

Information and Instructions for Executing a Living Will

What Is A Living Will?

A Living Will is a voluntary, legal document that lets you state your personal wishes regarding whether you receive life-sustaining treatments and procedures in the event you have been determined to have a terminal condition (incurable and expected to result in death), and are no longer capable of making your own health care decisions. A Living Will does not go into effect while you are still capable of making and expressing your own treatment decisions or if you are pregnant.

Unless you specify otherwise, a Living Will directs that your health care providers allow you to die naturally and not use any treatments or procedures that may artificially extend your life and the dying process. A Living Will does not prevent you from receiving any medications and treatment for pain relief or that make you more comfortable.

If you also have a Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care Decisions, the person(s) you appointed as your agent(s) cannot make decisions that conflict with your wishes stated in your Living Will, and they cannot revoke it.

Instructions For Completing The Living Will Form:

You can have someone fill-out and sign the Living Will form for you if they do so in your presence and at your direction.

1) Before you fill out the form, carefully read the entire Living Will form, read these instructions, and ask any questions. Take time to think about what treatment and procedures you want to receive or not receive in the event you have a terminal condition and are not able to make decisions for yourself. You should never fill out the form at a time when you feel pressured or cannot think clearly.

2) Print your name on the line at the top so that is easily readable.

3) Choose which treatments you **DO** or **DO NOT** want to receive by writing your initials on the line under the appropriate column that is next to each listed treatment. Afterwards, read over your choices to make sure you wrote your initials under the column you intended to choose. If you need to make any corrections, start over on a new form and destroy the incorrect form.

4) Sign your full name and write the current date, including the month, day and year. Do not sign the form unless there are two qualified witnesses watching you sign, *or* you are signing the form in front of a notary public who has verified your identity. A qualified witness is a person who:

- Is at least 18 years old
- Believes you are of sound mind
- Is not related to you by blood or marriage
- Is not entitled to inherit from you when you die
- Is not financially responsible for your medical care
- Is not your physician
- Did not fill out or sign the document for you

What To Do With Your Signed Living Will:

1) Make copies of the form and give one to each of your physicians, health care facilities, family members and the person(s) you appointed as your agent(s) to make health care decisions for you.

2) Keep the original signed Living Will form in a safe place and tell a trustworthy person where it can be found.

3) If you ever revoke or make a new Living Will, make sure to destroy the prior one and all copies of it.