

Massachusetts Adult Guardianship

Glossary of Terms

Co-guardian	If two or more people are guardians for the Respondent, they are called “co-guardians.”
Conservator	<p>The court may appoint a Conservator to manage the Respondent’s finances if the court determines the Respondent is unable to do so themselves.</p> <p>A Conservator is usually only appointed when the Respondent has more than \$5,000 worth of money and assets.</p>
Contested Guardianship	<p>When people disagree about the guardianship.</p> <p>For example, there may be a disagreement about who should be guardian or whether the Respondent needs a guardian.</p>
Durable Power of Attorney	A document signed by the Respondent that appoints another adult person to manage and protect the Respondent’s finances.
Guardian	An adult, appointed by the court, who is authorized to make certain decisions on behalf of the Respondent, who is unable to make those decisions for him or herself.
Health Care Proxy	<p>A document signed by the Respondent that appoints another adult person to make health care decision on their behalf.</p> <p>It only goes into effect if the Respondent becomes unable to make their own health care decisions.</p>
Incapacitated Person	A person diagnosed with a medical condition that affects their ability to think, communicate, or make decisions that affect their physical safety or self-care, even with appropriate technological assistance.
Intellectual Disability	<p>This is about a person’s mental ability.</p> <p>A person is considered intellectually disabled if they have:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Substantial limitation in present functioning,2. Low intellectual functioning (IQ), and3. Limitations with two or more activities of daily living,

	All of which began before the person turned eighteen (18) years old.
Limited Guardianship	A type of guardianship that only grants the guardian decisional power over specific aspects of the Respondent's life. The Respondent keeps control over some aspects of their life.
Medical Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment (MOLST)	A document executed by the Respondent that describes a person's wishes about end-of-life medical care.
Petitioner	The person seeking guardianship for the Respondent.
General Guardianship	When the guardian has decisional power over all aspects of the Respondent's life, except those specifically excluded.
Representative Payee	The person who receives Social Security Disability or Supplemental Security Income on behalf of the Respondent.
Respondent	Person for whom guardianship is sought.
Rogers Monitor	A person appointed by the court who reports back to the court about the Respondent's treatment with extraordinary measures, such as use of antipsychotic medication.
Rogers Authority	The power to consent to extraordinary medical treatment, such as treatment with anti-psychotic drugs, electroconvulsive therapy (ECT), amputation, sterilization, abortion, and experimental medical procedures.
Temporary Guardianship	A guardianship for a limited time, usually no more than ninety (90) days, granted in situations where there is a likely risk of immediate and substantial harm to the health, safety, and welfare of the Respondent.
Uncontested Guardianship	When there is no disagreement about the guardianship.