



Karnataka Allows Right to Die with Dignity

[Source: IE](#)

Karnataka allowed the setting up **medical boards** in hospitals to facilitate **requests for dignified deaths**.

- It has been done as per **Supreme Court verdict** in the [Common Cause vs. Union of India Case, 2018](#) that upheld legal validity of [passive euthanasia](#).
 - Passive euthanasia involves **withholding or stopping life-sustaining treatments**, letting a person die naturally from their condition.
- The **Supreme Court's 2023 order affirms** the right to die with dignity under [Article 21](#) and eases norms for passive euthanasia.
- **Supreme Court Guidelines 2023:**
 - **Withdrawal of WLST: Primary and Secondary Medical Boards** to review requests for **Withdrawal of Life-Sustaining Therapy (WLST)** based on living wills.
 - **Living Will:** Living will (Advance Medical Directive) allows patients to **document their treatment wishes**, ensuring dignity in end-of-life decisions.
 - **Approval:** Procedure requires approval from the **treating doctor, two medical boards (three practitioners each)**, and the **District Health Officer's nominated practitioner**.
 - **Consent:** Medical boards' decisions require **consent from the next of kin** and approval from the [Judicial Magistrate of the First Class \(JMFC\)](#).
 - **Advanced Medical Directive (AMD):** AMD mandates appointing at **least two individuals** for healthcare decisions if the patient loses capacity.
 - AMD can be executed by **adults of sound mind**, filed digitally or on paper, and maintained in health records.

IN THE SUPREME COURT

2011: *Aruna Shanbaug v. Union of India* recognised that life-sustaining treatment could legally be withheld/ withdrawn even from persons without decision-making capacity.

2018: *Common Cause v. Union of India* recognised the right to die with dignity as a fundamental right under Article 21 of the Constitution



of India, and legalised the use of advance medical directives or 'living wills'.

2023: *Common Cause v. Union of India* simplified the process for making living wills and withholding/ withdrawing life-sustaining treatment by removing bureaucratic hurdles.

Read More: [SC Eases Norms for Passive Euthanasia](#)

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