

Consumer Pamphlet: Florida Power of Attorney

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Unless otherwise specified, the information in this pamphlet applies to powers of attorney signed on or after Nov. 1, 2014. Consult a lawyer regarding use and enforceability of powers of attorney executed before Oct. 1, 2011. Also, special rules for durable powers of attorney are noted.

About the Power of Attorney

WHAT IS A POWER OF ATTORNEY?

– WHAT ARE SOME USES OF A POWER OF ATTORNEY?

A power of attorney may be used to give another the right to sell a car, home or other property. A power of attorney might be used to allow another to access bank accounts, sign a contract, make health care decisions, handle financial transactions or sign legal documents for the principal. A power of attorney may give others the right to do almost any legal act that the maker of the power of attorney could do, including the ability to create trusts and make gifts.

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Powers and Duties of Agent



Using the Power of Attorney

– WHEN IS A POWER OF ATTORNEY EFFECTIVE?

The power of attorney is effective as soon as the principal signs it. However, a durable power of attorney executed before Oct. 1, 2011, that is contingent on the incapacity of the principal (sometimes called a “springing” power) remains valid but is not effective until the principal’s incapacity has been certified by a physician. Springing powers of attorney may not have been created after Sept. 30, 2011.

MUST THE PRINCIPAL DELIVER THE POWER OF ATTORNEY TO THE AGENT RIGHT AFTER SIGNING OR MAY THE PRINCIPAL WAIT UNTIL SUCH TIME AS THE SERVICES OF THE AGENT ARE NEEDED?

HOW DOES THE AGENT INITIATE DECISION-MAKING AUTHORITY UNDER THE POWER OF ATTORNEY?

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Termination of the Power of Attorney

– WHEN DOES A POWER OF ATTORNEY TERMINATE?

The authority of any agent under a power of attorney automatically ends when one of the following things happens:

- The principal dies.
- The principal revokes the power of attorney.
- A court determines that the principal is totally or partially incapacitated and does not specifically provide that the power of attorney is to remain in force.
- The purpose of the power of attorney is completed.
- The term of the power of attorney expires.

In any of these instances, the power of attorney is terminated. If, after having knowledge of any of these events, a person continues to act as agent, he or she is acting without authority.

WHEN DOES A PARTICULAR AGENT'S AUTHORITY TERMINATE?

WHAT IS THE PROCEDURE FOR A PRINCIPAL TO REVOKE A POWER OF ATTORNEY?

COURT PROCEEDINGS WERE FILED TO APPOINT A GUARDIAN FOR THE PRINCIPAL OR TO DETERMINE WHETHER THE PRINCIPAL IS INCAPACITATED. HOW DOES THIS AFFECT THE POWER OF ATTORNEY?

AUTHORITY AS AGENT HAS BEEN SUSPENDED BECAUSE GUARDIANSHIP PROCEEDINGS ARE PENDING FOR THE PRINCIPAL. NOW THERE IS AN EMERGENCY, BUT NO GUARDIAN HAS BEEN APPOINTED YET. WHAT NOW?





