SAFEGUARDING YOUR WILL

Clients who have a Last Will and Testament are encouraged to read and use the following information concerning their will.

A Will is an important tool to provide to survivors and can help make a difficult time easier for families. If a Will is not treated properly, many of its benefits can be lost. Revoked Wills and any copies made of the original should be destroyed.

COPIES OF A WILL.

The Torii Station Legal Assistance Office does not keep a copy of your Will. Copies may be made of existing Wills but ***do not*** remove the staples from the original when making a copy. A copy of a Will is not a substitute for the original. Copies of a Will are not valid and may only lead to legal problems for survivors if the original is not found. If copies are made of a Will, clearly write, "**COPY**," on each page and write on the copy where the original is stored. If a Will is revoked, be sure to destroy all the copies as well. *There is no such thing as a certified copy of a Will*.

STORING A WILL.

Store the original copy of your Will in a safe and accessible location. The Will and other important papers should be kept where your Personal Representative (Executor) can find them after death. Suggestions for storing your Will: fireproof safe; locked filing cabinet; family strong box; or, with your Personal Representative. A safety deposit box should only be used if the box is jointly managed and someone you trust is authorized access. Some states require the box to be sealed after death, and family members might not be able to retrieve the Will without a court order, which could take a long time. Inquire with your bank concerning accessibility after death. Local courts may charge a small fee to store a Will. If a Will cannot be found after death, it may be presumed that the Will was destroyed with the intention of revoking its contents, and property will pass as if there never was a Will.

Wills should be reviewed periodically. Update a Will if anyone named in the Will has a change of circumstances, such as: marriage, birth, death, divorce, significant change in property owned, change of residence, or retirement.

A Will may be revoked at any time by destroying it with the intention of revoking its contents. Do not make any changes on the Will itself after it has been executed. To make changes, contact the Legal Office. Any alterations made to the Will may invalidate the entire document. If a Will is destroyed, another Will should be prepared.