

RCW 11.130.265 Basis for appointment of guardian for adult. (1)

On petition and after notice and hearing, the court may:

(a) Appoint a guardian for an adult if the court finds by clear and convincing evidence that:

(i) The respondent lacks the ability to meet essential requirements for physical health, safety, or self-care because the respondent is unable to receive and evaluate information or make or communicate decisions, even with appropriate supportive services, technological assistance, or supported decision making;

(ii) Appointment is necessary to prevent significant risk of harm to the adult respondent's physical health, safety, or self-care; and

(iii) The respondent's identified needs cannot be met by a protective arrangement instead of guardianship or other less restrictive alternative; or

(b) With appropriate findings, treat the petition as one for a conservatorship under Article 4 of this chapter or protective arrangement under Article 5 of this chapter, issue any appropriate order, or dismiss the proceeding.

(2) The court shall grant a guardian appointed under subsection (1) of this section only those powers necessitated by the demonstrated needs and limitations of the respondent and issue orders that will encourage development of the respondent's maximum self-determination and independence. The court may not establish a full guardianship if a limited guardianship, protective arrangement instead of guardianship, or other less restrictive alternative would meet the needs of the respondent.

(3) A determination by the court that a basis exists under subsection (1) of this section for the appointment of a guardian and on the issue of the rights that will be retained or restricted by the appointment of a guardian is a legal decision, not a medical decision. The determination must be based on a demonstration of management insufficiencies over time in the area of physical health, safety, or self-care. Age, eccentricity, poverty, or medical diagnosis alone are not sufficient basis under subsection (1) of this section to justify a determination that a guardian should be appointed for the respondent. [2020 c 312 § 308; 2019 c 437 § 301.]

Effective dates—2020 c 312: See note following RCW 11.130.915.