



The Role of Guardian of the Person

As guardian of the person, you have obligations not only to the ward, but also to the court. The court is the actual legal guardian and you are an agent of the court. You are responsible for carrying out those obligations.

What is the Role of Guardian of the Person?

- Your primary duty is to protect the rights and best interests of the ward while maintaining his or her dignity and independence.
- Your obligations to the ward will be laid out in the court order appointing you as guardian. The order will tell you what decisions you are authorized to make on behalf of the ward.
- The court may authorize you to:
 - Ensure the ward's day-to-day needs are met. Those needs include proper clothing, nutrition, hygiene, and exercise and arranging for the ward's social, recreational, educational, or friendship requirements.
 - Decide where the ward will live. Housing options include assisted living facilities, group homes, or living with a relative. You must get court approval before moving the ward to new living arrangements. Contact the Court Clerk or Trust Office.
 - Coordinate medical care for the ward. This includes making sure the ward receives routine medical examinations and medications and sees medical specialists when needed. You may also be the person who consents to medical treatment and makes medical decisions on behalf of the ward. There are certain medical decisions that cannot be made without court approval, such as consenting to or refusing any procedure that poses a substantial risk to the ward's life or withdrawing life support to end the ward's life.
 - Locate services and benefits available to the ward. There are federal, state, county, and private agencies that help with case management, meals, transportation, health care, legal issues, and other matters. If the ward is 65 or older, your local Department of Aging can help you find resources for which the ward is eligible. If the ward is between 18 and 65, contact your local Department of Social Services for help.

Watch the Video



What are Your Duties to the Court?



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- File an Annual Report of Guardian of Disabled Person each year within 60 days after the end of the guardianship year. Use form [CC-GN-013](#).
- Get court approval before you move the ward, consent to or refuse any procedure that poses a substantial risk to the ward's life, or withhold life-sustaining treatment.
- Get court approval before making any decision not authorized in the order appointing you as guardian.
- If the ward dies or has recovered, file a petition with the court to terminate guardianship.

What are Good Guardianship Practices?

- Develop a care plan.
- Keep a list of medications and dosages.
- Maintain a list of healthcare professionals and contact information.
- Keep a log of visits to healthcare professionals.
- Petition the court to terminate the guardianship if the ward recovers from the disability that caused the need for a guardianship.
- Petition the court to terminate the guardianship if the ward dies and file a copy of the death certificate with the court.
- Notify the court if there is a significant change in the ward's condition or circumstances.
- Ask the court if you are not sure what to do.

Be sure to read the order appointing you as guardian of the person carefully. It will tell you what you can and cannot do as guardian of the person.

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