

# Steps to completing a living will



## Understand what a living will is.

- A living will is also called a “Declaration to Health Care Professionals.” It helps you decide on future health treatments now.
- A living will is different from a Healthcare Power of Attorney (HCPOA). An HCPOA lets your agent make decisions about many things. A living will makes sure your wishes are followed for specific medical treatments.
- A living will is not the same thing as a will or trust. It doesn’t deal with finances or giving away possessions.



## Learn about when a living will goes into effect.

- A living will becomes active when a doctor confirms that you are unable to communicate your medical decisions, typically when terminally ill or permanently unconscious.



## Think about your wishes.

- Decide what you want about treatments like life support, artificial nutrition, and dialysis.
- Consider any personal, cultural, or religious beliefs that may influence these decisions.



## Talk about your wishes.

- Share your wishes with family members or loved ones who should know.
- If it applies, make sure your HCPOA agent knows about your wishes.
- Talk to your doctor about any medical questions you have.



## Record your wishes in a living will.

- A living will makes your choices lawful.
- You need two witnesses to sign it with you. The witnesses must be of legal age and not named as your HCPOA agent.