

Comparing Advance Directives and POLST

This chart gives an overview of some key differences between advance directives and POLST forms:

	Advance Directives	POLST Form
What is it?	Legal Document	Medical Order
Who should have this document?	All adults	Anyone (regardless of age) who is seriously ill or frail
Why would I need this?	- To tell others who you want to make medical decisions for you, if you can't communicate - Tell others what medical treatments you would want, your values, what you care about.	- Order providers to give specific treatments during an emergency - Supports the patient across care settings
Who fills it out?	The individual	Health care professional (after discussion with patient)
Can I use it to appoint my surrogate?	Yes	No
Can emergency responders use it?	No	Yes—It tells them if the patient was CPR and if the patient wants to go to the hospital
Is the document easily found?	Not always. Be sure you give a copy of your advance directive to your provider and surrogate.	Yes. You have a copy, your provider has a copy, and it may also be in a registry.