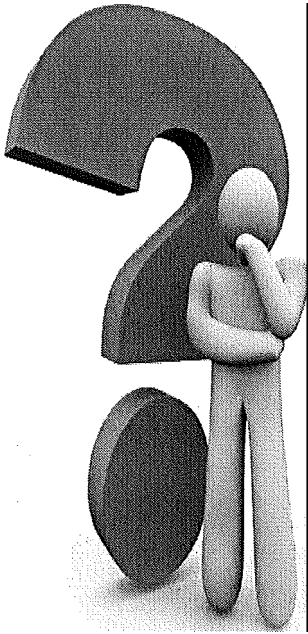


# ADULT GUARDIANSHIP FAQ'S



## Do I need guardianship?

If you are the primary caretaker or decision maker of an adult child or other family member who is unable to meet his own basic needs for food, shelter, medical care, or other daily living responsibilities, you might.

## What exactly is a guardian?

A person with both the ability and legal responsibility to make daily living decisions for the incapacitated person. This includes arranging doctors appointments, monitoring medicine, and paying bills.

## Who can be guardian?

Any person with a legitimate interest can be appointed. All immediate family must be notified. The court may appoint a public guardian if there is no suitable family or friend.

## What is the process?

You must file a petition. The person who you wish to care for will receive a court appointed lawyer known as a Guardian ad Litem. You will need a letter from a medical provider certifying that the person needs a guardian. You must appear in court. The court will hear the case and decide whether a guardian should be appointed and whether you are the appropriate person. Once appointed you will take an oath and be required to do an annual report to the local Department of Social Services. The process is complicated. You should seek legal representation to ensure that you get it right.

## Are there any alternatives?

Sometimes. If your loved one is able to understand the meaning of a power of attorney and desires for you to assist him, then a general durable power of attorney coupled with a special medical power of attorney may be a good alternative. If the family member just needs help managing his bills and other finances, then becoming a joint signer on banking accounts may be enough. Speaking with a lawyer will help you assess all alternatives.