

UNDERSTANDING YOUR POWER OF ATTORNEY

1. It is the policy of this office that you understand the meaning and effect of your power of attorney before signing it. The power of attorney is one of the strongest legal documents that an individual can give to another person. Accordingly, you must be making it of your own free will. It authorizes your agent (grantee) to act on your behalf and carry on your business in your absence.

PLEASE NOTE that a person or business does not have to accept or acknowledge your power of attorney: it is totally within their discretion.

2. A **GENERAL POWER OF ATTORNEY** authorizes your agent to do any number of acts relating to your property and personal affairs. Your agent can do anything you can legally do (i.e. sell your house, your car, your dog, take out a loan or credit card in your name, etc.). Because this document grants broad, virtually unlimited authority to your agent, it should be given to a person you trust completely.
3. A **SPECIAL POWER OF ATTORNEY** authorizes your agent to do one or more certain *specified* acts, such as selling your car, shipping your household goods or cashing your paycheck.
4. You should grant no greater power than is absolutely necessary. In addition, your agent (grantee) should be someone in whom you have absolute trust and confidence.
5. You will formally execute one copy of your power of attorney. You should give the original to your agent and keep a copy for yourself. Photocopies of your power of attorney are generally unacceptable because they do not contain the original signature or the notarial seal.
6. You should not make a power of attorney last any longer than is required to perform the acts covered. Local policy is that powers of attorney be limited to a maximum of one (1) year.
7. You have the option of choosing a **DURABLE** power of attorney that will remain valid in the case you become disabled, incapacitated, incompetent or missing in action.
8. A **BASIC** power of attorney becomes null and void in the event you become disabled, incapacitated, incompetent or missing in action.
9. You also have the option of choosing a **DURABLE and SPRINGING** power of attorney which will not take effect until you become disabled, incapacitated, incompetent or missing in action.
10. Otherwise, your power of attorney will automatically terminate upon the death of either you or your agent; or on the date that you specified in the document.
11. It is extremely difficult to revoke a power of attorney. The easiest way to revoke a power of attorney is to tear up the original. Should you desire to revoke your power of attorney prior to its stated termination date, you should seek the assistance of the Legal Assistance Office or of a civilian attorney in order to do so.
12. If you have additional questions concerning your power of attorney that are not answered in this document, please ask to speak to me before signing your power of attorney.