



MOLST

MASSACHUSETTS MEDICAL ORDERS FOR LIFE-SUSTAINING TREATMENT.

Massachusetts has joined an initiative to provide Massachusetts residents with more control about the care they receive towards the end of life through a process known as Medical Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment (“MOLST”).

MOLST provides End-of-Life Control

MOLST is a standardized form that translates a seriously ill patient’s preferences for certain medically appropriate life-sustaining treatments into *valid medical orders* that must be honored by health care professionals across all care settings.

MOLST is based on the ethical and legal principles of patient self-determination and respect for patient autonomy. Completing a MOLST form is voluntary. It is one possible outcome of ongoing

advance care planning discussions between a patient and the patient’s health care providers and loved ones. MOLST instructions are effective immediately and reflect the patient’s current health status & preferences.

MOLST is most suitable for patients of any age with serious medical conditions including, but not limited to: life-threatening illness or injury, chronic progressive disease, dementia, or medical frailty.



Best Practices

The original MOLST form stays with the patient. It is recommended that the MOLST form be printed on bright pink paper and kept in an easy-to-find place. EMTs and First Responders are trained to look on refrigerators, the backs of doors, the bedside area, and inside the patient’s wallet. Copies of the form are valid and should be retained in the patient’s medical record.

A valid MOLST must be signed by both the patient *and* the attending physician, nurse practitioner or physician’s assistant. A duly-authorized health care agent may sign on the patient’s behalf, but only if the patient has lost capacity. If a patient has not appointed a health care agent before losing the capacity to sign a MOLST form, no one is authorized to sign on his or her behalf unless a court-appointed guardian is granted the authority to do so.

Expansion of MOLST

MOLST is expanding statewide as a standard of practice to document and communicate patient preferences for care at the end of life. Expansion is endorsed by the Board of Registration in Medicine (and the Boards of Registration for nurses, nurse practitioners and physician assistants), the Massachusetts Medical Society and the Massachusetts Expert Panel on End of Life Care.

Visit molst-ma.org to *view a sample MOLST form* or to learn more about the efforts to expand the use of MOLST in Massachusetts. If you have any questions about the authority to sign a MOLST form, please contact Margolis & Bloom, LLP.