

Advance Health Care Directive Check List

- Get information on Advance Health Care Directives.
- Talk to your doctor, family, friends, and others who are important to you about your health care wishes, beliefs, and values.
- Get an Advance Health Care Directive form recognized in your state.
- Complete the Advance Health Care Directive form.
- Have the Advance Health Care Directive notarized or witnessed.
- Give a copy of the completed Advance Health Care Directive to your agent(s), doctor(s), clergy, family, friends, and anyone you feel that should be informed about your wishes concerning medical treatment.

For any questions or concerns about advance health care directives, call the Department of Clinical Social Work at 323-865-3150.

Keck Medical Center of USC is committed to providing the best possible care experience for our patients and their loved ones. We respect and honor our patients' wishes with regard to their medical treatment. We strive to ensure that these wishes are carried out if a patient should be unable to communicate directly with their health care team.

**Keck Medical
Center of USC**
Keck Medicine of USC

For more information on Advance Health Care Directives, contact Keck Medical Center of USC Department of Clinical Social Work:

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**Keck Medical
Center of USC**
Keck Medicine of USC

**Let Others
Know
Your
Voice**

**Advance
Health Care
Directives**

What is an Advance Health Care Directive?

An Advance Health Care Directive is a legal document that let your doctor, family, friends, and others who are important to you know your health care wishes when you are unable to speak for yourself in an emergency.

It also allows you to have another adult over the age of 18 known as an “agent” to make health care choices for you when you are no longer able to make them for yourself.

Why is it important to have an Advance Health Care Directive?

Advance Health Care Directives:

- Protect your health care wishes, beliefs, and values under federal and state law.
- Helps medical care givers create an appropriate health care plan based around your wishes stated in your advance health care directive.
- Assists family, loved ones, and others who are important to you in understanding your health care wishes.

Who can complete an Advance Health Care Directive?

Anyone who is at least 18 years old (or an emancipated minor), who is of sound mind, and acting on his or her own free will can complete a valid advance health care directive.

Who can I appoint as my health care agent?

You can appoint almost any adult over the age of 18 to be your agent. An agent can be a family member, your spouse, a same-sex or domestic partner, an adult child, a friend, or someone you trust.

In addition, you can also have one or more “alternate agents.” An alternate agent is a person you can choose as your health care agent if your original health care agent is unavailable or unwilling to make a decision for you.

When should someone get an Advance Health Care Directive?

It is good to have an advance health care directive before an emergency happens. An adult over the age of 18 should complete an advance health care directive as soon as possible.

Where can I get an Advance Health Care Directive?

Advance Health Care Directive forms are available upon request at Keck Medical Center of USC. To get an Advance Health Care Directive form, talk to your doctor, nurse, or contact the Department of Clinical Social Work at 323-865-3150.

Advance Health Care Directives are also available through the State of California Office of the Attorney General website (oag.ca.gov).

Is there only one type of Advance Health Care Directive form?

Advance Health Care Directive forms are specific to the State in which you live. It is important to know that an Advance Health Care Directive legally approved in the State of California may or may not be honored in other States. Most States will recognize an Advance Health Care Directive that is approved legally in another State. If you spend a lot of time in a State outside of California, you may want to talk to a doctor, lawyer, or a medical professional in that State.

How do I legalize my Advance Health Care Directive?

In order to legalize your Advance Health Care Directive, your signature must be observed and signed by either a notary of the public or by two adult witnesses over the age of 18.

There are limitations on whom you can choose to be your witnesses.

Individuals who are **not** eligible to be your witnesses are:

- Your health care provider or an employee of your health care provider.
- The operator or an employee of a community care facility.
- The operator or an employee of a residential care facility for the elderly.
- The person you have appointed as an agent, if you have appointed an agent.

In addition, one of your witnesses must be unrelated to you by blood, marriage, or adoption and not entitled to any portion of your estate.

Who should receive a copy of my Advance Health Care Directive?

After completing your Advance Health Care Directive, it is recommended that you give a copy to your agent(s), doctor(s), clergy, family, friends, and anyone you feel that should be informed about your wishes concerning medical treatment.