



The Difference between the Advance Directive and POLST

The Advance Directive and the POLST are really different. Still, it is easy to confuse the two. This chart shows you the differences.

	Advance Directive	POLST (stands for Portable Order for Life Sustaining Treatment)
Who is it for?	Everyone 18 and older.	People with a serious illness or who are very old and frail.
What kind of document is it?	It is a legal document.	It is a medical order.
Who signs it?	You fill it out and sign it. Also, your health care representative signs it and witnesses or a Notary.	Your doctor fills it out with your input. Then signs it.
Do I need a lawyer?	No.	No.
Who keeps the form?	You keep the original where loved ones can find it. You give a copy to your health care representative and your doctor.	Your doctor's office keeps it and enters it into the electronic Oregon POLST Registry. They give you a copy that you post at home in a visible place like the fridge.
Can I change the form if I change my mind?	Yes. You can tear up the old one. Then write a new one where loved ones can find it. You give a copy to your health care representative and your doctor.	Yes. You can ask for an appointment with your doctor to change it.
What if there is a medical emergency and I cannot speak for myself?	Your health care representative speaks for you and honors your wishes.	The ambulance staff, hospital staff and doctors look for the medical orders in the electronic data base and follow them.