

144A.7 Procedure in absence of declaration.

1. Life-sustaining procedures may be withheld or withdrawn from a patient who is in a terminal condition and who is comatose, incompetent, or otherwise physically or mentally incapable of communication and has not made a declaration in accordance with [this chapter](#) if there is consultation and written agreement for the withholding or the withdrawal of life-sustaining procedures between the attending physician and any of the following individuals, who shall be guided by the express or implied intentions of the patient, in the following order of priority if no individual in a prior class is reasonably available, willing, and competent to act:

a. The attorney in fact designated to make treatment decisions for the patient should such person be diagnosed as suffering from a terminal condition, if the designation is in writing and complies with [chapter 144B](#).

b. The guardian of the person of the patient if one has been appointed, provided court approval is obtained in accordance with [section 232D.401, subsection 4](#), paragraph “a”, or [section 633.635, subsection 3](#), paragraph “b”, subparagraph (1). This paragraph does not require the appointment of a guardian in order for a treatment decision to be made under [this section](#).

c. The patient’s spouse.

d. An adult child of the patient or, if the patient has more than one adult child, a majority of the adult children who are reasonably available for consultation.

e. A parent of the patient, or parents if both are reasonably available.

f. An adult sibling.

2. When a decision is made pursuant to [this section](#) to withhold or withdraw life-sustaining procedures, there shall be a witness present at the time of the consultation when that decision is made.

3. [Subsections 1 and 2](#) shall not be in effect for a patient who is known to the attending physician to be pregnant with a fetus that could develop to the point of live birth with continued application of life-sustaining procedures. However, the provisions of [this subsection](#) do not impair any existing rights or responsibilities that any person may have in regard to the withholding or withdrawal of life-sustaining procedures.

[85 Acts, ch 3, §8; 87 Acts, ch 100, §1; 2002 Acts, ch 1061, §4; 2005 Acts, ch 38, §55; 2014 Acts, ch 1078, §1; 2020 Acts, ch 1063, §61](#)

Referred to in [§144A.8, 144D.1, 144D.4](#)

Subsection 1, paragraph b amended