Here are the two most important legal documents for your lifetime that everyone should have to make sure the people you trust can legally help you when you cannot help yourself.

The Durable Power of Attorney (“DPOA”) lets you pick someone as your agent that you trust to make specific decisions for you, especially when you are incapacitated.

In your DPOA you decide what your agent can do for you such as handling your banking, bill paying, investing, taxes, estate planning and real property.

The Healthcare Surrogate Designation (“HCSD”) lets you pick someone you trust as your surrogate to (1) make healthcare decisions for you when you cannot do so for yourself and (2) access your health information.
Why is a DPOA important?

If you become incapacitated or unable to carry out certain activities, the person you trust as your agent can do those activities for you.

Even when you are capable, your agent can handle certain activities for you.

Your DPOA is the most important legal document to have to control who can help you when you cannot do so yourself.

Why is a HCSD important?

If you become incapacitated or unable to make your medical and health decisions, the person you trust as your surrogate can do those decisions for you.

You can include what treatments you want or do not want.

You control who will make your medical decisions.

Decisions about your health care can be made faster in an emergency since your surrogate is identified and authorized to do so.

Your HCSD is the second most important legal document to have to control who can help you when you cannot do so yourself.