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Superior Court of California
County of Los Angeles

August 10, 2011

TO: PROBATE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES COMMITTEE

FROM: MARIA GODDARD, PROBATE ADMINISTRATOR *MG*

SUBJECT: *Copies of Safekeeping Wills to the Public*

Effective immediately, it is the Court's policy that no clerk shall issue any certified copies of a will submitted for safekeeping.

A will submitted for safekeeping is treated as confidential document and only designated persons may view it. Until the will is offered for probate (through a petition to probate that will), they are stored in safekeeping. There are only three ways in which the clerk shall release a copy (not a certified copy) of a will pursuant to §8200(c) of the Probate Code:

1. For attachment to a Petition for Probate of that will, or
2. Payment of required fees and a court order to produce the will, or
3. Payment of required fees and an Authorized – Certified copy of a death certificate (not a copy for Information purposes) of the decedent (testator).

An information copy will read, "**INFORMATIONAL, NOT A VALID DOCUMENT TO ESTABLISH IDENTITY**" and is not acceptable to obtain a copy of a will in safekeeping.

It is assumed the party who submitted the will for safekeeping already has a copy of the will. Should anyone insist in obtaining a certified copy of a safekeeping will, their request should come before the Supervising Judge of Probate, Judge Mitchell Beckloff.

An original will cannot be viewed or released once deposited with the Court without a Court order. Requests to view a safekeeping will with an existing pending case should come before the bench officer assigned to hear that matter.

All safekeeping wills are considered property of value and are maintained in the Central District will vault, regardless of where they were deposited. If it appears that a petition for probate of the safekeeping will is immediately forthcoming, the district may maintain the will in its own vault. If the petition is not received within three days, the will is to be forwarded to Central District for safekeeping.

Please destroy any stamps you may have in your possession for issuing certified copies of safekeeping wills.

MG/s/

cc: Hon. Mitchell Beckloff, Probate Supervising Judge
Margaret Little, Sr. Family Law and Probate Administrator
Sandy Riley, Supervising Probate Attorney