



Let's Talk: Make It Legal & Next Steps

Congratulations! You have completed a major part of planning for your future care. But wait, there's more...

Make It Legal

To make your Power of Attorney for Health Care legal in Wisconsin, 2 people must watch you sign it and then they also sign it, too. (NOTE: The dates need to match!) These 2 people are known as your "witnesses" because they are watching you sign your document and stating that you are "of sound mind and body" at that time. **Do not notarize this document.**

Witnesses MUST be:

- At least 18 years of age
- NOT one of the people you listed as a health care agent
- NOT your family member or relative (by blood, marriage, domestic partnership or adoption)
- NOT your health care provider (doctor, nurse, etc.) directly serving you at this time
- NOT an employee of your health care system (UNLESS they are a social worker or chaplain)
- NOT directly financially responsible for your health care
- NOT aware that they entitled to or have a claim against your estate

Depending upon your situation, witnesses for you may be:

- Friends
- Neighbors
- Co-workers
- People from your faith community or church
- Workers at your bank or lawyer's office (Please call ahead.)

Keep your original document in a safe place that can be accessed by others in an emergency - NOT in a safety deposit box!

Get Copies to Your...

- **Health Care Agent(s), Family, and other Support People**
 - Give each of the people you chose as your Health Care Agents a copy of this document
 - If you think they should have it, give family, friends, and others you trust a copy, or scan and email it
 - Talk to your family and loved ones about your wishes, and ask about their wishes, too
- **Doctor and Health Care Team**
 - In case of an emergency, your document should be easy to find. Your doctor will put your document in your electronic medical record so it can be used if needed.
 - You can:
 1. Bring a copy to your next appointment or it off at your doctor's office.
 2. Submit it through your online patient portal
 3. Mail or fax a copy to your health care system

Reminders

- Keep ALL pages of your document together and include them when you make copies (even if you didn't fill out "optional" pages)
- Update your document at least every 5-10 years, if you have a new diagnosis, or a decline in your health
- If you get divorced (and your former spouse was your health care agent), your document becomes null and void and you need to complete a new document

**Fox Valley
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