Medical Treatment Directives

Background—

In very isolated situations, a child who is terminally ill may be enrolled and actively participating in a public school. This policy sets forth what school personnel may and must do if a student subject to an "order for life sustaining treatment" directive faces a life-threatening medical emergency.

The law provides that an "order for life sustaining treatment" executed pursuant to Utah Code § 26B-2-802 may be directed to health care providers or emergency medical service providers licensed or certified under Utah Code Title 53, Chapter 2d, Utah Emergency Medical Services Act. An order for life sustaining treatment gives direction to health care providers, health care facilities, and emergency medical services providers regarding the specific health care decisions of the individual to whom the order relates. The law further provides that those licensed or certified emergency medical providers may be directed to withhold or withdraw all life-sustaining procedures. Professionals licensed pursuant to Utah Code § 53-2d-402 include paramedics, advanced emergency medical service technicians, emergency medical services technicians, emergency medical responders, behavioral emergency services technicians, and advanced behavioral emergency services technicians. Such professionals are granted immunity from liability for complying in good faith with an order for life sustaining treatment. Such professionals are also granted immunity for providing life-sustaining treatment notwithstanding a contrary directive in an order for life sustaining treatment.

Utah Code § 53-2d-402 (2025)

Utah Code § 26B-2-801(9) (2026)

Utah Code § 26B-2-802 (2026)

Policy—

1. Medical service providers who are school employees may have responsibilities related to the treatment or withholding of treatment for persons for whom a valid order for life sustaining treatment has been issued pursuant to Utah Code § 26B-2-802. Such providers may act in good faith to exercise their judgment regarding complying with an order for life sustaining treatment to withhold or withdraw life-sustaining treatment or to provide life-sustaining treatment despite a contrary directive in the order.
2. With the exception of situations governed by paragraph 1, above, it is the policy of the District that first aid shall be provided to any and all students in need of such assistance while under the control and/or supervision of the District. Orders for life sustaining treatment will not be followed by school district staff who are not licensed under Section 53-2d-402.
3. When a school employee or volunteer observes or becomes aware of a medical emergency involving a student, normal responsive actions should be taken, including the summoning of emergency medical personnel and administering first aid.
4. This should be done by school staff irrespective of whether an order for life sustaining treatment is in place and has been provided to the school with respect to that particular student.