



## Frequently Asked Questions: California End of Life Option Act

### What is the California End of Life Option Act?

Since 2016, the California End of Life Option Act (ELOA) allows physicians to prescribe life-ending medication to terminally-ill individuals. The law offers eligible Californians the option to obtain medical aid in dying (MAiD) under specific and carefully regulated conditions.

### How End of Life Choices California (EOLCCA) Can Help

EOLCCA is a non-profit organization with a mission to provide Californians with information and support to successfully navigate all legal end-of-life options. Whether you are considering this option for yourself, seeking information for a loved one, or a healthcare professional looking to support your patients, EOLCCA is here to guide you through every aspect of the law and provide free support you need during this important journey. See our website for extensive resources and information: <https://endoflifechoicesca.org/>  
Call us at **760-636-8009** to speak with one of our highly trained volunteers.

### Do I qualify for the ELOA?

#### Eligibility Requirements:

- **California resident 18 years or older**
- **Diagnosed with a terminal illness with life expectancy of six months or less** by two doctors
- **Demonstrate decision-making capacity** to two doctors
- **Independently able to self-ingest the medication** by mouth or by using a stomach tube or rectal catheter

### How to request Medical Aid in Dying (MAiD) in California

#### Oral and written requests:

- 1st oral request to your doctor (email also counts)
- 2nd oral request to your doctor **at least 48 hours** after the 1st request
- One-page form completed and signed by you and two witnesses  
    “[Request for an Aid-in-Dying Drug to End My Life in a Humane and Dignified Manner](#)”  
    Note: One witness cannot be a family member  
        Members of healthcare team providing MAiD cannot sign as a witness
- Deliver form to your doctor

## MAiD: MYTHS versus FACTS

**Myth #1:** It is too complicated.

**FACT:** Eligibility requirements for hospice and MAiD are similar. If your doctor chooses not to prescribe the medication (allowed by law), we will help you find a doctor who will prescribe.

**Myth #2:** MAiD requires too much paperwork.

**FACT:** You only need to complete a one-page form, "[Request for an Aid-in-Dying Drug to End My Life in a Humane and Dignified Manner](#)". This form is on [our EOLCCA website](#).

**Myth #3:** You must open and mix 100 capsules of medication.

**FACT:** A specialty pharmacy prepares the medication as a powder. It is mixed with two ounces of liquid. After taking it all within two minutes, the person falls into a deep sleep before dying peacefully.

**Myth #4:** A doctor or nurse must be there when MAiD medication is taken.

**FACT:** Anyone can mix the medication. We provide experienced, highly-trained volunteers to be there with clients and their loved ones for support, if requested, so that no one is alone.

**Myth #5:** You must live in California for at least six months to obtain MAiD.

**FACT:** The law says nothing about required length of residency. Any place of residence in California, whether on your own or with family/friends, is sufficient to seek medical care in the state.

**Myth #6:** MAiD is euthanasia.

**FACT:** Euthanasia is the administration of lethal medication by a medical professional to an individual. All MAiD laws in the US require people to take the medication themselves.

**Myth #7:** MAiD is suicide.

**FACT:** MAiD allows an individual to plan for the day, time, and place to die peacefully from a medical condition that has no chance of recovery. The law states that MAiD is not suicide.

**Myth #8:** Life insurance will not pay out for someone who uses MAiD.

**FACT:** By law, the death certificate shows the cause of death as the underlying disease (cancer, heart failure, etc.), never MAiD or suicide. Life insurance, trusts, wills, and contracts are not affected.

**Myth #9:** If I go through the process to get the MAiD the medication, I must take it.

**FACT:** You are in control and can always change your mind, even on your planned day of death. One-third of Americans in states with medical aid in dying who get the MAiD prescription never use it. But, knowing they can take the medication when they need it provides great comfort.