

Leaflet on Advance Directives and Living Wills

Any competent adult can unexpectedly become incapacitated due to an accident, illness, or aging. To ensure that personal and financial matters are handled according to their wishes in such situations, individuals can create an Advance Care Directive, and a Living Will.

What is an Advance Directive?

An Advance Care directive allows individuals to appoint one or more trusted persons who will take responsibility in case of incapacity in the following areas:

- **Personal care:** Supervision and care, decisions regarding living arrangements and medical treatment.
- **Financial management:** Handling financial matters, paying bills, managing assets.
- **Legal representation:** Representing the person in dealings with authorities, courts, and third parties.

To be legally valid, an Advance Care Directive must be either entirely handwritten, dated, and signed or notarized.

What is a Living Will?

A Living Will allows employees to specify which medical treatments they wish to accept or refuse if they can no longer make decisions for themselves. This includes:

- Consent to or refusal of life-sustaining treatments.
- Specification of pain management and therapies.
- Determination of specific medical interventions to be performed or withheld.

A valid Living Will must be entirely handwritten, dated, and signed.

Storage and Accessibility of Documents

It is important that the location of the Advance Care Directive and Living Will is known. Employees should inform their trusted persons and may register the storage location of the Advance Care Directive with the Civil Registry Office. A copy of the Living Will can also be kept with their general practitioner.

Updating the Documents

The Advance Care Directive and Living Will should be reviewed regularly (every 2 to 3 years or following significant life changes) and updated as necessary.

Consequences of not having an Advance Care Directive

Without an Advance Care Directive, the Child and Adult Protection Authority (KESB) decides who will represent the incapacitated person. This may result in delays and decisions that may not align with the individual's preferences.

Next steps

Creating an Advance Care Directive and a Living Will is not mandatory. However, we recommend that all adult employees, regardless of age or health status, consider doing so. Many helpful templates for Advance Care Directives and Living Wills are available online (e.g., on the Red Cross website:

<https://www.srk-aargau.ch/vorsorgeauftrag> / <https://www.srk-luzern.ch/fuer-sie-da/familie-als-fundament/patientenverfuegung-vorsorgeauftrag-testament> / <https://www.admin.ch/gov/de/start/dokumentation/medienmitteilungen.msg-id-46738.html>).

If you would like to inform your employees accordingly and need assistance with this, please feel free to contact us. We are also available to answer any questions you may have.