

Power of Attorney Doesn't Give You the Right to Represent Someone in Court

If you have a power of attorney (POA) for a family member or friend in Tennessee, you might assume that you can act on their behalf in any legal matter, including representing them in court. However, that's not the case.

A power of attorney gives you the authority to handle financial, medical, or other personal affairs for someone else, depending on the type of POA. It does not make you a lawyer. Tennessee law does not allow non-lawyers to represent others in court, even if they have a POA. This means that if your loved one needs to go to court for any reason, whether it's a lawsuit, eviction, or another legal matter, you cannot argue their case or file legal documents for them unless you are a licensed attorney.

If your loved one is unable to represent themselves in court, you may need to help them hire a lawyer. If you're unsure about your options, consulting an attorney is always a good idea.

Understanding this limitation can save you time, frustration, and potential legal trouble. While a power of attorney gives you important responsibilities, representing someone in court is not one of them.

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