

LEGACY PLANNING GUIDE

Simple Explanations of Key Documents (Michigan)

1. What is a Living Will?

A Living Will explains your wishes for medical care if you are unable to speak for yourself.

It tells doctors and your family what kind of life-sustaining treatment you want or do not want.

Examples include:

- Life support
- Feeding tubes
- Resuscitation (CPR)

In Michigan, Living Wills are not legally binding alone, but they are powerful guidance documents. They are typically paired with a Medical Power of Attorney.

Simple Explanation: A Living Will speaks FOR you when you cannot speak.

2. What is a HIPAA Authorization?

A HIPAA Authorization allows specific people to access your medical information.

Without it, doctors and hospitals may not share your health information—even with family.

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This document allows your chosen person to:

- Speak with doctors
- Access medical records
- Stay informed about your condition

Simple Explanation: This gives permission for someone to SEE and RECEIVE your medical information.

3. What is a Financial Power of Attorney?

A Financial Power of Attorney allows someone to handle your financial matters if you are unable to do so.

They can:

- Pay bills
- Manage bank accounts
- Handle property and investments

This document can be immediate or only effective if you become incapacitated.

Simple Explanation: This allows someone to HANDLE your money and financial responsibilities.

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4. What is a Medical Power of Attorney?

A Medical Power of Attorney (called Patient Advocate Designation in Michigan) allows someone to make medical decisions on your behalf.

This person can:

- Talk to doctors
- Approve or decline treatment
- Make end-of-life decisions

In Michigan, it must be signed and witnessed.

Simple Explanation: This allows someone to MAKE medical decisions for you if you cannot.

Quick Summary

Living Will → What YOU want medically

HIPAA Authorization → Who can SEE your medical info

Medical Power of Attorney → Who can MAKE medical decisions

Financial Power of Attorney → Who can HANDLE your finances

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Faith & Legacy Perspective

These documents are tools of stewardship. They ensure your voice is heard, your family is protected, and your wishes are honored with clarity and peace.

“A good person leaves an inheritance to their children’s children.” – Proverbs 13:22