



Portugal

Registering and searching for wills

→ What are the principal forms of will in Portugal?

- * the **public will**, drawn up by a civil law notary.
- * the **closed will**, written by the testator or by a third party at his/her request. A closed will must be approved by the civil law notary and may, at the testator's request, be deposited at the notary's office through the public instrument of deposit.
- * the **international will**, signed before two witnesses and a civil law notary.

→ Does a register of will exist in Portugal?

Yes, there is a register, administered by the Ministry of Justice (Central Registry Office). It is not computerized.

N.B.

These questions and answers constitute a general source of information, up to date as of August 2025. In the event of a particular difficulty, consult a civil law notary. Pratical sheet realized by ENRWA with the participation of the European Commission and of the Notaries of Europe.





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I. The registration of a will

→ Why register a will?

The notary has a legal obligation to communicate the wills drawn up in his office, as well as the instruments of approval, deposit and opening of sealed wills and international wills.

The requirement to register wills is intended to ensure that all provisions of the last will and testament are known after the testator's death.

→ Who can carry out the registration?

The registration of wills is carried out by the notary who drew up the document. In fact, all forms of wills require the intervention of a notary, either to draw up the document or to approve it.

The notification is made by completing and submitting a form with the identifying details of the testator and the act performed.

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→ Who keeps the will?

The physical archive of notarial acts is the responsibility of the notary who drew them up. The Notaries Association is responsible for the digital archive platform for notarial acts.

→ Can the testator's family members consult the register while he is still alive?

No, the existence of a will and its content shall remain a secret during the entire life of the testator, unless he has granted specific power of attorney for that purpose.

→ How much does it cost to register a will?

The communication of wills to the Central Registries is free of charge.

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II. The search for the wills

→ Who may query the register of wills?

After the testator's death, any person with a legitimate interest, provided they have the relevant death certificate, may consult the register of wills, either in person or through a legal professional (notary, judge, solicitor). **This consultation is not mandatory, but is recommended** in order to ensure that the testator's last wishes are respected.

→ Is it necessary to provide a death certificate?

Yes, the request for information must be accompanied by a death certificate. This measure ensures that the existence of the will remains completely secret during the testator's lifetime.

→ How much does a search cost?

Requests for information made orally to the notary who drew up the deed may be free of charge, but consultation of the central registers costs €25. Collection of the document from the notary with the respective annotation costs approximately €50.

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