



EstateVault



Protecting everything you've built.

A family guide to
Wills and Trusts.

MICHIGAN EDITION

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What happens without a plan?

When someone in Michigan passes without a Will or Trust, state law and the probate court take over. Your family has little say in how it unfolds.

1 State law decides.

Michigan's intestacy rules choose who inherits, not you.

2 A court gets involved.

Your estate goes through probate before anything reaches your family.

3 Your affairs become public.

Probate filings are part of the public court record.

4 Your family waits.

Accounts and property can stay tied up until the court process ends.

• **PLAIN ENGLISH**

Probate: the court process that settles a person's affairs after they pass.

Intestacy: when someone passes without a Will, so state law decides who inherits.

Estate: everything a person owns: home, accounts, belongings.

The Last Will & Testament

A Will is your written instructions for who receives your property and who carries out your wishes after you pass.

WHAT A WILL DOES

- ✓ Names who receives your property
- ✓ Names your personal representative
- ✓ Names a guardian for minor children

WHAT A WILL DOES NOT DO

- ✗ Avoid probate. Every Will goes through probate court.
- ✗ Protect you if you can't manage your own affairs
- ✗ Keep your affairs private

• PLAIN ENGLISH

Personal representative: the person you choose to carry out your Will. Sometimes called an executor.

Guardian: the person who would raise your minor children.

Probate: the court process that settles a person's affairs after they pass.

The Revocable Living Trust

A Revocable Living Trust holds your property while you're living and passes it to your family after you're gone, without probate court.

1 You create it.

You serve as your own trustee and keep full control.

2 You fund it.

You move your home, accounts, and other assets into the Trust.

3 Your successor trustee steps in.

If you become ill, or after you pass, the person you chose takes over. No court required.

Revocable means you can change it or cancel it at any time.

• **PLAIN ENGLISH**

Trustee: the person who manages the Trust. While you're living, that's you.

Successor trustee: the person you choose to manage the Trust when you can't.

Funding: moving your assets into the Trust's name.

Revocable: changeable. You can update or cancel it whenever you like.

Will or Trust?

FEATURE	Will Package	Trust Package
Avoids probate court	✕ No	✓ Yes*
Keeps your affairs private	✕ No	✓ Yes
Someone can manage your finances if you can't	✓ Yes†	✓ Yes†
Someone can make medical decisions if you can't	✓ Yes†	✓ Yes†
Family can act without court approval	✕ No	✓ Yes
Names a guardian for minor children	✓ Yes	✓ Yes‡
Staged inheritance for young beneficiaries	✕ No	✓ Yes

* For assets placed into the Trust. † Through the Durable Power of Attorney and Advance Healthcare Directive, included in both packages. ‡ Through the Pour-Over Will in the Trust Package.

● PLAIN ENGLISH

Probate: the court process that settles a person's affairs after they pass.

Pour-Over Will: a Will that moves anything left outside your Trust into it.

Beneficiary: a person who receives property from your Will or Trust.

A Trust works for you while you're living.

Estate planning isn't only about later. A Trust starts protecting you the day it's funded.



If you become ill or injured.

Your successor trustee can manage Trust property right away. Without a Trust, your family may have to ask a court to appoint a conservator.



Your bills keep getting paid.

Mortgage, taxes, and household expenses stay on track while you recover.



You stay in full control.

As your own trustee, you can buy, sell, or change anything in the Trust at any time.



Everything lives in one place.

Your family gets a clear, organized picture of what you own.

• PLAIN ENGLISH

Successor trustee: the person you choose to manage the Trust when you can't.

Conservator: someone a court appoints to manage the finances of a person who can't.

Durable Power of Attorney: a document, included in both packages, that lets someone you trust handle your finances if you can't.

A Trust protects your family after you're gone.

The people you love get what you intended, privately and without a court process.



No probate court.

Assets in your Trust pass to your family without going through probate.



Your privacy stays intact.

A Trust is a private document. It does not become part of the public court record.



Your family isn't left waiting.

Your successor trustee can act without waiting on court approval.



Inheritance on your terms.

Children or grandchildren can receive their inheritance when they reach an age you choose, rather than all at once.

• PLAIN ENGLISH

Probate: the court process that settles a person's affairs after they pass.

Successor trustee: the person you choose to manage the Trust when you can't.

Inheritance: the property a person receives from someone who has passed.

What probate can cost your family.

Probate typically costs 3% to 8% of an estate's gross value. On a \$400,000 estate, that's roughly \$12,000 to \$32,000, paid from the estate before your family receives their inheritance.¹

COST	TYPICAL RANGE
Attorney fees	3% to 5% of the gross estate
Personal representative fees	2% to 4% of the gross estate
Court filing fees	\$150 to \$400
Real estate appraisal	\$300 to \$600 per property
Accounting and tax filings	\$500 to \$3,000+

In Michigan, attorney and personal representative fees aren't a fixed percentage. The court allows reasonable compensation.

● PLAIN ENGLISH

Probate: the court process that settles a person's affairs after they pass.

Personal representative: the person who carries out a Will. Sometimes called an executor.

Gross estate value: the total value of everything a person owns, before debts.

¹ Settled Estate, *Probate Costs Explained*, April 2026. National ranges. Actual costs vary.

Every document, explained.

Your core legal documents. Each one is Michigan-specific.

Last Will & Testament

Will Package

Names who receives your property, your personal representative, and a guardian for minor children.

Revocable Living Trust

Trust Package

Holds your property while you're living and passes it to your family without probate.

Pour-Over Will

Trust Package

Moves anything left outside your Trust into it, and names a guardian for minor children.

Durable Power of Attorney

Both packages

Lets someone you trust handle your finances if you can't.

Advance Healthcare Directive

Both packages

Names who makes medical decisions for you if you can't, and records your wishes.

• PLAIN ENGLISH

Personal representative: the person you choose to carry out your Will.

Probate: the court process that settles a person's affairs after they pass.

Pour-Over Will: a Will that moves anything left outside your Trust into it.

Plus the documents that make it work.

These put your Trust into action and walk you through signing.

Certification of Trust

Trust Package

A short document that proves your Trust exists, for banks and other institutions, without revealing its contents.

Assignment of Personal Property

Trust Package

Moves your personal belongings into the Trust.

Trust Funding Instructions

Trust Package

Step-by-step instructions for moving your home, accounts and other assets into the Trust's name.

Signing instructions

Both packages

Every document arrives with Michigan witness and notary requirements explained.

• PLAIN ENGLISH

Funding: moving your assets into the Trust's name.

Notary: an official who confirms your identity when you sign.

Witness: an adult who watches you sign and signs to confirm it.

Four simple steps.

1 Answer a few questions.

About 15 minutes. Your answers shape every document.

2 Review and acknowledge.

You confirm you understand EstateVault prepares documents from your answers and does not give legal advice.

3 Choose attorney review, if you'd like it.

Attorney review is added at checkout. A licensed Michigan attorney reviews your documents before they're released to you.

4 Receive your documents.

Michigan-specific, with signing instructions covering witness and notary requirements. You print and sign them: Michigan requires a wet signature with witnesses and, for some documents, a notary.

Your documents are saved to your account, where you can download them any time.

BEFORE YOU BUY

Some situations need a lawyer, not a form. If your answers tell us that, for example if you're providing for a dependent with special needs, we stop and refer you to a licensed Michigan attorney instead of generating documents.

• PLAIN ENGLISH

Notary: an official who confirms your identity when you sign.

Witness: an adult who watches you sign and signs to confirm it.

PRICING

One fixed price. No hourly bills.

Pay once for your package. No surprise invoices.

Will Package

\$400

Last Will & Testament · Durable Power of Attorney · Advance Healthcare Directive · Signing instructions

Trust Package

MOST POPULAR

\$600

Revocable Living Trust · Certification of Trust · Assignment of Personal Property · Pour-Over Will · Trust Funding Instructions · Durable Power of Attorney · Advance Healthcare Directive · Signing instructions

OPTIONAL

Attorney review

+\$300

A licensed Michigan attorney reviews your documents before they're released to you.

Amendments

\$50

Update a document when life changes.

What protection costs.

Custom drafting through a law firm fits complex situations. For many Michigan families, EstateVault offers a streamlined path.

	TYPICAL MICHIGAN ATTORNEY ¹	EstateVault
Will-based plan	\$1,000+	\$400
Trust-based plan	\$2,500+	\$600
Future changes	Often billed hourly	\$50 per amendment

¹ Starting prices published by Michigan estate planning law firms, 2026. Individual attorney fees vary.



EstateVault

Your family is worth fifteen minutes.

Take the free quiz and see which package fits your answers.

Take the free quiz ›

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