



How does Maryland MOLST relate to Advance Directives?

An **advance directive** is used to name someone else to make health care decisions in case you subsequently lose the capacity to decide or document your wishes about life-sustaining medical treatments.

An **instructional advance directive**, often called a **living will**, is used to describe preferences about life-sustaining treatments that are to be honored after someone loses decision-making capacity.

A living will typically describes preferences about life-sustaining procedures in a contingent, general way. For example, the optional living will form in the Health Care Decisions Act allows someone to declare that, —If my death from a terminal condition is imminent. . . I direct that my life not be extended by life-sustaining procedures. For example, suppose you made an advance directive that limits interventions in the event of an end-stage or terminal condition or persistent vegetative state. Suppose that you were to lose capacity and the doctor certifies that you are in a terminal condition.

Under these circumstances, an authorized decision maker must apply your wishes as documented in the advance directive to guide the practitioner concerning specific treatment options covered on the MOLST form.

The **MOLST form** is not an advance directive, and an advance directive is not a medical order. An advance directive only speaks for you after you lose decision making capacity. Use of the MOLST form does not require that you have an advance directive or wish to make one.