

# Everyone needs an Advance Directive. Not everyone needs a POLST.

The **Advance Directive** and **POLST** (Provider Orders for Life Sustaining Treatments) are both very important to document your wishes for care. To clarify the strengths and differences, we have created this chart.



**The Advance Health Care Directive**, commonly known as an Advance Directive, allows you to appoint your Health Care Power of Attorney the person who can speak for you if you cannot speak for yourself in a medical situation. It also allows you to specify your wishes for care at the end of life. There are many versions of the Advance Directive and you can download a free version at [kokuamau.org/resources/advance-directives](http://kokuamau.org/resources/advance-directives). Everyone 18 years and older needs an Advance Directive.

**POLST** is a portable medical order that takes effect as soon as it is signed. POLST is intended for people with serious illness and/or the medically frail at any age. It can follow you from home into a medical setting, and after discharge to your home or other setting such as a nursing or care home. POLST is a form that contains medical orders that specify the type of care you would like in the event of a medical emergency. This form can be quickly understood by all healthcare professionals, including first responders and ambulance personnel. Transferable to all healthcare settings, POLST must be signed by a physician or APRN to be valid. More at [kokuamau.org/polst](http://kokuamau.org/polst)

<i>DETAILS</i>	<i>Advance Directive</i>	<b>POLST</b>
Purpose	Express wishes for future end of life care and appoints a health care power of attorney(s)	Portable Medical Order which turns a patient's wishes to action in a medical emergency
Who Needs It?	All Adults 18+ of sound mind	Seriously Ill or medically frail at any age
Treatment Focus	In the future if you cannot speak for yourself	Right now – based on your current medical condition
Whom Completes?	Individual (you)	Doctor or Advance Practice Registered Nurse (APRN) & patient or legally authorized representative
Appoints Healthcare Agent?	YES	NO
Guides Emergency Room Decisions?	YES	YES
EMS Honors it?	NO	YES

Key Kōkua Mau materials, including the Advance Directive and POLST, are translated into 10 languages. More at [kokuamau.org/languages](http://kokuamau.org/languages)  
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