

# Guardianship Services



In New York every person is considered to be a legally emancipated adult at age 18, regardless of disability status.

Establishing a guardianship is a complex issue, because guardianship removes an individual's legal rights and is considered a highly restrictive course of action. Less restrictive ways to support a person in making major life decisions should be considered first. There are currently several advocacy groups in the state who are working to make legal changes to guardianship.



If guardianship is appropriate for an individual, it must be obtained through the Surrogate Court. Guardianship is not an automatic process conferred on parents, family members, or caretakers. When guardianship is pursued, two medical providers must attest that the person subject to a guardianship is legally incapable of making decisions and managing his or her affairs in such areas as finances, medical/healthcare issues, choice of program services, areas of daily living, and more.

AHRC Suffolk encourages families to seek the advice of an attorney/eldercare provider as a means to navigate these issues in a thoughtful manner. When a person residing in Suffolk County meets the criteria for guardianship and has no one to fulfill this role, The Arc New York may be willing to come on as the legal guardian. Families must apply through the AHRC Suffolk Chapter and be approved by The Arc New York.



To learn more, please contact  
Wendy Tigchelaar, Guardianship Coordinator,  
at 631-585-0100 x. 502 or  
email [wtigchelaar@suffahrc.org](mailto:wtigchelaar@suffahrc.org)