



# Advanced Directives

## What is a living will?

A living will is a legal document that tells others how you want to be treated if you cannot talk or make decisions about your health care. It helps your family, friends and health care providers understand the choices you have made about the kind of care you want. Living wills are for adults age 18 or older.

## Why is a living will important?

It is important that you create a living will so your health care wishes are followed if you are unable to speak for yourself. Certain health conditions or unexpected events may lead to a situation where you rely on others to act in your best interest. Living wills protect an individual's right to make their own health care choices and prevents unnecessary suffering for families who may struggle with these decisions.

## What if I am too sick to make a decision about my medical care?

You can name a family member or someone else you trust who will make decisions for you about your health care.

## What kinds of decisions do I need put in a living will?

You may want to list the types of care you do or do not want. For example, some people do not want to be put on life-support machines if they go into a coma. Talk to your doctor about treatment options and side effects of different types of care to help you make informed decisions. Think about the following questions:

- Do you want machines to help you breathe or to feed you if you are unable to do these things on your own? For how long?
- Do you want treatment options like antibiotics or fluids in your veins or receiving blood products? For how long?
- Who would you like to make these decisions, and if they cannot make these decisions, who is your backup?

If you have more questions about a living will, call the Customer Advocate Department, toll-free, at the number on the back of your member ID card.

## Who needs to have a copy of my living will?

You should give a copy to your primary care provider to keep in your medical records. Keep the original copy at home and make extra copies for your hospital file, a family member or someone else you trust to make health care decisions for you. You may change your living will at any time.

## How do I get a living will?

Ask your doctor's office or lawyer if they have copies. You can also download the forms from the Texas Health and Human Services Department at <https://www.hhs.texas.gov/forms/advance-directives> to review with your primary care provider or lawyer.

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ATENCIÓN: Si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 1-855-710-6984 (TTY: 711).

CHÚ Ý: Nếu bạn nói Tiếng Việt, có các dịch vụ hỗ trợ ngôn ngữ miễn phí dành cho bạn. Gọi số 1-855-710-6984 (TTY: 711).