

Your voice comes first. Make an advance directive.

Make a healthcare plan now for peace of mind later. Learn about advance directives and steps you can take to stay in charge of your care.

Advance directives explain the healthcare choices you want if you ever can't make those choices for yourself. If you put this in writing now, others will be prepared for what to expect if you ever can't tell them later.

Types of advance directives

You can:

1. **Ask someone to be your agent (or power of attorney).** This means you choose another person, like a child, friend, or spouse, to make healthcare decisions for you if you ever can't make them yourself. You can tell your agent exactly the kind of care you'd want to have.
2. **Write down your plans.** You can write down how you want your care to be handled if you can't decide for yourself. This is called a living will.

Making an advance directive

It's up to you if you want to make an advance directive. If you decide at any point you'd like to have a healthcare plan for the future, here's a few ways to get started:

- Fill out an advance directive form and give it to your primary care provider (PCP).
- Talk with your PCP about your plans and ask if he or she can help you with a form and next steps.
- Work with your care manager or care coordinator if you have one. He or she can help answer your questions and tell you more about advanced directives and future care planning.

After you make an advance directive, view details about it any time on the [Advance Health Care Directives Registry](#).

As your health plan, we'll respect your choices in making plans for care. We'll make sure to:

- Follow all state laws about advanced directives and tell you about any changes to those laws within 90 days of the change.
- Not put any limits on advance directives based on moral or personal preferences.
- Help you find another doctor if your current doctor won't follow your advance directive based on moral or personal preferences.

You won't be discriminated against based on whether you have an advance directive. Your doctors and healthcare providers won't make decisions about giving you care based on whether you have an advance directive. If you have a complaint about the way a doctor, provider, or another healthcare professional handled your advanced directive, you can contact the Virginia Department for Medical Assistance Services (DMAS).

More resources

Virginia Advance Directives: virginiaadvancedirectives.org

Virginia Division for the Aging: vda.virginia.gov

Call toll free for translation or oral interpretation at no cost/Llame a la línea gratuita para servicios de traducción o interpretación sin cargo: 800-901-0020; TTY 711.

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