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New System of Safekeeping of Holographic Wills Goes into Effect

Effective from July 10, 2020

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Summary

- Starting on July 10, 2020, a new system in which holographic wills (handwritten wills) can be kept for safekeeping at the Legal Affairs Bureau will go into effect. This system avoids the risk of a handwritten will being lost or altered by an heir when the document has been kept at home.
- After the death of the testator, the heirs and other successors may request the Legal Affairs Bureau to approve the inspection of the will and issue a "certificate of will information" to prove the content of the will. If one of the heirs or successors makes such a request, the Legal Affairs Bureau shall notify other heirs that the will has been kept in safekeeping by the Legal Affairs Bureau.
- When opening a will, in principle, it is necessary to carry out a procedure called "probate" in the family court in the presence of the heirs to inform the heirs of the existence of the will and its content. When this system is used, probate is not necessary.

Attention

This report is a summary translation. The official document is only in Japanese.