

Massachusetts Adult Guardianship

Glossary of Terms

Co-guardian	When two people serve as guardians for the Respondent together, they are referred to as “co-guardians. Co-guardians must agree on all decisions and divide tasks.
Conservator	The person appointed by the court to handle the Respondent’s finances. Typically, a conservator is appointed when the amount to be managed is more than \$5,000.
Contested Guardianship	Situation in which parties disagree about guardianship.
Durable Power of Attorney	A document signed by the Respondent that appoints another person to act on the Respondent’s behalf to manage and protect finances.
Guardian	An adult, appointed by the court, who is authorized to make certain decisions on behalf of another adult who is unable to make those decisions for him or herself.
Health Care Proxy	A document executed by the Respondent that names a person to make health care decision on behalf of the Respondent if the Respondent becomes unable to make those decisions.
Incapacitated Person	A person, who for reasons other than advanced age or minority, has a clinically diagnosed condition that results in an inability to receive and evaluate information or make or communicate decisions to such an extent that the person lacks the ability to make necessary decisions for physical health, safety, or self-care, even with appropriate technological assistance.
Intellectual Disability	A person with substantial limitation in present functioning, low intellectual functioning (IQ), and limitations with two or more activities of daily living, all of which began prior to age eighteen (18)

Limited Guardianship	When the guardian only has decisional power over specific aspects of the Respondent's 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.
Plenary (or 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 when Rogers Authority is granted, who reports back to the court about the Respondent's treatment.
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 all parties agree to the guardianship.