



What is Power of Attorney? A power of attorney is a legal document that gives one or more persons (“the attorney”) the power to make financial or legal decisions on behalf of another person according to their instructions. It is an inexpensive way to protect your assets!

Why Use It?

Advanced Planning: Appoint someone to make decisions for you when you want them to, or in case you lose your capacity to make decisions.

Peace of mind: Knowing someone you trust will manage your affairs if you are sick, away or incapacitated.

Convenience: You can appoint an attorney so you don’t have to deal with managing finances. You choose what your attorney can or can’t do!

Your Rights

- You can change or revoke power of attorney at anytime
- You don’t give away decision making authority you share it, you are still in charge

Be Careful! Attorneys can abuse their power. Your attorney must be someone you trust. Anyone can take advantage of you even your own children. Power of attorney abuse can take on any form, such as improper spending, stealing money, or taking your CPP or OAS benefits. To care for yourself, look out for yourself! It can be very difficult to talk about abuse. Don’t be ashamed or afraid to talk with someone you trust about your worries, or meet with a lawyer or notary if you have any questions or concerns. If someone chooses to abuse their privilege of being appointed as your attorney, it is completely their choice to do so. It is highly unlikely that this is somehow your fault nor could it have been prevented by you. If you have suspicions you are being taken advantage of or abused, reach out for help. **An attorney’s power can be broad or narrow. You get to decide what your attorney can and cannot do!**

Who Can Be an Attorney? Any one or more persons who are:

- An adult over the age of 18, mentally capable of acting on your behalf
- Able to understand and fill their duties
- Able and willing to act as per your wishes, beliefs, instructions, and values

Duties of Attorney? Being an attorney is not a privilege it is a responsibility!

- Act in the persons best interest, honestly and in good faith
- Keep records of everything & exercises care, diligence and skill when acting for the person

Source: (British Columbia Law Institute)