

**POWERS OF ATTORNEY-
AN OFTEN OVERLOOKED LEGAL TOOL TOWARD
FINANCIAL INDEPENDENCE**

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Too often clients seek our legal advice because a relative, old or young, has become incapacitated and can no longer handle his or her own financial affairs. Unless that individual has executed a *Power of Attorney*, a costly and often lengthy, legal proceeding to appoint the client as their representative for making those financial decisions is required. If the disabled individual had executed a *Power of Attorney* appointing the client as her or her Agent, no legal proceeding is required, and the financial affairs could easily be handled by the client, without interruption. Your **CWA Local 1180 Legal Benefit Fund** provides you with a consultation with an attorney, and the drafting of a *Power of Attorney*, at no charge!

A *Power of Attorney* is a document by which one person, known as the Principal, appoints another as his or her Agent, known as the Attorney-in-Fact, and confers upon that Agent certain power and authority, as is set forth in the *Power of Attorney*. It can be effective immediately upon the signing of the *Power of Attorney* and can grant a broad range of power and authority-this is known as the **General Power of Attorney**. If it grants only specific powers, then it is known as a **Limited Power of Attorney**. It can remain effective if the Principal becomes disabled and can no longer handle his or her affairs-this is known as a **Durable Power of Attorney**. Or, it can become effective upon the happening of a specified event to occur in the future, such as the principal becoming disabled –this is known as a **Springing Power of Attorney**. Whichever is chosen, the Principal can revoke it at any time, while they are mentally capable to make such a decision, and it is done in writing. A *Power of Attorney* automatically terminates upon the death of the Principal.

A *Power of Attorney* is a useful, legal document. Consult a lawyer through the **CWA Local 1180 Legal Benefit Fund** to discuss whether it can be a beneficial tool for you or a family member in insuring financial independence in the event of a disabling event.