Portable Orders for Life Sustaining Treatment (POLST)

The Department of Health (DOH) Office of Emergency Medical Services & Trauma System (OEMSTS) in conjunction with the Washington State Medical Association (WSMA) has implemented a new form, which will allow individuals to summarize their wishes regarding end of life treatment.

The new Portable Orders for Life Sustaining Treatment (POLST) form is a "portable" physician order form that describes the patient's code directions.

- It is intended to go with the patient from one health care setting to another.

- It represents a way of summarizing wishes of an individual regarding life-sustaining treatment identified in an advanced directive such as Healthcare Directive or Durable Power of Attorney for Healthcare and includes the following:

    1. Patient wishes for resuscitation
    2. Medical Interventions
    3. Antibiotics
    4. Artificial feedings

The form is available from WSMA via the link below.

Previously completed and signed EMS-No CPR forms will continue to be honored by prehospital EMS personnel.

More information on the POLST program and educational materials, including how to order the form, can be found at the WSMA website at https://doh.wa.gov/public-health-healthcare-providers/emergency-medical-services-ems-systems/portable-orders-life-sustaining-treatment-polst

HIPAA PERMITS DISCLOSURE OF POLST TO OTHER HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS AS NECESSARY

Washington POLST
Portable Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment
A Participating Program of National POLST

LAST NAME / FIRST NAME / MIDDLE NAME/INITIAL		
DATE OF BIRTH / /	GENDER (optional)	PRONOUNS (optional)

This is a medical order. It must be completed with a medical professional. Completing a POLST is always voluntary.
IMPORTANT: See page 2 for complete instructions.

MEDICAL CONDITIONS/INDIVIDUAL GOALS:	AGENCY INFO / PHONE (if applicable)

A — Use of Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR): When the individual has NO pulse and is not breathing.

CHECK ONE

☐ **YES – Attempt Resuscitation / CPR** *(choose FULL TREATMENT in Section B)*
☐ **NO – Do Not Attempt Resuscitation (DNAR) / Allow Natural Death**

When not in cardiopulmonary arrest, go to Section B.

B — Level of Medical Interventions: When the individual has a pulse and/or is breathing.

CHECK ONE

Any of these treatment levels may be paired with DNAR / Allow Natural Death above.

☐ **FULL TREATMENT – Primary goal is prolonging life by all medically effective means.** Use intubation, advanced airway interventions, mechanical ventilation, and cardioversion as indicated. Includes care described below.
Transfer to hospital if indicated. Includes intensive care.

☐ **SELECTIVE TREATMENT – Primary goal is treating medical conditions while avoiding invasive measures whenever possible.** Use medical treatment, IV fluids and medications, and cardiac monitor as indicated. ***Do not intubate.*** May use less invasive airway support (e.g., CPAP, BiPAP, high-flow oxygen). Includes care described below.
Transfer to hospital if indicated. Avoid intensive care if possible.

☐ **COMFORT-FOCUSED TREATMENT – Primary goal is maximizing comfort.** Relieve pain and suffering with medication by any route as needed. Use oxygen, oral suction, and manual treatment of airway obstruction as needed for comfort.
Individual prefers no transfer to hospital. EMS: consider contacting medical control to determine if transport is indicated to provide adequate comfort.

Additional orders (e.g., blood products, dialysis): _____

C — Signatures:

A legal medical decision maker *(see page 2)* may sign on behalf of an adult who is not able to make a choice. An individual who makes their own choice can ask a trusted adult to sign on their behalf, or clinician signature(s) can suffice as witnesses to verbal consent. A guardian or parent must sign for a person under the age of 18. Multiple parent/decision maker signatures are allowed but not required. Virtual, remote, and verbal consents and orders are addressed on page 2.

Discussed with: ☐ Individual ☐ Parent(s) of minor ☐ Guardian with health care authority ☐ Legal health care agent(s) by DPOA-HC ☐ Other medical decision maker by 7.70.065 RCW	X **SIGNATURE** – MD/DO/ARNP/PA-C **(mandatory)**	DATE **(mandatory)**
	PRINT – NAME OF MD/DO/ARNP/PA-C **(mandatory)**	PHONE

X **SIGNATURE(S)** – INDIVIDUAL OR LEGAL MEDICAL DECISION MAKER(S) **(mandatory)**	RELATIONSHIP	DATE **(mandatory)**
PRINT – NAME OF INDIVIDUAL OR LEGAL MEDICAL DECISION MAKER(S) **(mandatory)**		PHONE

Individual has: ☐ Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care ☐ Health Care Directive (Living Will)
Encourage all advance care planning documents to accompany POLST.

SEND ORIGINAL FORM WITH INDIVIDUAL WHENEVER TRANSFERRED OR DISCHARGED

WSMA Washington State Medical Association
Physician Driven, Patient Focused

Washington State Department of Health

All copies, digital images, faxes of signed POLST forms are valid.
See page 2 for preferences regarding medically assisted nutrition.
For more information on POLST, visit **www.wsma.org/POLST**.

HIPAA PERMITS DISCLOSURE OF POLST TO OTHER HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS AS NECESSARY

LAST NAME / FIRST NAME / MIDDLE NAME/INITIAL	DATE OF BIRTH / /

Additional Contact Information (if any)

LEGAL MEDICAL DECISION MAKER(S) (by DPOA-HC or 7.70.065 RCW)	RELATIONSHIP	PHONE
OTHER CONTACT PERSON	RELATIONSHIP	PHONE
HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONAL COMPLETING FORM	ROLE / CREDENTIALS	PHONE

Preference: Medically Assisted Nutrition (i.e., Artificial Nutrition)

☐ **Check here if not discussed**

This section is NOT required. This section, whether completed or not, does not affect orders on page 1 of form.

Preferences for medically assisted nutrition, and other health care decisions, can also be indicated in advance directives which are advised for all adults. The POLST does not replace an advance directive. When an individual is no longer able to make their own decisions, consult with the legal medical decision maker(s) regarding their plan of care, including medically assisted nutrition. Base decisions on prior known wishes, best interests of the individual, preferences noted here or elsewhere, and current medical condition. Document specific decisions and/or orders in the medical record.

Food and liquids to be offered by mouth if feasible and consistent with the individual's known preferences.

☐ Preference is to avoid medically assisted nutrition.

☐ Preference is to discuss medically assisted nutrition options, as indicated.*

Discuss short- versus long-term medically assisted nutrition (long-term requires surgical placement of tube).

* Medically assisted nutrition is proven to have no effect on length of life in moderate- to late-stage dementia, and it is associated with complications. People may have documents or known wishes to not have oral feeding continued; the directions for oral feeding may be subject to these known wishes.

Discussed with: ____ Individual ____ Health Care Professional ____ Legal Medical Decision Maker

Directions for Health Care Professionals

NOTE: An individual with capacity may always consent to or refuse medical care or interventions, regardless of information represented on any document, including this one.

Any incomplete section of POLST implies full treatment for that section. This POLST is valid in all care settings. It is primarily intended for out of hospital care, but valid within health care facilities per specific policy. The POLST is a set of medical orders. The most recent POLST replaces all previous orders.

Completing POLST

- Completing POLST is voluntary for the individual; it should be offered as appropriate but not required.
- Treatment choices documented on this form should be the result of shared decision making by an individual or their health care agent and health care professional based on the individual's preferences and medical condition.
- POLST must be signed by an MD/DO/ARNP/PA-C and the individual or their legal medical decision maker as determined by guardianship, DPOA-HC, or other relationship per 7.70.065 RCW, to be valid. Multiple decision maker signatures are allowed, but not required.
- Virtual, remote, and verbal orders and consents are acceptable in accordance with the policies of the health care facility. For examples, see FAQ at www.wsma.org/POLST.
- POLST may be used to indicate orders regarding medical care for children under the age of 18 with serious illness. Guardian(s)/parent(s) sign the form along with the health care professionals. See FAQ at www.wsma.org/POLST.

NOTE: This form is not adequate to designate someone as a health care agent. A separate DPOA-HC is required to designate a health care agent.

Honoring POLST

Everyone shall be treated with dignity and respect.

SECTIONS A AND B:

- No defibrillator should be used on an individual who has chosen "Do Not Attempt Resuscitation."
- When comfort cannot be achieved in the current setting, the individual should be transferred to a setting able to provide comfort (e.g., treatment of a hip fracture). This may include medication by IV route for comfort.
- Treatment of dehydration is a measure which may prolong life. An individual who desires IV fluids should indicate "Selective" or "Full Treatment."

Reviewing POLST

This POLST should be reviewed whenever:

- The individual is transferred from one care setting or care level to another.
- There is a substantial change in the individual's health status.
- The individual's treatment preferences change.

To void this form, draw a line across the page and write "VOID" in large letters. Notify all care facilities, clinical settings, and anyone who has a copy of the current POLST. Any changes require a new POLST.

Review of this POLST form: <u>Use this section to update and confirm order and preferences.</u>

This meets the requirement of establishing code status and basic medical guidance for admission to nursing and other facilities.

REVIEW DATE	REVIEWER	LOCATION OF REVIEW	REVIEW OUTCOME
			☐ No Change ☐ Form Voided ☐ New Form Completed

SEND ORIGINAL FORM WITH INDIVIDUAL WHENEVER TRANSFERRED OR DISCHARGED

Copies, digital images, and faxes of signed POLST forms are legal and valid. May make copies for records.
For more information on POLST, visit **www.wsma.org/POLST**.