

A Checklist for Getting Your Affairs in Order

There are important healthcare, legal and financial decisions every senior should make when they are well. Communicating our desires ahead of time, while we are able to do so, takes a great burden off of our families when we are in crisis.

Manage your healthcare decisions.

In Maryland, a health care directive permits you to pre-select the life-saving treatments you do and do not wish to receive when your health is in critical condition. An additional Medical Order for Life-Sustaining Treatment, or MOLST form, is available for you to provide instructions to your medical team.

- Health Care Directive
- MOLST

Manage your finances. Make decisions now to control your finances even when you are personally unable to do so. Everyone should have a Durable Power of Attorney in place designating their trusted choice for who should manage their finances and outlining the control their agent has. Other ways of controlling finances include preparing a will, trust, and business succession plan. Lifetime gifts of money can be made by transferring funds to a joint ownership or payable on death account, or by outright gifting, but you should consult with your Elder Law Attorney before doing so to ensure your gifts do not jeopardize your Medicaid coverage.

- Power of Attorney
- Wills
- Trusts
- Business Succession Planning
- Beneficiary designations
- Joint Ownership Accounts*
- Payable on Death Transfers*
- Gifts * (**consult legal counsel*)

Plan your final farewell. You should decide what type of funeral services you want so your family is not burdened with those decisions while they are grieving. You can also pre-pay for your arrangements with a pre-need funeral contract or assigned life insurance policy, eliminating your family's worry over money.

- Pre-need Funeral Contract
- Life Insurance

Compile your essential legal documents.

Don't send your family on a scavenger hunt to find your important papers when you are ill. Assemble all of the following in a safe location at home or in a safety deposit box.

- Power of Attorney
- Healthcare Directive & MOLST
- Will
- Trust Documents
- Life Insurance
- Funeral Plans
- Digital Will
- Birth Certificate / Adoption Papers
- Marriage Certificate
- Death Certificate for Spouse
- Safety Deposit Box Instructions
- Veteran's Paperwork
- Financial Statements
- Monthly bills

Talk with your loved ones. You need to share your decisions with your loved ones, especially what life sustaining treatments you want, what assets you have and how you want them managed in the event of your illness, and what your choices are for your funeral services. Talk with your loved ones:

- About your healthcare choices.
- About your financial choices.
- About your funeral choices.



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