

# End-of-Life Options and the LGBTQ Community



## History

The LGBTQ and end-of-life options movements are deeply intertwined, helping each other achieve monumental progress over the years. From the charge to pass the nation's first death-with-dignity act in 1994 to allowing same-sex partners to act as healthcare proxies for one another, the two movements have decades of crossover.

Every year, Compassion & Choices participates in Pride month in June. We send out "Pride in a Box" toolkits to supporters and staff who want to represent Compassion & Choices at Pride events in their area. This resource is used for organizing in the LGBTQ community, and contains campaign materials, petitions and resources to start the conversation with people in your community about their end-of-life options.

Find links to helpful documents for end-of-life planning on the other side of this sheet.

## Advance Directive

An advance directive is an important set of documents that outline end-of-life priorities. It includes:

- » living will (“what I want”)
- » medical durable power of attorney (“who will speak for me”)

Find your state-specific advance directive and recommended supporting documents at [CompassionAndChoices.org/advance-directives](https://CompassionAndChoices.org/advance-directives)

Without an advance healthcare directive, end-of-life care decisions are often left for spouses or close family members to determine and administer. For patients in same sex relationships, the state in which they reside may or may not recognize their marriage or unmarried partner as fitting one of those categories, even after the Supreme Court of the United States of America recognized that same-sex marriage as a constitutional right guaranteed to all Americans. Some states have possibly not yet amended statutes that address healthcare decision making with regard to same sex marriages.

## Hospital Authorization Form

This form enables people not traditionally recognized as family members to gain priority visitation rights. Once completed and signed, this form it should be kept with the advance directive. Visit [CompassionAndChoices.org/hospital-visitation-authorization](https://CompassionAndChoices.org/hospital-visitation-authorization)

## End-of-Life Decisions Guide and Toolkit

Download “My End-of-Life Decisions: An Advance Planning Guide and Toolkit” with comprehensive end-of-life planning documents at [CompassionandChoices.org/eoldgt](https://CompassionandChoices.org/eoldgt)

## LGBTQ in Authorized States

In states where medical aid in dying has been authorized, our access campaigns work to ensure that regardless of a person’s circumstances they have equitable and fair access to the end-of-life options they need. Medical aid in dying allows terminally ill, mentally capable adults with a prognosis of six months or less to live the option to request, obtain and take medication — should they decide — to die peacefully in their sleep if their suffering becomes unbearable. Our team partners with leaders across the country to provide education and support through medical outreach, community engagement and technical assistance. We work to give individuals the tools they need to advocate effectively for themselves and their family members. [CompassionAndChoices.org/access-campaigns](https://CompassionAndChoices.org/access-campaigns)

## LGBTQ Voices

Visit [CompassionAndChoices.org/pride](https://CompassionAndChoices.org/pride) to read stories from LGBTQ Compassion & Choices supporters about why they’re involved in the end-of-life options movement.