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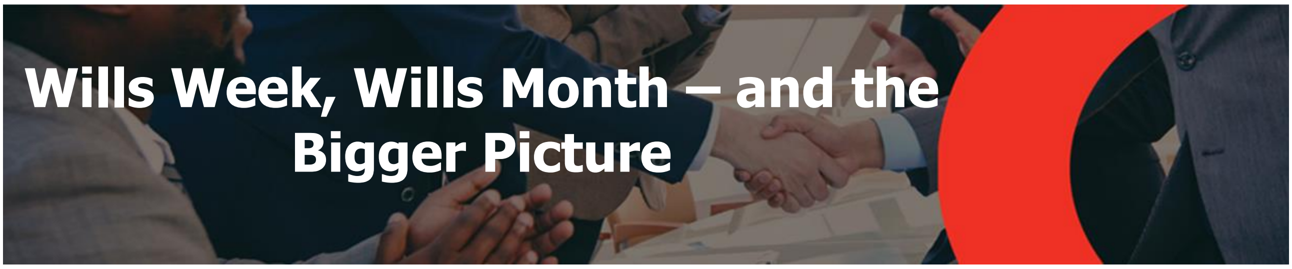

Every September, the spotlight turns to wills. Across the country, there's a push to get South Africans to draft a will – with free services on offer through "Wills Week". Some even call it "Wills Month". At Verso Wealth, we believe these initiatives are valuable. We fully support the principle of encouraging every South African to draft a proper will. **Full stop.**

But here is our deeper conviction: a will should be more than just a piece of paper, or a free form downloaded from the internet. A will must be a **properly executed, well-planned, and well-thought-through document** that takes all risks and parameters into account.

The Reality: South Africans and Wills

Despite years of awareness campaigns, the numbers tell a concerning story:

- Only **34% of South African adults have a will** in place - The trend is moving backwards – down from 39% the previous year.
- Around **66% of adults still don't have a will**.
- More than **70% of South Africans die without a will**, leaving their families in legal and financial limbo.
- Even among those with wills, most are outdated: a Discovery Life survey found **67% had not updated their will in the past year**, and **23% hadn't updated it in more than five years**.

The gap between perception and reality is striking. While over 90% of South Africans believe having a will is important, less than 40% act on it.

Why an Unplanned Will is Risky

An unplanned, poorly drafted, or outdated will can be just as damaging as having no will at all. The risks include:

- **Unintended heirs** – The Intestate Succession Act decides who inherits, not you.
- **Liquidity shortfalls** – Estates often face taxes, debts, and administration costs that exceed available cash, forcing the sale of family homes or businesses.
- **Administrative delays** – Without clarity, executors face long delays with the Master of the High Court.
- **Family disputes** – Vague, incomplete, or inconsistent instructions often lead to conflict.

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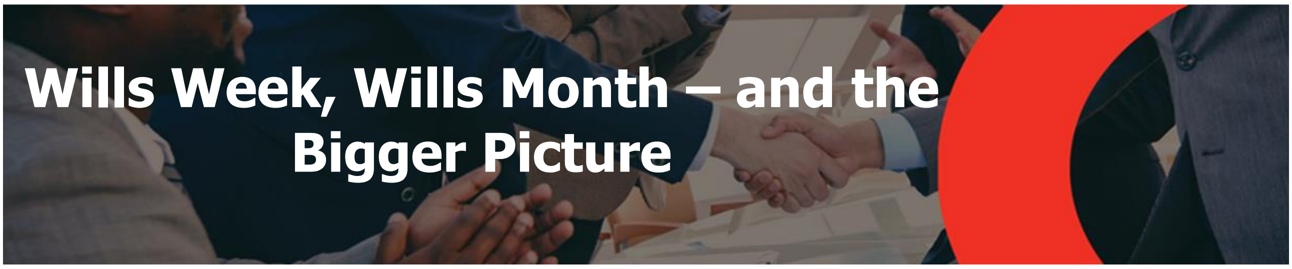

This means the real danger is not just dying without a will, but dying with a will that is **inadequate, outdated, or disconnected from your estate plan**.

The Verso Wealth Approach
At Verso Wealth, we don't stop at drafting a will. We believe the document should be the **final expression of a holistic financial and estate plan**. Our process involves:

1. **Holistic Financial Planning** – We review your assets, liabilities, income needs, and family dynamics.
2. **Estate Risk Analysis** – We identify risks around tax, liquidity, and succession.
3. **Executor & Heir Guidance** – We provide clarity and tools for executors and heirs, ensuring they can fulfil their roles without confusion.
4. **Tailored Will Drafting** – Only after planning do we draft the will, ensuring it integrates seamlessly into your estate strategy.

This way, your will becomes part of a **living plan**, not just a static document.

Our Message for Wills Week 2025
We believe in Wills Week. We support Wills Month. We endorse free will drafting. However, more than that, we believe in protecting families by ensuring that every will is **part of a broader, expertly executed estate plan**. A will on its own is not necessarily enough. It must be current, aligned with your financial strategy, and structured to reduce risk for your loved ones.

This Wills Week, take the opportunity not only to draft a will, but to review your entire estate and financial plan. At Verso Wealth, we design estate strategies that last – **it is your legacy, secured.**

Contact your Verso Wealth financial planner today or email Verso Wealth at info@verso-wealth.co.za to start the process.
Written by Deon van Vuuren CFP® - Fiduciary Specialist and Financial Planner at Verso Wealth