

MINNESOTA

HEALTHCARE DIRECTIVE GUIDE

Helping you plan ahead for your care

Your guide to creating a healthcare directive

Help ensure your loved ones make choices according to your wishes.

A healthcare directive informs people what medical care you want if you can't speak for yourself. It can also appoint someone to make healthcare decisions for you.

Here's how to complete a healthcare directive in three steps:

STEP 1:

Choose your healthcare agent

A healthcare agent is a person who can make medical decisions for you if you are too sick to make them yourself. You can choose one or more person to be your healthcare agent. Choose a family member or friend you trust who:

- Is at least 18 years old and knows you well
- Can be there for you when you need them
- Will do what is best for you
- Can tell your doctors about your choices

Note: An individual who works at your hospital or clinic, including your doctor, can't be your agent unless you explain why in writing. If your marriage ends, your ex-spouse can't serve as your agent unless you clearly state they still can.

What decisions can my healthcare agent make?

Your healthcare agent can agree to, say no to, change, stop and choose:

- Doctors, nurses and social workers
- Hospitals and clinics
- Medications, tests and treatments
- What happens to your body and organs after you die



This guide will help you complete a healthcare directive. **It is not a legal document.**

QUESTIONS?

We're here to help. Call the Member Services toll-free number on the back of your member ID card if you need help.

STEP 2:

Talk about your future care preferences

Now that you have chosen a healthcare agent, talk with them about your choices for future care, including:

- Medical treatments you do and don't want
- Care you want if you're injured or suddenly become ill and are unable to speak for yourself
- Your religious or spiritual beliefs that should guide your care
- Your beliefs about quality and length of life
- Care you want when dying
- Your thoughts about organ and tissue donation

What happens if you don't choose a healthcare agent?

If you are too sick to make your own decisions and you don't have an agent, your doctors will ask your closest family members to make decisions for you. To receive the care you want and take the decision-making burden off family members, it's important to name the person you want to be your healthcare agent.



STEP 3:

Complete and sign a healthcare directive

You are now ready to complete and sign your healthcare directive. Forms such as the Minnesota Attorney General's Office Healthcare Directive are available, but using a form is not required. To create a healthcare directive that is legally suitable in Minnesota, it must:

- Be in writing
- Be dated
- State your name
- Be signed by you or another person approved by you to sign on your behalf
- Include a healthcare instruction, a healthcare power of attorney or both*

What do you after you complete your healthcare directive?

Now that you've completed the healthcare directive, it's important to:

- Give copies of your completed and signed healthcare directive form to your healthcare agent, doctors, nurses and social workers, and anyone else who helps care for you.
- Make sure they know your choices.
- Keep the original form in a safe place that is easy to find. Do not put the completed form in a safe deposit box.

What if I change my mind?

Talk with your healthcare provider about the changes you want. They may suggest you fill out a new form. And let the people who care for you know about the changes.

*Minn. Stat. § 145C.03, subd. 1.

Better together

