

LIVING WILL



- ▶ A Living Will is a legal document that informs your loved ones and doctors of what type of care would be selected if you are unable to make medical decisions for yourself. The Living Will can only be used if you have a medical condition that your doctors have deemed that there is not probable cure. Under Florida law, two doctors must have determined that there is no reasonable medical probability of my recovery from such condition for the Living Will to take effect.

LIVING WILL - continued

Under the terms of a Living Will, you may select whether you want artificial food and hydration or whether you are specifically refusing artificial food and hydration. The decision to request artificial food and hydration equates to an artificial prolonging of your life. If you select that you refuse artificial food and hydration, then you are choosing not to have your life prolonged by artificial measures. Even if you decline food/water, you will still receive palliative care (pain management). This decision is a very complicated decision that you should discuss with your doctor and family before you execute a Living Will. Remember that the goal of a Living Will is to prevent a prolonged dying process and spare family members any unnecessary pain.

The Legal Aid Society of Palm Beach County, Inc., is a private, non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation.



ADVANCED DIRECTIVES

PLANNING FOR YOUR MEDICAL FUTURE



Legal Aid Society of Palm Beach County, Inc.
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DURABLE POWER OF ATTORNEY

This allows you to appoint an individual to act on your behalf.

Anything you are legally entitled to do they would be able to do. It is very important that you choose someone trustworthy. The POA can contain health care proxy language. It is effective without incapacity and ends at death! It can be revoked, but you must notify any party that has a copy. It becomes valid at execution. You need two witnesses and a notary for it to be valid. Always keep the original. Copies can be given to banks, etc.



HEALTH CARE SURROGATE

This allows you to pick who you want to make medical decisions for you in the event you become incapacitated. Technically a doctor should certify that you are unable to make a decision on your own. You need two witnesses; neither can be the proxy and at least one of the witnesses must be unrelated to you. Make sure you give a copy to your primary care doctor. It won't do you any good sitting in a drawer.



The Legal Aid Society provides Advanced Directive services for clients who are over 60 years of age or who have HIV/AIDS, or who are patients of the Health Care District. For more information contact the Legal Aid Society at 561-655-8944.

DO NOT RESUSCITATE (DNR)

A do not resuscitate (DNR) order is another kind of advance directive. A DNR is a request not to have cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) if your heart stops or if you stop breathing.

(Unless given other instructions, hospital staff will try to help all patients whose heart has stopped or who have stopped breathing.) There is a specific form that must be signed by your doctor. It should be displayed prominently so that health care officials are aware and it should also be included in your medical records.



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OF PALM BEACH COUNTY

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