



GUARDIANSHIPS

Guardianships are established and monitored by the Superior Court. Guardians are appointed through a legal process in which the rights of the individual are protected and the needs of the individual are reviewed. Guardianship Services of Seattle becomes involved when there is no family, when family are unable to serve due to distance or other factors, when there are irreconcilable differences among family members, or when there has been exploitation or neglect. When there is family support, GSS strives to foster and maintain positive contacts.

Guardianship is appropriate when the individual requires a surrogate to make or implement important decisions. The duties of a guardian can include property management, management of income and regular expenses, management of medical care and consent, crisis intervention, and ensuring that proper living arrangements are in place.

A guardian of the estate may be given authority to assume control of bank accounts, real property, personal property and other assets. The guardian of the estate often pays routine bills and manages other debts.

A guardian of the person is usually given responsibility for ensuring that the client's medical and personal care needs are met. Services provided vary with the client's physical condition, mental condition, living situation and attitude.

The guardian's authority is often conditioned or limited based on the abilities of the client. Co guardianships are sometimes created, allowing the family to share the duties of guardianship.

Our primary goal is to ensure that clients are treated as valued members of the community and are served in the most valued and least institutional settings possible. Many of our clients are able to live independent lives with supervision. We prefer to provide assistance to clients in their own homes. When this is not possible, we have considerable experience in developing non institutional residential settings. For clients in nursing homes we make regular visits, ensure that appropriate care is provided and advocate for less restrictive alternatives.

Guardians are required to make an initial report that includes a detailed description of the client's assets or care needs and the plans of the guardian. Guardians are also required to provide an annual court report of the guardian's activities.