

New survey reveals that 74% of Canadians do not have an up-to-date Will

Results show that 62% of Canadians do not have a Will at all – a 6% increase from 2012.

OTTAWA, ON. – June 7, 2016 – A new survey by LegalWills.ca suggests that previous surveys may have under-reported the number of Canadians without a Will by not including those who have a Will that is out-of-date. In 2012, data showed that 56% of Canadians did not have a Will – a number that has increased to 62%, according to the Google Consumer Survey conducted by Legalwills.ca. However, a statistic that was not published before now reveals that 12% of Canadians have a Will that is out-of-date, meaning 74% of Canadians do not have an up-to-date Last Will and Testament.

"We really wanted to explore this group after anecdotally hearing from people who had a Will, but had it written before they got married or had children," explained Tim Hewson, CEO of PartingWishes Inc., the parent company of LegalWills.ca. "In essence, although they technically had a Will, it was worthless."

This is especially true of seniors (aged 65+), where 72% said that they have a Will, but of those, a full one in three have Wills which are out-of-date.

The survey also showed a correlation between age group and the probability of having a Will:

- **18-24:** 87% do not have a Will, 5% have an out-of-date Will, and 8% have an up-to-date Will.
- **23-35:** 77% do not have a Will, 10.5% have an out-of-date Will, and 12.5% have an up-to-date Will.
- **35-44:** 68% do not have a Will, 8% have an out-of-date Will, and 24% have an up-to-date Will.
- **45-54:** 53% do not have a Will, 13% have an out-of-date Will, and 34% have an up-to-date Will.
- **55-64:** 32% do not have a Will, 19% have an out-of-date Will, and 49% have an up-to-date Will.
- **65+ :** 28% do not have a Will, 21% have an out-of-date Will, and 51% have an up-to-date Will.

Even when discounting younger adults, 48.5% of Canadians aged 35 and older responded to not having a Will and 13.5% responded to having a Will that is out-of-date, leaving only 38% with a Will that reflects their current financial and personal situation.

Also notable is that the proportion of Canadians without a Will was significantly higher in suburban areas (75%) than in urban areas (62%).

Inverse Relationship: Income vs. the Probability of Having an up-to-date Will.

The group least likely to have up-to-date Wills was in the \$100,000+ annual income range; respondents in this group were also 3 times more likely to have an out-of-date Will than those with lower incomes.

The group most likely to have up-to-date Wills was in the lowest annual income range of \$0-\$24,999. As annual income increased, the proportion of respondents with an up-to-date Will decreased.

The cause of this is likely because those with higher incomes can more easily afford to use a lawyer to write their Will; making modifications to a Will with a lawyer requires setting a meeting, and costs hundreds of dollars. To the contrary, those with lower incomes are usually inclined to use more affordable alternatives, such as the online service at LegalWills.ca, where the testator can make modifications to his or her Will at any time without extra costs.

Comparison to the United States

USLegalWills.com conducted the same survey in the United States as LegalWills.ca, over the same period of time. The Google Consumer Survey of over 2,000 Americans shows similar results to the Canadian survey: 63% of Americans do not have a Will, 72% do not have a Will that is up-to-date. Similar trends were also noticed across age.

In both surveys, there were no significant differences when comparing across gender or state/provincial region. The US survey saw no significant differences across urban density.

“This reflects a broken system,” said Tim Hewson, “we understand that everybody should have a Will, but only a small percentage have created one, and an even smaller number have managed to keep it up-to-date with their personal or financial situation.”

About Canadian Legal Wills

LegalWills.ca is operated by PartingWishes Inc., an independent organization which works with lawyers in Canada to provide legal document creation services to the public. Formed in 2000, the company has since helped hundreds of thousands of people to create legal documents in an easy, convenient, secure, and affordable manner.

PartingWishes Inc. is also the parent company of USLegalWills.com, LegalWills.co.uk, and ExpatLegalWills.com. For more information, visit www.LegalWills.ca.

Methodology

The LegalWills.ca survey was conducted within Canada by Google Consumer Surveys, June 2016, among 2,000 adults aged 18 and older, and has a root square mean error of 4.7%.

The USLegalWills.com survey was conducted within the United States by Google Consumer Surveys, June 2016, among 2,012 adults aged 18 and older, and has a root square mean error of 1.4%.

Results are weighted by age, gender, and region. For full information on Google Consumer Surveys' methodology and validity, visit

https://support.google.com/consumersurveys/answer/6189786?hl=en&ref_topic=6194692.

CONTACT:

Tim Hewson

LegalWills.ca

2420 Bank Street, Suite 45

Ottawa, Ontario, K1V 8S1

www.legalwills.ca

media@legalwills.ca