

SUPERIOR'S GUIDE FOR ADVANCE DIRECTIVES POLICY

The policy of the USA East Province is that each member of the Province, as well as any Jesuit residing in the USA East Province, complete the Advance Directive for Health Care. The Province asks that preferably Jesuits be listed as surrogates. Preferably, these would be the superior and the minister of the community. Another Jesuit is acceptable if he is able and accessible. Surrogates must be listed by name; a title such as "rector" or "superior" is not sufficient. **Please review your community's advance directives to ensure that one is on file for each member or long-term visitor, and that appropriate surrogates are named.**

To be valid, an Advance Directive must be signed by two witnesses (over age 18). The witnesses should be different than the named surrogates. Forms can vary from state to state.

The **original** document should be kept in the Superior's locked files and given to the community member to take with him when reassigned. A copy should be kept along with emergency medical information in a secure location that is accessible in case of emergency (a sealed envelope is recommended). Each Jesuit should keep a copy for himself and give a copy to his primary physician and interested family members. A copy also needs to be forwarded to the Province's Healthcare Office (to the attention of the Province Assistant for Health Care, who will see that a copy also goes in the Socius' files). Jesuits with home provinces other than USA East Province should forward a copy to that Province's office as well.

Superiors should discuss the Advance Directives with the Jesuits in their community to ensure that they understand the specific wishes of their community members. Especially with older Jesuits, Superiors need to ascertain if they have any **current** feelings about resuscitation or prolonged hospitalization (the Advance Directive forms only refer specifically to cases of terminal illness or persistent vegetative states). Superiors need to make sure a man's funeral wishes and non-Jesuit contact information are also up to date. **If a Jesuit is reluctant to specify wishes in advance, have him at least name surrogate decision makers. The relationship of a Religious to his community is not covered in state statutes dealing with medical decisions.** Superior should encourage each man to complete forms at his doctors' offices and hospital that would allow Superior and/or his designate (i.e., Minister) to receive medical information per HIPAA. Please remember that these are documents meant for use with the wide medical community.

Refer to the **Jesuit Health Care Handbook for the Assistency of Canada and the United States dated April 2015** for more useful information and guidance. The Province's Healthcare Office or local healthcare coordinator and the Executive Assistant to the Provincial and Socius can provide copies of the forms, along with instructions.