

## **Recognized DNR Options in New Hampshire**

1. The following are the only recognized DNR options in New Hampshire:  
“P-DNR” (portable DNR) order: statewide recognized document of any color and/or a “DNR” (Portable DNR) wallet card signed by a physician or APRN.
2. Medical orders form documenting the patient’s name and signed by a physician or APRN and that clearly documents the DNR order.
3. DNR bracelet or necklace worn by a patient, inscribed with the patient’s name, date of birth (in numerical form), and “NH DNR” or “NH Do not resuscitate.”

**Note:** Under state law, a DNR bracelet or necklace may only be issued to patients who have a valid DNR order.

**Note:** Neither a Living will or a Durable Power of Attorney for Healthcare (DPOAH) form is as effective as a valid DNR order. A patient’s healthcare agent under a DPOAH may not direct EMS providers to withhold resuscitation in the absence of a valid DNR Order.



When a written DNR order is not available and a DPOAH is present and requests that resuscitation be withheld, contact online **Medical Control** for guidance.

## **For patients present or residing in a healthcare facility, the following is also acceptable**

A DNR order written by a physician or APRN at a nursing home, hospital, or other healthcare facility issued in accordance with the healthcare facility’s policies and procedures.

## **For Patients Being Transferred**

All forms of DNR identified above remain valid during a transfer from one healthcare facility to another.

## **DNR Orders from Other States**

EMS providers should honor any DNR order that is substantially similar to the NH statutory form. Medical orders from other states must be signed by a physician or APRN that clearly documents a DNR order.

## **Revocation of a DNR Order**

The following are the only recognized methods for revoking a DNR order:

### **Patients residing at home**

- A patient residing at home may revoke a DNR order by destroying the DNR order and removing a DNR bracelet or necklace.
- If the patient lacks the capacity to make health care decisions, the patient’s healthcare agent (under a DPOAH—see below) may revoke the DNR order by destroying the DNR order and removing any DNR bracelet or necklace.

### **Patients residing in a healthcare facility**

- A patient in a healthcare facility may revoke his or her previous consent to a DNR order by making a written, oral, or other act of communication to the attending physician or APRN or other professional staff of the healthcare facility.
- For a patient who lacks the capacity to make health care decisions, the patient’s healthcare agent (under a DPOAH—see below) may revoke a DNR order by notifying the attending physician or APRN in writing or, if a witness over the age of 18 is present, orally.

Policy Continues

# Do No Resuscitate (DNR) Orders, Provider Orders for Life Sustaining Treatment (POLST) and Advanced Directives

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## **Procedures not to be Performed**

If there is a valid DNR order and the patient is in cardiac or respiratory arrest, or cardiac or respiratory arrest is imminent, EMS providers should withhold the following procedures:

- Do not perform chest compressions or actively assist ventilations via BVM.
- Do not intubate or place advanced airway devices.
- Do not defibrillate.
- Do not administer resuscitation drugs to treat cardiac arrest or the rhythms identified below:
  - Ventricular fibrillation.
  - Pulseless ventricular tachycardia.
  - Pulseless electrical activity.
  - Asystole.

## **Procedures that may be performed**

If the patient is not in imminent cardiac or respiratory arrest, and has a valid DNR order appropriate medical treatment for all injuries, pain, difficult or insufficient breathing, hemorrhage, and/or other medical conditions must be provided.

EMS providers **MAY** perform any other measures, including comfort measures, for these patients, within their scope of practice per the usual treatment guidelines, including but not limited to:

- Oxygen therapy via nasal cannula, non-rebreather mask, and/or CPAP.
- Medications for treatment of pain, respiratory distress, dysrhythmias (except for those identified above).
- Intravenous fluid therapy for medication access.
- Mouth or airway suctioning.

## **NH statutory DNR Form**

Do not resuscitate Order.

As attending physician or APRN of [patient's name here] and as a licensed physician or advanced practice registered nurse, I order that this person **SHALL NOT BE Resuscitated** in the event of cardiac or respiratory arrest.

This order has been discussed with [patient's name here] (or, if applicable, with his/her agent,) [name of DPOAH], who has given consent as evidenced by his/her signature below.

Attending physician or APRN name: \_\_\_\_\_

Attending physician or APRN signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Patient signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Agent signature (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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## **Durable Power of Attorney for Healthcare**

Under a Durable power of attorney for healthcare, a patient may designate another person—a healthcare agent—to make health care decisions for the themselves.

- Before a healthcare agent may make decisions on behalf of the patient, the patient's attending physician or APRN must certify in writing that the patient lacks capacity (this certification is filed within the patient's medical record).
- A patient who, in the clinical judgment of the EMS provider, retains the capacity to make health care decisions, shall direct his or her health care, even where a healthcare agent has been appointed. That is, EMS providers shall follow the wishes of the patient rather than the healthcare agent unless the patient lacks the capacity to make health care decisions.
- The healthcare agent must make an informed decision. It is generally advisable for EMS providers to perform at least a preliminary assessment and inform the healthcare agent of the options for caring for the patient.



**Note:** in the absence of a valid DNR order, a healthcare agent does not have the authority to direct prehospital providers to withhold resuscitation in the event of a cardiac arrest. When a written DNR order is not available and a DPOAH is present and requests that resuscitation be withheld, contact online **Medical Control** for guidance.

## **Living Will**

A living will is intended to address patients who have been admitted to a healthcare facility. Living wills will rarely, if ever, have application in the prehospital environment.

## **POLST (Provider Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment)**

### **Section A**

When patients are in cardiac arrest and have indicated they do not want resuscitation in Section A but do not have a valid DNR, contact **Medical Control** for guidance.

### **Section B**

When confronted with a seriously ill patient who is not in cardiac arrest and a POLST form (yellow form), see [POLST Appendix A5](#) is available, utilize as follows:

- Full Treatment box is checked: Use all appropriate measures to stabilize/resuscitate patient.
- Limited Interventions box is checked: The maximum airway interventions are non-rebreather mask, CPAP, and suctioning. All appropriate IV medications may be utilized. No electrical therapies are to be provided.
- Comfort-focused Care box is checked: The maximum airway interventions are non-rebreather mask, suctioning and treatment of airway obstruction, as needed. Medications to relieve pain or discomfort.

### **PEARLS:**

- You must have a valid DNR order or DNR jewelry. Neither a Durable Power of Attorney or a Living Will may be treated as a DNR order.
- Neither a spouse nor a healthcare agent / durable power of attorney may direct you not to perform resuscitation unless the patient has a valid DNR order.
- Your decision to withhold resuscitation is protected under the New Hampshire DNR law as long as it is based on the good faith belief that you have been presented with a valid DNR order or DNR jewelry.