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## [Advance Directives and Long-Term Care](#)

### **Avoid confusion: let others know what you want**

Advance directives explain how you want medical decisions to be made when you're too ill to speak for yourself.

These legal documents tell your family, friends, and health care professionals:

- What kind of health care you want
- Who you want to make decisions for you

### **Types of advance directives**

A health care proxy is a document that names someone you trust to make health decisions if you can't. This is also called a durable power of attorney.

A living will tells which treatment you want if your life is threatened, including:

- Dialysis and breathing machines
- Resuscitation if you stop breathing or if your heart stops
- Tube feeding
- Organ or tissue donation after you die

### **How to get advance directives**

Get an advance directive from any of these:

- Your health care provider
- Your attorney
- Your local [Area Agency on Aging \(AAA\)](#)
- Your [state health department](#)

## **What to do with your advance directives**

1. Keep the original copies of your advance directives where you can easily find them.
2. Give a copy to your health care proxy, health care providers, hospital, nursing home, family, and/or friends.
3. Carry a card in your wallet that says you have an advance directive.
4. Review your advance directives each year.

## **Plan for long-term care**

Visit [LongTermCare.gov](https://www.longtermcare.gov) for information and resources to help you and your family plan for future long-term care needs.

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