

# Advanced Directives

(Rule No. 560-X-28-.02 Summary of State Law Regarding Advanced Directives New Rule)

## ***Deciding about your health care***

If you are 19 or older, the law says you have the right to decide about your medical care.

If you are very sick or badly hurt, you may not be able to say what medical care you want.

If you have an advanced directive, your doctor and family will know what medical care you want if you are too sick or hurt to talk or make decisions.

## ***What is an advanced directive?***

An advanced directive is used to tell your doctor and family what kind of medical care you want if you are too sick or hurt to talk or make decisions. If you do not have one, certain members of your family will have to decide on your care.

You must be at least 19 years old to set up an advanced directive. You must be able to think clearly and make decisions for yourself when you set it up. You do not need a lawyer to set one up, but you may want to talk with a lawyer before you take this important step. Whether or not you have an advanced directive, you have the same right to get the care you need.

## ***Types of advanced directives***

In Alabama you can set up an Advanced Directive for Health Care. The choices you have include:

A **Living Will** is used to write down ahead of time what kind of care you do or do not want if you are too sick to speak for yourself.

A **Proxy** can be part of a Living Will. You can pick a proxy to speak for you and make the choices you would make if you could. If you pick a proxy, you should talk to that person ahead of time. Be sure that your proxy knows how you feel about different kinds of medical treatments.

Another way to pick a proxy is to sign a **Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care**. The person you pick does not need to be a lawyer.

You can choose to have any or all of these three advanced directives: Living Will, Proxy, and/or Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care.