

§5-803. Advance health care directives

1. Individual instruction. An adult or emancipated minor with capacity may give an individual instruction. The instruction may be oral or written. The instruction may be limited to take effect only if a specified condition arises. An oral instruction is valid only if made to a health care provider or to an individual who may serve as a surrogate under section 5-806, subsection 2.

[PL 2017, c. 402, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2019, c. 417, Pt. B, §14 (AFF).]

2. Power of attorney for health care. An adult or emancipated minor with capacity may execute a power of attorney for health care, which may authorize the agent to make any health care decision the principal could have made while having capacity. The power must be in writing and signed by the principal and 2 witnesses. Notwithstanding any law validating electronic or digital signatures, signatures of the principal and witnesses must be made in person and not by electronic means. The power remains in effect notwithstanding the principal's later incapacity and may include individual instructions. Unless related to the principal by blood, marriage or adoption, an agent may not be an owner, operator or employee of a residential long-term health care institution at which the principal is receiving care.

[PL 2017, c. 402, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2019, c. 417, Pt. B, §14 (AFF).]

3. Effective upon determination that principal lacks capacity. Unless otherwise specified in a power of attorney for health care, the authority of an agent becomes effective only upon a determination that the principal lacks capacity and ceases to be effective upon a determination that the principal has recovered capacity.

[PL 2017, c. 402, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2019, c. 417, Pt. B, §14 (AFF).]

4. Determination. Unless otherwise specified in a written advance health care directive, a determination that an individual lacks or has recovered capacity or that another condition exists that affects an individual instruction, the authority of an agent or the validity of an advance health care directive must be made by the primary physician, by a court of competent jurisdiction or, for an individual who has included a directive authorizing mental health treatment in an advance health care directive, by a person qualified to conduct an examination pursuant to Title 34-B, section 3863.

[PL 2017, c. 402, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2019, c. 417, Pt. B, §14 (AFF).]

5. Decision in accordance with instructions, wishes, best interest. An agent shall make a health care decision in accordance with the principal's individual instructions, if any, and other wishes to the extent known to the agent. Otherwise, the agent shall make the decision in accordance with the agent's determination of the principal's best interest. In determining the principal's best interest, the agent shall consider the principal's personal values to the extent known to the agent.

[PL 2017, c. 402, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2019, c. 417, Pt. B, §14 (AFF).]

6. Effective without judicial approval. A health care decision made by an agent for a principal is effective without judicial approval.

[PL 2017, c. 402, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2019, c. 417, Pt. B, §14 (AFF).]

7. Nomination of guardian. A written advance health care directive may include the individual's nomination of a guardian of the person.

[PL 2017, c. 402, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2019, c. 417, Pt. B, §14 (AFF).]

8. Validity of advance health care directive. An advance health care directive is valid for purposes of this Part if it complies with this Part, regardless of when or where executed or communicated, or if it is valid under the laws of the state in which it was executed. An advance health care directive that is valid where executed or communicated is valid for the purposes of this Part.

[PL 2017, c. 402, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2019, c. 417, Pt. B, §14 (AFF).]

9. Directing mental health treatment. An advance health care directive is valid for purposes of directing mental health treatment. The terms of the directive must be construed in accordance with this Part and Title 34-B, sections 3831 and 3862.

[PL 2017, c. 402, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2019, c. 417, Pt. B, §14 (AFF).]

10. Personal representative for purposes of federal law. A surrogate or an agent named in an advance health care directive has the power and authority to serve as the personal representative of the patient who executed the health care directive for all purposes of the federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996, 42 United States Code, Section 1320d et seq. and its regulations, 45 Code of Federal Regulations, Parts 160-164. The surrogate or agent has all the rights of the patient with respect to the use and disclosure of the individually identifiable health information and other medical records of the patient.

[PL 2017, c. 402, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2019, c. 417, Pt. B, §14 (AFF).]

SECTION HISTORY

PL 2017, c. 402, Pt. A, §2 (NEW). PL 2017, c. 402, Pt. F, §1 (AFF). PL 2019, c. 417, Pt. B, §14 (AFF).

The State of Maine claims a copyright in its codified statutes. If you intend to republish this material, we require that you include the following disclaimer in your publication:

All copyrights and other rights to statutory text are reserved by the State of Maine. The text included in this publication reflects changes made through the Second Regular Session of the 131st Maine Legislature and is current through January 1, 2025. The text is subject to change without notice. It is a version that has not been officially certified by the Secretary of State. Refer to the Maine Revised Statutes Annotated and supplements for certified text.

The Office of the Revisor of Statutes also requests that you send us one copy of any statutory publication you may produce. Our goal is not to restrict publishing activity, but to keep track of who is publishing what, to identify any needless duplication and to preserve the State's copyright rights.

PLEASE NOTE: The Revisor's Office cannot perform research for or provide legal advice or interpretation of Maine law to the public. If you need legal assistance, please contact a qualified attorney.