A letter of wishes is intended to provide general guidance to the executor or trustee of a person’s estate following their death. While the document is not legally binding, it can have strong moral sway. A letter of wishes is a very personal document and can deal with a range of issues including:

1. wishes in relation to assets which the willmaker may have effectively controlled during their lifetime, but will not form part of their estate, for example assets in family trusts, superannuation funds or offshore entities;
2. the names of advisers or family friends from whom assistance should be obtained in relation to financial planning, accounting services, legal advice, insurance brokerage, stockbroking, religious guidance or other matters;
3. personal assets, particularly those with emotional value such as jewellery, items of collection, other personal effects or family heirlooms;
4. any charities or causes that the willmaker would like the beneficiaries to consider;
5. the location of important documents such as deeds, title records and financial information;
6. any wishes or directions as to how infant children should be cared for;
7. directions in relation to funeral arrangements and burial; and
8. any other matters that the willmaker would like their executors or trustees to take into account.
I/We, [insert name/s], confirm as follows:

I/We have executed wills dated _______________ which I/we believe to be my/our last will/s at the date of this letter of wishes.

I/We have not entered into a Mutual Will Agreement which does not allow me/us to make future changes to my/our will/s.

I/We acknowledge that my/our will/s determine the way in which my/our estates will be distributed on death.

This letter of wishes in no way revokes or changes the provisions of my/our wills.

While the attached letter of wishes does not, and cannot, change the provisions of my/our wills, I/we express the wish that my/our trustees have due regard to these wishes when administering my/our estates.

While the attached letter summarises my/our broad wishes as at the date of signing our wills, I/we acknowledge that the circumstances at the dates of my/our deaths may have changed and I/we realise that my/our trustees will have the ultimate ability and discretion to make their decisions in accordance with the provisions of my/our will/s, regardless of the wishes set out in this letter or any further letter of wishes I/we may prepare.

This communication to my/our trustees is to be regarded by them as privileged. Copies should not be given to anyone other than professional advisers unless my/our trustees decide otherwise or a court directs. This paragraph may be quoted to anyone who requests a copy of this letter.

This letter revokes entirely any previous letter I/we may have prepared.

Signed by
On               /                 / 20

Signature of: ____________________________

Signed by
On               /                 / 20

Signature of: ____________________________
Letter of Wishes

[insert name/s]

Overview

1. This letter of wishes is directed to the executors and trustees of my/our wills and to the persons or entities who have control of any family trust that I/we may have an interest in or entitlement under from time to time.
2. When reading these wishes my/our trustees should have reference to the way in which my/our estates are structured.
3. My/Our wishes are intended to be read subject to the terms set out on the covering page to this letter.

Main objectives

1. My/Our main objective in relation to my/our estates and succession plan is to provide a framework within which the capital I/we have accumulated during my/our lifetime is protected for the ultimate benefit of my/our children and grandchildren.

Directions in relation to the Guardianship of Minor Children

a. We have appointed [Name/s] as the guardian of our minor children.
b. We have appointed these people as the guardians of our minor children because we share similar values about life, family and parenting children. We have absolute faith in the guardians to make decisions as best they can and hopefully in a manner which is consistent with our personal views and philosophies.
c. We also have absolute faith the trustees (where the guardian and trustees are not the same person/s) will work co-operatively with the guardians and provide financial support (where appropriate) for decisions they make.
d. It is quite possible that the guardians will require funds to renovate their existing home or find an alternate home that is suitable to accommodate their children as well as our children. We authorise the trustees to apply reasonable funds for this purpose.
e. Similarly, the guardians may need to obtain a new motor vehicle so they can transport their family and our children. We authorise the trustees to apply reasonable funds for this purpose.
f. We do not wish for our guardians to suffer a financial burden as a result of acting as guardians.

Some people like to include specific wishes about caring for their children. I have included some prompts below in case you want to record additional wishes.

gh. Home and accommodation – where to reside?
Letter of Wishes

h. Involvement of other family members in children’s upbringing – who and to what degree?

i. Religious instruction – which faith and to what degree?

j. Primary and secondary education – which school? What about boarding school? Who should be entitled to receive copies of school reports and have access to staff at the relevant educational facility?

k. Extra-curricular activities – what activities would you support and to what extent?
   For example, participation in sport and the arts (acting, painting, music), student exchange programs and other courses.

l. Tertiary education – what level of tertiary education would you support and to what extent?

m. General development – what hobbies and interests would you support and to what extent? What about pets?

n. Part-time employment – do you support part-time employment?

o. Equipment/facilities – do you support and to what extent would you support the provision of computers, mobile phones and other like items.

p. Overseas trips – do you support and to what extent would you support overseas trips – leisure, study or work?

q. Health – medical insurance and regularity of medical (including dental) checks? Do you support conventional and or alternative medical treatment and support?

r. Financial assistance – do you support and to what extent the provision of pocket money? What about financial assistance into investments and major acquisitions (eg: home)?

s. Flexibility – would you like to include a broad acknowledgment that the matters mentioned in the document need to be subject to a certain degree of flexibility as the wishes of the parents may not “mirror” those of the children?

t. Access to this document – who would you like to have access to this document and when?

Personal Wishes

Jewellery
Letter of Wishes

Assets

Residential home

My/Our home is owned singly/jointly  (please circle)  
It is owned by  
of (address)  
The Title Deed to the property, and any relevant insurance policies (including contents insurance), can be found at  

My/Our home is not/is mortgaged to  

Bank, Building Society or Credit Union Accounts

I/We have the following accounts:  
Bank, Building Society, Credit Union  
Branch  
Account No.  
Account Name  
Location of passbook or card  

Bank, Building Society, Credit Union  
Branch  
Account No.  
Account Name  
Location of passbook or card  
Letter of Wishes

Superannuation
I/We hold superannuation with (name of fund)

The agent I/we deal with is:

Name
Address

Life Insurance
I/We have the following Life Insurance and other policies:

Policy number
Company
Type of policy
Location of policy documents
Special details

Shares in companies
I/We hold shares in these company/ies:

Name of company
Number of shares
Type of shares
Location of share certificates

My/Our records relating to these and other assets are kept as follows:
Letter of Wishes

Managed Investments

Managed investments include cash management trusts, mortgage trusts, friendly society bonds, insurance bonds, superannuation bonds, deferred annuities and approved deposit funds or annuities.

I/We have the following managed investments:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Company or Manager</th>
<th>Product name</th>
<th>Date invested</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Name of investment advisor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Motor Vehicles

The following motor vehicle/s are in my/our names:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Location of certificate of registration</th>
<th>Insurance details</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Other assets

In considering your other assets, you should think generally within the following areas:

a. interests in a deceased person’s estate;

b. debts due to you;

c. furniture, trinkets, artwork, other personal effects;

d. interests in a partnership.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of asset</th>
<th>Location of asset</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Location of title documents or insurance policies, or other relevant details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Letter of Wishes

Safe deposit

I/We have documents held in safe deposit at __________________________
The key/duplicate key can be found at __________________________

Specific directions in relation to assets

Investment directions

Guidance

1. My/Our expectation no matter who is in control of my/our estate is that they would have recourse to appropriate advice as and when required. There are a number of professional advisers in my/our network that I/we have taken advice from in relation to the establishment of the various structures under my/our estates.

2. I/We think it would be appropriate for guidance to be sought from the following people:
   a. my/our accountant;
   b. my/our financial advisers; and
   c. my/our lawyers.
Letter of Wishes

Professional advisers

My/our professional advisers are:

**Accountant**
Name
Firm
Address
Telephone No.

**Lawyer**
Name
Firm
Address
Telephone No.

People to notify
In the event of either of my/our death/s, please notify the following people immediately:

Name
Address
Telephone No.
Relationship
Letter of Wishes

Funeral arrangements

I/We would like to be buried/cremated at:

________________________________________________________________________________________

The services are to be conducted by ______________________________________________________

According to my/our religious denomination, which is ________________________________________

I/We would like the services to be conducted at ____________________________________________

I/We would like a special service, the details of which are as follows:

________________________________________________________________________________________

I/We desire the following special arrangements regarding my/our funeral/s:

________________________________________________________________________________________

Arrangements for funeral/cremation costs

I/We have made arrangements regarding payment of the cost of my/our funeral/s and/or cremation/s
including niche reservation). These arrangements are made with

________________________________________________________________________________________

Documents relating to any pre-payment of my/our funeral and/or cremation expenses can be found:

________________________________________________________________________________________
Organ Donation

The procedures regarding donating human tissue are very strict. You should include any directions on organ donation specifically in your Will, and also notify your next of kin, doctor and the institute to which you would like to donate your organs. If you don’t do this, your wishes may not be followed.

Also, special arrangements are usually necessary. For example, if you wish to donate your eyes, you will need to complete eye donor forms. Kidney donors must carry a special kidney donor card with them.

Separate rules also need to be followed for organ donation for medical research purposes.

These are my/our directions regarding donating my/our organs:

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________