



WISCONSIN CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE WISCONSIN POWER OF ATTORNEY FOR HEALTH CARE ADDENDUM

There are two forms with “Addendum” in the title. Do I need to complete both forms?

No. There are two forms with “Addendum” in the title because there are two versions of the form, one version for use by Catholics and one version for use by those who are not Catholic (such as a spouse, etc.). Only complete the version of the form that is applicable to you.

Do I have to do anything else besides completing the appropriate Addendum?

Yes. You must complete a valid Power of Attorney for Health Care (POAHC) document and reference the Addendum in that document in order for the Addendum to be legally recognized.

Under Wisconsin law, there are certain requirements that must be met in order for a document to be considered a valid POAHC document. The State of Wisconsin’s Power of Attorney for Health Care (POAHC) document, which is distributed by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS), meets these requirements and is valid when completed as required by law. The State of Wisconsin POAHC document is available free of charge from the DHS at <http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/forms/advdirectives/Index.htm>. To obtain the form by mail, send a request for the document along with a self-addressed stamped envelope to Power of Attorney, Division of Public Health, PO Box 2659, Madison, WI 53701-2659.

An attorney can also draft a POAHC document that meets Wisconsin’s legal requirements and instruct you on how to best incorporate the Addendum language into your POAHC.

How do I add the Addendum to my POAHC?

If you are using the State of Wisconsin’s POAHC form, you will notice a section entitled “STATEMENT OF DESIRES, SPECIAL PROVISIONS OR LIMITATIONS” on Page 4 of 6 of the form. On line 1 of this section, write "See separate Addendum." (The Addendum’s first page includes a blank line where you should reference this page (4 of 6) of the POAHC form.)

Make certain to complete and include the Addendum with the POAHC form. Ideally the POAHC form and Addendum should be signed, dated, and witnessed in the same manner and completed sequentially.

Can we complete one POAHC and Addendum for our entire family?

No. Each adult individual should complete a separate POAHC and Addendum.

What is different about the “revised” Addendum from the original version?

The newly revised edition of the Addendum provides greater clarity for users regarding the Church’s teaching on nutrition and hydration. Section II of the Addendum is entitled “DESIRES, PROVISIONS AND LIMITATIONS FOR MY HEALTH CARE” and details the

principles, concerns, and considerations that a health care agent should employ when making a decision for the person who completed the form. Item 3 of this section deals explicitly with the provision of nutrition and hydration and was altered in the revised form to provide a more comprehensive explanation of when the provision of nutrition and hydration is morally obligatory. The revised language better informs the health care agent of how to assess certain considerations, such as prognosis, physical comfort, and financial burden, and includes an instructive example.

What if I have already completed the original Addendum?

While the original document is in harmony with Church teaching, individuals are encouraged to use the revised version of the Addendum. If an individual has already completed the Addendum, he or she may want to consider completing the revised form in its place, or at a minimum, provide further clarification to their health care agent and others who may reference the original form by supplying them with the revised language for Item 3 in Section II of the Addendum.

Do I need to include the letter from the bishops with my POAHC and Addendum?

No. The letter is pastoral correspondence that does not need to be included with the legal documentation.