

## What can a health care power of attorney do?

The attorney-in-fact is permitted to make only health care-related decisions on your behalf. In exercising this authority, the attorney-in-fact must act consistently with your desires (as stated in the HC-POA document).

The attorney-in-fact also must act in accordance with any limitations in the HC-POA document and with any statement you have made regarding your desires.

Some decisions attorneys-in-fact may make on your behalf include:

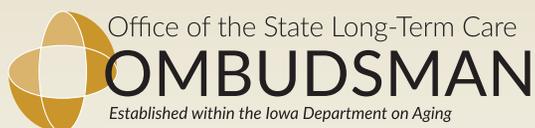
- Whether to consent, refuse or withdraw consent to any care, procedure, treatment or service;
- Whether to permit, refuse or withdraw permission to participate in federally funded research related to any condition or disorder;
- Whether to withhold or withdraw life-prolonging treatment, including artificial nutrition and hydration; or
- Whether to authorize an autopsy or tissue/organ donation upon your death.

**Your State and Local Long-Term Care Ombudsmen can be reached at:**

# 866.236.1430

A Health Care Power of Attorney form is available from the Iowa State Bar Association ([www.iowabar.org](http://www.iowabar.org)).

# HEALTH CARE Power of Attorney



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## How do I enact or revoke a health care power of attorney?

To create a legally valid HC-POA, all you need to do is properly complete and sign a fill-in-the-blanks form in front of a notary public or two witnesses. The person named as your attorney-in-fact should receive a copy. It is also wise to give a copy to your health care provider(s) to place in your medical record.

Iowa law permits you to revoke your HC-POA at any time and in any manner. The revocation should be communicated to the attending physician and other health care providers, the attorney-in-fact and any successor attorney-in-fact.

Your HC-POA will terminate upon your death; however, you do have the option to sign a Final Disposition Declaration and designate someone to make final decisions concerning your remains and the ceremonies planned after your death. This document must be either included within your HC-POA or in a document attached to your HC-POA.

## What is a health care power of attorney?

A health care power of attorney (HC-POA) is a document authorizing an attorney-in-fact (**your designated agent**) to make health care decisions on your behalf if you (**the principal**) are unable, in the judgment of your attending physician, to make health care decisions.

Health care is defined as any care, treatment, service or procedure required to maintain, diagnose or treat a physical or mental condition. Through your HC-POA, you may authorize someone else to consent, refuse or withdraw consent to health care on your behalf.

In Iowa, you may also include a Living Will to document whether or not you wish to receive "life-sustaining procedures" if you become permanently comatose or terminally ill. The living will may be combined into the same form as the HC-POA.

## Who should I choose to serve as my attorney-in-fact?

The attorney-in-fact is the person who will be making health care decisions for you, so it is important to choose someone who will not abuse or exploit this power, will listen to and follow your wishes and will look out for your best interests. You may also designate a successor attorney-in-fact who can take over if your original attorney-in-fact is unable or unwilling to serve.

While it is possible to appoint multiple individuals to serve together as attorneys-in-fact, this method should be pursued with caution. If the individuals appointed to serve together do not agree, they may have to go to court in order to settle a disagreement.

Your HC-POA will become effective when your attending physician determines you are unable to make health care decisions on your own.

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