Supportive Attorney

Sometimes it is not easy to make a decision or talk to organisations such as hospitals, banks, electricity, gas and phone providers.

You may have a disability that makes it hard to communicate, or maybe you are just not comfortable with making those types of calls or enquiries.

Appointing a 'supportive attorney' is choosing someone, a family member or friend, to support you to make your own decisions.

It is made by completing a legal form, where the person you choose has the authority to talk to services on your behalf, get information about you on your behalf and talk about what you want. You are still in charge!

Need help?

If you want to know more, get in touch.

Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service

Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service
273 High Street, Preston, Victoria 3072
Tel: (03) 9418 5999 Toll free: 1800 064 865
Email: reception@vals.org.au
www.vals.org.au

Office of the Public Advocate

Office of the Public Advocate
Level 1, 204 Lygon Street, Carlton, Victoria 3053
Phone: 1300 309 337
TTY: 1300 305 612 NRS: 133 677
Email: opa_advice@justice.vic.gov.au
www.publicadvocate.vic.gov.au

Victorian Legal Services BOARD + COMMISSIONER

Victorian Legal Services Board + Commissioner
Level 5, 555 Bourke Street, Melbourne, Victoria 3000
Tel: (03) 9679 8001 Local call: 1300 796 344
Email: admin@lsbc.vic.gov.au
www.lsb.vic.gov.au

Your life, your choice

Planning for your future

Who can make decisions for you, if you can't?

The law in Australia says that everyone has the right to make their own decisions about their life - but who can make decisions for you when you can't?

Life is unpredictable and accidents and illnesses can happen which may prevent you from making your own decisions. This could lead to your family disagreeing about who can make decisions for you about matters such as your money, your medical treatment, where you live and who can visit you.

Making an enduring power of attorney

You can choose someone now to make decisions for you in case something happens to you in the future. This is called 'making an enduring power of attorney'.

A power of attorney is made by completing a legal form but you don't need a lawyer in order to complete it.

An 'attorney' is the person you choose to make decisions for you, if anything happens to you. They can be a family member or a friend.

You should choose someone you trust and who knows you well as they may need to make decisions on your behalf.

Personal and financial matters

Anyone over 18 years of age can make an enduring power of attorney, as long as they understand what they are doing.

You can choose more than one person to be your attorney. You can also choose a back-up person, called 'an alternative'.

You can make an enduring power of attorney for personal and financial matters on the one form, and you decide when that power starts.

Examples of personal matters:

- where you live
- what services or help you need.

Examples of financial matters:

- paying your bills
- going to the bank and withdrawing money
- selling your house, if this needs to happen.

Medical treatment decisions

You can choose someone **now** to be your medical treatment decision-maker if something happens to you in the future and you can no longer make these decisions for yourself.

By doing this, you are giving this person the legal authority to consent to, or refuse treatment, on your behalf. The person you choose should be someone you trust to respect and carry out your wishes.

Advance care planning

Advance care planning is when you make a plan for your future health and personal care.

You do this by writing down what you want or do not want, if you get sick. It can help your family to make medical treatment decisions for you so they don't have to guess or disagree about what you would want.