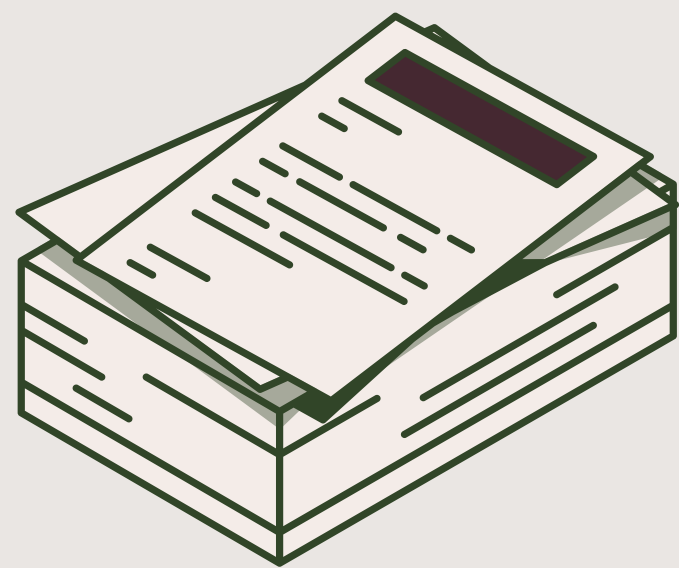


# Advance Healthcare Directives



## Advance Directives

Legal documents that provide instructions for your medical wishes if you are unable to make those decisions.

The two most common are:

- Living will
- Durable power of attorney for healthcare



## Who Needs an Advance Directive?

An Advance Care Plan (ACP) is not only for those who are terminally ill a medical crisis could occur at any time.

If you have dementia, advance care planning can:

- Give you a sense of control over an uncertain future.
- Enable you to participate directly in decision-making about your future care.

## What are the Contents of an Advanced Directive

An advance directive has many sections, including:

- **Living Will** - Specifies what medical treatment you do/don't want if you are in a terminal condition.
- **Power of Attorney** - Designates another person to make health care decisions on your behalf
- **Health Care Instructions** - Allow you to specify what treatment you want or do not want in the event you are in a terminal condition. Ex) A Do Not Resuscitate Order (DNR)

## What if you do not have an Advance Directive?

The state laws where you live will determine who may make medical decisions on your behalf.

- Typically your spouse or your children (if adults)
- If unmarried and have not named your partner as proxy they could be excluded from decision-making
- If you have no family members, some states allow a close friend to help. They may also assign a physician to represent your best interests.



## How to Find Advance Directive Forms

Many states have their own forms that you can access and complete for free. Here are places to find these forms:

- State Attorney General's Office.
- Local Area Agency on Aging. You can find your area agency phone number by visiting the Eldercare Locator or by calling 800-677-1116.
- Download your state's form online from one of these national organizations: AARP, American Bar Association, or National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization.
- If a veteran, contact your local Veteran's Affairs (VA) office. The VA offers an advance directive specifically for veterans.

