

Advance Health Directives

Advance directives are legal records. They are used when you are very sick and cannot explain the kind of care you want. They let your family, friends and doctors know about your end-of life choices ahead of time.

There are three main types of advance directives in Illinois:

1. Living Will

A living will tells how you feel about care that continues your life. This kind of care includes:

- The use of dialysis and breathing machines
- Tube feeding
- Organ or tissue donation
- If you want to be saved when your breathing or heartbeat stops

You can either receive or say no to any of this care. Your living will becomes active **ONLY** when you are not able to make choices on your own.

2. Health Care Power of Attorney

A health care power of attorney allows you to choose a healthcare agent. A healthcare agent is someone who makes choices about your care when you are not able to. You may not be able to make your own healthcare choices if you are badly injured or sick. Your healthcare agent can make choices on your behalf about your care in these cases according to your instructions.

With a health care power of attorney, your agent can:

- See your medical and other personal info
- Choose and dismiss your doctors
- Say yes or no to medical care
- Sign waivers and other documents to allow or stop your medical care

Your agent should be someone you trust, like a family member or a friend. Talk with your agent about your values and wishes. The more your agent knows about you, the better choices he or she can make.

3. Mental Health Treatment Preference Declaration

A mental health treatment preference declaration lets you say if you want to get electroconvulsive treatment (ECT) or psychotropic drugs when you have a mental illness and are not able to make choices for yourself. It also allows you to say if you wish to go to a mental health center for up to 17 days of care. You can select an "attorney-in-fact." This person is like a healthcare agent and makes mental health choices when you cannot. You must have witnesses when you sign your declaration. It expires two years from the date you sign it.

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Do-Not-Resuscitate (DNR) Order

A DNR order is not the same as an advance directive. It lets your doctors and providers know that you do not want CPR if your heart and/or breathing stops.

Our Policy

MeridianHealth (Meridian) will respect your choices as listed in your advance directives. We will not limit the use of any of your advance directives because of personal beliefs or conscience.

Advance directives may be changed or canceled in writing at any time. This must follow the laws of Illinois. If you have questions about filling out an advance directive, talk to your doctor, mental health provider, attorney or other professional that handles advance directives. You can also call Meridian at 866-606-3700. You can get advance directive forms at your doctor's office or local hospital.

If you think that your doctor did not follow your wishes, contact:

Department of Financial and Professional Regulation
Division of Professional Regulation
Complaint Intake Unit
100 West Randolph Street, Suite 9-300
Chicago, IL 60601
Phone: 312-814-6910

If you think that your hospital or other healthcare center did not follow your wishes, contact:

Illinois Department of Public Health Office of Health Care Regulations (IDFPR)
Central Complaint Registry
525 West Jefferson Street, Ground Floor
Springfield, IL 62761
Phone: 800-252-4343

You can also file your complaint online at www.idfpr.com/Admin/DPR/Complaint.asp.

If you think that Meridian did not follow your wishes, contact:

Illinois Department of Insurance
320 West Washington Street
Springfield, IL 62767-0001
Phone (toll-free): 866-445-5364
TDD: 217-524-4872
Fax: 217-558-2083
<https://mc.insurance.illinois.gov/messagecenter.nsf>

