

Key Definitions:

Advanced Health Care Directive: a legal document that contains both your Living Will (see next page) and your Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care.



DNAR: Do Not Attempt Resuscitation

DNI: Do Not Intubate

Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care:

A legal document in which you give another person permission to make medical decisions for you if you are unable.

Health Care Agent: The person named in your durable power of attorney for health care who will make decisions for you if you cannot.

Intubate: A tube is placed down your throat and connected to a machine that can help you breath.

Resuscitate: Reviving someone from apparent death or unconsciousness. This may include chest compressions, defibrillation (shocking the heart), medications, and assistance in breathing. This may also be called "full code."

AAEM/RSA-0716-537

Discuss your wishes with your family, friends and health care provider.

Advanced Directive and POLST

Have the Discussion

Living Will
Declaration



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We know these topics can be difficult to discuss.

It can be hard to bring up such emotional topics with the family and friends in your life. We encourage you to have the conversation because it will help both you and your loved ones when faced with difficult decisions regarding your care.

Preparing an Advanced Directive should be viewed as the end product of vital discussions you have with your loved ones.

In these discussions, it is important that you let your loved ones know how you define “quality of life.”

By telling them your thoughts and feelings, and finally using the Advanced Directive to memorialize those discussions, you are helping to ensure that you only receive treatments that you would want in the event of a life-threatening illness.

For help beginning this important discussion, please visit The Conversation Project at: www.theconversationproject.org/starter-kit/intro/.



What is a Living Will?

A living will is a type of Advanced Directive. It is a legal document that spells out, in advance, what kind of end-of-life medical care you would prefer. This document tells your family, friends and doctors what your wishes are.

How do I make a Living Will?

A Living Will is a legal form that you fill out. It is a different form in every state with different requirements. You do not need a lawyer to make a living will, but you can consult with one if you wish.

You can find free living will forms at:

- Senior Centers
- Hospitals
- Your regular physician
- The National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization (www.nhpco.org)

Reference: www.nolo.com/legal-encyclopedia/how-write-living-will.html

What is a POLST?

POLST stands for “Physician Orders for Life Sustaining Treatment.” It gives seriously ill patients control over their end-of-life treatment. It is printed on bright pink paper that should be placed in the medical chart as well as in a visible place in the home. This is so emergency responders will be aware of the patient’s wishes. Ask your regular physician about filling out a POLST.

Visit www.polst.org for more information.

What do I do once I have filled out a Living Will?

Let your family and friends know that you have completed a Living Will and keep a copy in your personal files.

Consider giving a copy of your living will to:

- Family members
- Your health care agent
- Your physician(s) and
- Your hospital or care facility.

Reference: www.nolo.com/legal-encyclopedia/how-write-living-will.html