



VA PUGET SOUND

Visitor Center: Living Will

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If your visit will include a surgical or medical procedure, it is always wise to have a Living Will on hand. Our social workers and medical center staff can assist you with the preparation of a Living Will. To learn about a Living Will, read "[Your Life, Your Choices](#)" (PDF Format). The VA also has an online form for your use, the [VA Advanced Directive Form](#) (PDF Format).

The workbook has two major goals: to help individuals personalize their advance directives, and to help them talk with their family members and health care providers about how they would want to be treated medically if they were so ill that they could not speak for themselves.

However, in any case, you should be aware that just having a written advance directive by itself does not ensure that your wishes will be understood and respected. Studies have shown that standard advance directive forms do little to influence end-of-life decisions without: 1) informed, thoughtful reflection about your wishes and values, and 2) personal communication between you and your likely decision-makers before a crisis occurs.

Even if you have an Advanced Directive on file, it might be wise to refresh your memory on it's contents, and perhaps amend your existing directive if it no longer reflects your wishes.

Helpful Links:

- ABA Commission on Law and Aging, <http://www.abanet.org/aging/toolkit/>
- Washington State EMS-No CPR Guidelines, <http://www.aasa.dshs.wa.gov/Library/publications/htmlversions/legalrights.htm#CPR>. When completed, this special form allows paramedics to respond in every way but to initiate CPR. Requires completion both by the individual and the doctor. This is called a "pre-hospital advance directive". It essentially allows for a non-hospital based DNAR (Do not attempt resuscitation) order.
- Your Legal Right to make Decisions about Health Care and Advance Directives in Washington State, <http://www.aasa.dshs.wa.gov/Library/publications/htmlversions/legalrights.htm#advance>.

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