

2023 Kansas Statutes

59-3075. Guardian's duties, responsibilities, powers and authorities. (a) (1) The individual or corporation appointed by the court to serve as the guardian shall carry out diligently and in good faith, the general duties and responsibilities, and shall have the general powers and authorities, provided for in this section as well as any specific duties, responsibilities, powers and authorities assigned to the guardian by the court. In doing so, a guardian shall at all times be subject to the control and direction of the court, and shall act in accordance with the provisions of any guardianship plan filed with the court pursuant to K.S.A. 59-3076, and amendments thereto. The court shall have the authority to appoint counsel for the guardian, and the fees of such attorney may be assessed as costs pursuant to K.S.A. 59-3094, and amendments thereto.

(2) A guardian shall become and remain personally acquainted with the ward, the spouse of the ward and with other interested persons associated with the ward and who are knowledgeable about the ward, the ward's needs and the ward's responsibilities. A guardian shall exercise authority only as necessitated by the ward's limitations. A guardian shall encourage the ward to participate in making decisions affecting the ward. A guardian shall encourage the ward to act on the ward's own behalf to the extent the ward is able. A guardian shall encourage the ward to develop or regain the skills and abilities necessary to meet the ward's own essential needs and to otherwise manage the ward's own affairs. In making decisions on behalf of the ward, a guardian shall consider the expressed desires and personal values of the ward to the extent known to the guardian. A guardian shall strive to assure that the personal, civil and human rights of the ward are protected. A guardian shall at all times act in the best interests of the ward and shall exercise reasonable care, diligence and prudence.

(b) A guardian shall have the following general duties, responsibilities, powers and authorities:

(1) If the ward is a minor, to have the custody and control of the minor and to provide for the minor's care, treatment, habilitation, education, support and maintenance;

(2) if the ward is an adult, to take charge of the person of the ward and to provide for the ward's care, treatment, habilitation, education, support and maintenance;

(3) to consider and either provide on behalf of the ward necessary or required consents or refuse the same;

(4) to assure that the ward resides in the least restrictive setting appropriate to the needs of the ward and which is reasonably available;

(5) to assure that the ward receives any necessary and reasonably available medical care, consistent with the provisions of K.S.A. 59-3077, and amendments thereto, when applicable, and any reasonably available nonmedical care or other services as may be needed to preserve the health of the ward or to assist the ward to develop or retain skills and abilities;

(6) to promote and protect the comfort, safety, health and welfare of the ward;

(7) to make necessary determinations and arrangements for, and to give the necessary consents in regard to, the ward's funeral arrangements, burial or cremation, the performance of an autopsy upon the body of the ward, and anatomical gifts of the ward, subject to the provisions and limitations provided for in K.S.A. 65-3228, K.S.A. 65-2893 and 65-1734, and amendments thereto; and

(8) to exercise all powers and to discharge all duties necessary or proper to implement the provisions of this section.

(c) A guardian shall not be obligated by virtue of the guardian's appointment to use the guardian's own financial resources for the support of the ward.

(d) A guardian shall not be liable to a third person for the acts of the ward solely by virtue of the guardian's appointment, nor shall a guardian who exercises reasonable care in selecting a third person to provide any medical or other care, treatment or service for the ward be liable for any injury to the ward resulting from the wrongful conduct of that third person.

(e) A guardian shall not have the power:

(1) To prohibit the marriage or divorce of the ward;

- (2) to consent, on behalf of the ward, to the termination of the ward's parental rights;
- (3) to consent to the adoption of the ward, unless approved by the court;
- (4) to consent, on behalf of the ward, to any psychosurgery, removal of any bodily organ or amputation of any limb, unless such surgery, removal or amputation has been approved in advance by the court, except in an emergency and when necessary to preserve the life of the ward or to prevent serious and irreparable impairment to the physical health of the ward;
- (5) to consent, on behalf of the ward, to the sterilization of the ward, unless approved by the court following a due process hearing held for the purposes of determining whether to approve such, and during which hearing the ward is represented by an attorney appointed by the court;
- (6) to consent, on behalf of the ward, to the performance of any experimental biomedical or behavioral procedure on the ward, or for the ward to be a participant in any biomedical or behavioral experiment, without the prior review and approval of such by either an institutional review board as provided for in title 45, part 46 of the code of federal regulations, or if such regulations do not apply, then by a review committee established by the agency, institution or treatment facility at which the procedure or experiment is proposed to occur, composed of members selected for the purposes of determining whether the proposed procedure or experiment:
 - (A) Does not involve any significant risk of harm to the physical or mental health of the ward, or the use of aversive stimulants, and is intended to preserve the life or health of the ward or to assist the ward to develop or regain skills or abilities; or
 - (B) involves a significant risk of harm to the physical or mental health of the ward, or the use of an aversive stimulant, but that the conducting of the proposed procedure or experiment is intended either to preserve the life of the ward, or to significantly improve the quality of life of the ward, or to assist the ward to develop or regain significant skills or abilities, and that the guardian has been fully informed concerning the potential risks and benefits of the proposed procedure or experiment or of any aversive stimulant proposed to be used, and as to how and under what circumstances the aversive stimulant may be used, and has specifically consented to such;
- (7) to consent, on behalf of the ward, to the withholding or withdrawal of life-saving or life-sustaining medical care, treatment, services or procedures, except:
 - (A) In accordance with the provisions of any declaration of the ward made pursuant to the provisions of K.S.A. 65-28,101 through 65-28,109, and amendments thereto; or
 - (B) if the ward, prior to the court's appointment of a guardian pursuant to K.S.A. 59-3067, and amendments thereto, shall have executed a durable power of attorney for health care decisions pursuant to K.S.A. 58-629, and amendments thereto, and such shall not have been revoked by the ward prior thereto, and there is included in such power of attorney any provision relevant to the withholding or withdrawal of life-saving or life-sustaining medical care, treatment, services or procedures, then the guardian shall have the authority to act as provided for in such power of attorney, even if the guardian has revoked or otherwise amended that power of attorney pursuant to the authority of K.S.A. 58-627, and amendments thereto, or the guardian may allow the agent appointed by the ward to act on the ward's behalf if the guardian has not revoked or otherwise amended that power of attorney; or
 - (C) in the circumstances where the ward's treating physician shall certify in writing to the guardian that the ward is in a persistent vegetative state or is suffering from an illness or other medical condition for which further treatment, other than for the relief of pain, would not likely prolong the life of the ward other than by artificial means, nor would be likely to restore to the ward any significant degree of capabilities beyond those the ward currently possesses, and which opinion is concurred in by either a second physician or by any medical ethics or similar committee to which the health care provider has access established for the purposes of reviewing such circumstances and the appropriateness of any type of physician's order which would have the effect of withholding or withdrawing life-saving or life-sustaining medical care, treatment, services or procedures. Such written certification shall be approved by an order issued by the court;
- (8) to exercise any control or authority over the ward's estate, except if the court shall specifically authorize such. The court may assign such authority to the guardian,

including the authority to establish certain trusts as provided in K.S.A. 59-3080, and amendments thereto, and may waive the requirement of the posting of a bond, only if:

(A) Initially, the combined value of any funds and property in the possession of the ward or in the possession of any other person or entity, but which the ward is otherwise entitled to possess, equals \$25,000 or less; and

(B) either the court requires the guardian to report to the court the commencement of the exercising of such authority, or requires the guardian to specifically request of the court the authority to commence the exercise of such authority, as the court shall specify; and

(C) the court also requires the guardian, whenever the combined value of such funds and property exceeds \$25,000, to:

(i) File a guardianship plan as provided for in K.S.A. 59-3076, and amendments thereto, which contains elements similar to those which would be contained in a conservatorship plan as provided for in K.S.A. 59-3078, and amendments thereto;

(ii) petition the court for appointment of a conservator as provided for in K.S.A. 59-3058, 59-3059 or 59-3060, and amendments thereto; or

(iii) notify the court as the court shall specify that the value of the conservatee's estate has equaled or exceeded \$25,000, if the court has earlier appointed a conservator but did not issue letters of conservatorship pending such notification;

(9) to place the ward in a treatment facility as defined in K.S.A. 59-3077, and amendments thereto, except if authorized by the court as provided for in that section; or

(10) to access digital assets of the ward except if authorized by the court pursuant to K.S.A. 2023 Supp. 58-4814, and amendments thereto.

(f) The guardian shall file with the court reports concerning the status of the ward and the actions of the guardian as the court shall direct pursuant to K.S.A. 59-3083, and amendments thereto.

History: L. 2002, ch. 114, § 26; L. 2007, ch. 127, § 30; L. 2017, ch. 19, § 22; L. 2023, ch. 65, § 6; July 1.