

# The Oklahoma Advance Directive for Health Care

## What is an Advance Directive for Health Care?

Oklahoma's Advance Directive for Health care is a written, legal document that allows you, if you are 18 years of age or older and of sound mind, to inform physicians and others of your wishes to:

- Provide, decline, or withdraw life-sustaining medical care;
- Appoint a Health Care Proxy; and
- Donate specified organs or your entire body for transplantation or research.

Filling out the Advance Directive and thereby communicating your preference about end-of-life treatment will save your family the heartache of having to make decisions for you without knowing your wishes.

## Who Should Have a Copy of My Advance Directive for Health Care?

Once your Advance Directive has been complete, copies should be given to your family, your physician, your attorney, your Health Care Proxy, and your alternate Health Care Proxy. If you live in an assisted living facility or nursing home, a copy should be given to a staff member who can make it a part of your file. Make sure your physician is willing to comply with your wishes; if your physician is not willing to comply, he or she must promptly inform you of that fact and take all reasonable steps to arrange for your care by another physician.

## What is a Health Care Proxy?

Someone you choose to make medical decisions for you if you can't. This person should be trustworthy and aware of and willing to abide by your wishes. Without a Health Care Proxy, Doctors and Hospitals are charged with making health decisions for you if you become incapacitated.

## Can I Revoke my Advance Directive for Health Care?

Yes. The Advance Directive can be revoked at any time and in any manner that indicates your intention to revoke. It is important to inform all those who receive a copy that it has been revoked and ask them to destroy the copy they have. Upon informing your physician that your Advance Directive has been revoked, ask him or her to make the revocation part of your medical record. Completing a new Advance Directive automatically revokes the old one.

## When Should I Review My Advance Directive for Health Care?

The Advance Directive should be reviewed every few years, and especially after a major, life-changing event such as the death of a loved one, divorce, or diagnosis of a serious medical condition. If you recently moved to Oklahoma, you should review any previously executed end-of-life documents from your other state and execute an Oklahoma Advance Directive for Health Care. Finally, the Advance Directive for Health Care was revised in 2006. While a previously executed Advance Directive will remain in effect until revoked by you, it is recommended that you consider executing a new Advance Directive because of the additional options available with the new form.

## Where Can I Find an Advance Directive for Health Care Form?

An Oklahoma Advance Directive for Health Care can be downloaded free from these Web sites:

- [www.LIFEseniorservices.org](http://www.LIFEseniorservices.org)
- [www.okbar.org/public/brochures/default.htm](http://www.okbar.org/public/brochures/default.htm)
- [www.OklahomaSeniorLaw.org](http://www.OklahomaSeniorLaw.org)



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