



Advance Directives

Categories : [Health Issues](#), [Legal and Protective Services](#), [Older Adult Programs](#)

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An **advance directive** is a legal document through which you provide your directions or wishes as to your medical care should you become unable to make or communicate your decisions about your medical treatment. Under Connecticut law, there are two types of advance directives.

WHAT ARE THE TYPES OF ADVANCE DIRECTIVES?

- The living will or health care instructions
- The appointment of a health care representative

A **living will** is a document that states whether you wish to have life sustaining procedures or treatment administered should you be in a terminal condition or permanently unconscious. The living will tells your physician whether you want “life support systems” to keep you alive in these situations or whether you do not want to receive such treatment, even if the result is your death. A living will goes into effect only (1) when you are unable to make or communicate your decisions about your medical care and (2) when you are in a terminal condition or permanently unconscious. A **health care agent** makes all health care decisions including the decision to provide, withhold, or withdraw life support systems. The agent cannot make decisions for certain specific treatments which by law have special requirements. A health care agent does not act unless you are unable to make or communicate your decisions about your medical care.

HOW DO I MAKE AN ADVANCE DIRECTIVE?

You can get a copy of the brochure “**Your Rights to Make Health Care Decisions**” from the office of the Connecticut Attorney General either by calling or by ordering through the Attorney General’s [Health Issues webpage](#) (<http://www.ct.gov/ag/cwp/browse.asp?A=2130&BMDRN=2000&BCOB=0&C=19278>). The brochure has information about advance directives and copies of documents you may use. You are not required to use an attorney to create advance directives, but since some documents must be notarized you will need a Notary Public.

Visit the Connecticut Department of Social Service’s (DSS) Advance Directives guide for “[Planning for Future Health Care Decisions](#)” tips.

For Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ’s) about Advance Directives and Health Care Planning, visit the [CTLAWHelp.org](#) site.

TO FIND PROVIDERS IN CONNECTICUT’S COMMUNITY RESOURCES DATABASE:

- Search by service name: [Estate Planning Assistance](#)



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