

Statement of Advance Directive of Living Wills

Under Federal law, every adult has the right to make certain decisions concerning his or her medical treatment. The law also allows for your rights and personal wishes to be respected even if you are too sick to make decisions yourself.

You have the right, under certain conditions, to decide whether to accept or reject medical treatment, including whether to continue medical treatment and other procedures that would prolong your life artificially.

You may spell out these rights in a “living will,” containing your person directions about life-prolonging treatment in the case of serious illness that could cause death.

You may also designate another person, or surrogate, who may make decisions for you if you become physically unable to do so. This surrogate may function on your behalf for a brief time or longer, for a life threatening or a not-life-threatening illness. Any limits to the power of the surrogate in making decisions for you should be clearly expressed. It is advisable to name a replacement in case the person you have chosen to make decisions for becomes unable or unwilling to do so.

If you decide to make a living will or other advance directive, it is recommended that you give a copy to your doctor, your closest relative or friend and any hospital, nursing home or other facility where you are receiving treatment or care. If you change your mind, make sure that you so advise all those to whom you have given copies.

A living will in no way affects life insurance. Also, it cannot be required as a condition for being insured Or receiving health care services. Any medical treatment used for providing comfort care or to alleviate pain will be continued. A summary like this cannot answer all of your questions or cover every circumstance. If you have questions about your particular legal situation, please talk to a lawyer. Also, talk to your health care provider about the medical issues. Let those who will be care for you know what you have decided.