinet.



For More Information/Questions

For more information about *Wills for Heroes* and its Pennsylvania programs, visit www.pabar.org/public/yld or call the Pennsylvania Bar Association Young Lawyers Division at 800-932-0311.



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