

Introduced: 1/13/81  
Referred: Judiciary

1 IN THE SENATE

BY ZIEGLER AND FAHRENKAMP

2 SENATE BILL NO. 3

3 IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

4 TWELFTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

5 A BILL

6 For an Act entitled: "An Act relating to guardians and conservators; and  
7 providing for an effective date."

8 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

9 \* Section 1. AS 13.26.005(1) is repealed and re-enacted to read:

10 (1) "incapacitated person" means a person whose ability to  
11 receive and evaluate information or to communicate decisions is impaired  
12 for reasons other than minority to the extent that he lacks the ability  
13 to provide for himself the essential requirements for his physical  
14 health or safety without court-ordered assistance;

15 \* Sec. 2. AS 13.26.005 is amended by adding new paragraphs to read:

16 (5) "essential requirements for physical health or safety"  
17 means the health care, food, shelter, clothing, personal hygiene, and  
18 protection without which serious physical injury or illness is more  
19 likely than not to occur;

20 (6) "partial guardian" means a guardian who possesses fewer  
21 than all of the legal duties and powers of a full guardian, and whose  
22 rights, powers, and duties have been specifically enumerated by court  
23 order;

24 (7) "full guardian" means a guardian who possesses the legal  
25 duties and powers enumerated in AS 13.26.150(c);

26 (8) "visitor" means a person trained or experienced in law,  
27 medical care, mental health care, pastoral care, education, rehabilita-  
28 tion, or social work, who is an officer, employee, or special appointee  
29 of the court with no personal interest in the proceedings;

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1 (9) "guardian" includes full guardian and partial guardian;

2 (10) "respondent" means a person who, in a guardianship pro-  
3 ceeding under this chapter, is alleged to be incapacitated and for whom  
4 the appointment of a guardian or alternative assistance is sought;  
5 "respondent" includes a person seeking the appointment of a guardian or  
6 alternative assistance for himself.

7 \* Sec. 3. AS 13.26 is amended by adding a new section to read:

8 Sec. 13.26.013. COURT RECORDS OF PROCEEDINGS; ACCESS; SEALING.

9 (a) A notice of the filing of a petition, a summary of all formal  
10 proceedings, and a dispositional order or modification or termination of  
11 a dispositional order relating to a proceeding under this chapter shall  
12 be available for public inspection. All other information contained in  
13 the court records relating to a proceeding under this chapter is con-  
14 fidential and available only upon court order for good cause shown or to  
15 the following persons:

16 (1) the person who is the subject of the court record, his  
17 attorney, or his guardian ad litem;

18 (2) a person designated by the person who is the subject of  
19 the court record;

20 (3) the guardian of the person who is the subject of the  
21 court record or the attorney of the guardian;

22 (4) the conservator of the estate of the person who is the  
23 subject of the court record or the attorney of the conservator;

24 (5) a party to the proceeding and his attorney;

25 (6) the judge or judges hearing or reviewing the matter; and

26 (7) a member of the clerical or administrative staff of the  
27 court if access is essential for authorized internal administrative  
28 purposes.

29 (b) Upon finding that a petition under this chapter was malicious,

1 frivolous, or without just cause, the court may order that all informa-  
2 tion contained in the court records relating to the proceeding be sealed  
3 and that the information be disclosed only upon court order for good  
4 cause shown.

5 \* Sec. 4. AS 13.26 is amended by adding a new section to article 3 to  
6 read:

7 Sec. 13.26.090. PURPOSE AND BASIS FOR GUARDIANSHIP. Guardianship  
8 for an incapacitated person shall be used only as is necessary to pro-  
9 mote and protect the well-being of the person, shall be designed to  
10 encourage the development of maximum self-reliance and independence of  
11 the person, and shall be ordered only to the extent necessitated by the  
12 person's actual mental and physical limitations. An incapacitated  
13 person for whom a guardian has been appointed is not presumed to be  
14 incompetent and retains all legal and civil rights except those which  
15 have been expressly limited by court order or have been specifically  
16 granted to the guardian by the court.

17 \* Sec. 5. AS 13.26.095 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

18 (e) A testamentary appointment of a guardian by the parent of an  
19 incapacitated person, or by the spouse of a married incapacitated person,  
20 may grant all guardianship powers and duties which the deceased parent  
21 or spouse held, subject to modification by the court under AS 13.26.125.

22 \* Sec. 6. AS 13.26.105 is repealed and re-enacted to read:

23 Sec. 13.26.105. PETITION. (a) Any person may petition the court  
24 for a finding of incapacity and the appointment of a guardian for himself  
25 or for another person.

26 (b) The petition for appointment of a guardian shall state

27 (1) the name, age, and address of the petitioner and his  
28 relationship to the respondent;

29 (2) the name, age, and present address of the respondent;

1 (3) the name and address of the person or facility presently  
2 having care, custody, guardianship, or conservatorship of the respon-  
3 dent, if any, and the existence of any other restrictions on the legal  
4 capacity of the respondent to act in his own behalf;

5 (4) the nature and degree of the alleged incapacity;

6 (5) the particular type and duration of appointment and the  
7 protection and assistance being sought;

8 (6) the names and addresses, unless they are unknown and  
9 cannot reasonably be ascertained, of the individuals most closely re-  
10 lated to the respondent by blood or marriage;

11 (7) the facts supporting the allegations of incapacity and  
12 the need for appointment of a guardian;

13 (8) the names and addresses of persons known to the peti-  
14 tioner who have knowledge that might prove helpful in determining the  
15 capacity and needs of the respondent.

16 (c) The petition may also nominate a guardian and include a re-  
17 quest for temporary guardianship as provided in AS 13.26.140 if the  
18 petitioner believes there is an imminent danger that the physical health  
19 or safety of the respondent will be seriously impaired during the pen-  
20 dency of the guardianship proceeding. A request for temporary guard-  
21 ianship shall specify facts which cause the petitioner to believe that a  
22 temporary guardian is necessary.

23 \* Sec. 7. AS 13.26 is amended by adding new sections to read:

24 Sec. 13.26.106. INITIAL COURT PROCEDURES. (a) Upon the filing of  
25 a petition, the court shall schedule a hearing on the issue of incapac-  
26 ity. The hearing shall be conducted within 120 days from the filing of  
27 the petition unless the court postpones the hearing for cause.

28 (b) The respondent is entitled to be represented by an attorney in  
29 the proceedings. If the respondent is financially unable to employ an

1 attorney to assist him, the court shall appoint an attorney to represent  
2 the respondent in the proceedings.

3 (c) The court shall appoint a visitor as defined in AS 13.26.-  
4 005(8). The visitor shall arrange for evaluations to be performed and  
5 prepare a written report to be filed with the court. The court shall  
6 also appoint an expert who has expertise in regard to the alleged or  
7 admitted incapacity to investigate the issue of incapacity.

8 (d) The visitor shall interview the respondent and the person  
9 seeking appointment as guardian, if any. The visitor shall conduct the  
10 interviews and investigations necessary to prepare his report and shall  
11 arrange for the respondent to be examined by the expert appointed under  
12 (c) of this section. The expert's written report shall be attached to  
13 the visitor's report.

14 (e) Interviews and examinations shall take place in the respon-  
15 dent's usual residence unless

16 (1) the respondent consents to being examined or interviewed  
17 in a medical or mental health facility; or

18 (2) the visitor considers it necessary to conduct interviews  
19 or examinations in a medical or mental health facility.

20 Sec. 13.26.107. NOTICE OF RIGHTS. (a) Upon appointment, the  
21 visitor shall promptly

22 (1) explain to the respondent, in a language or communication  
23 system he can understand, the purpose of the interview and possible  
24 consequences of the proceedings;

25 (2) serve a copy of the petition on the respondent in accor-  
26 dance with the procedure described in AS 13.06.110;

27 (3) explain and provide to the respondent a written statement  
28 of the following rights:

29 (A) he may communicate with an attorney or an expert in

1 the field of the alleged incapacity before proceeding with the  
2 interview;

3 (B) if he does not have an attorney, an attorney, whose  
4 name, address, and telephone number shall be included in the state-  
5 ment, will be designated to advise and represent him before and at  
6 any judicial hearings, and the attorney may arrange for an examina-  
7 tion and consultation with an expert; and

8 (C) he may, instead, employ an attorney or expert of his  
9 own choice; and

10 (4) offer assistance to the respondent in contacting an  
11 attorney.

12 (b) A substantive interview of the respondent or other investi-  
13 gation may not be conducted until the provisions of (a) of this section  
14 have been satisfied.

15 Sec. 13.26.108. VISITOR'S REPORT. (a) The visitor shall file  
16 with the court his evaluation report, proof of service of the petition  
17 upon the respondent, and proof of service of his report upon the respon-  
18 dent, his attorney, and the petitioner, within 90 days after the date on  
19 which the petition was filed.

20 (b) The visitor shall, as part of the evaluation report, explain  
21 alternatives to guardianship and recommend any which will safeguard the  
22 respondent's essential requirements for physical health and safety. The  
23 evaluation report may recommend personal guardianship only if the visitor  
24 determines that the needs of the respondent cannot be met by other  
25 alternatives.

26 (c) The evaluation report shall include

27 (1) the results and analyses of medical and other tests and  
28 examinations performed which describe the respondent's mental, emo-  
29 tional, physical, and educational condition, adaptive behavior and

1 social skills, and which specify the data on which the description is  
2 based;

3 (2) recommendations regarding the types and extent of assis-  
4 tance, if any, necessary to meet the essential requirements for the  
5 physical health and safety of the respondent;

6 (3) an evaluation of the respondent's need for mental health  
7 treatment and whether there is a substantial probability that available  
8 treatment will significantly improve his mental condition;

9 (4) an evaluation of the respondent's need for educational or  
10 vocational assistance or personal care and whether these can be made  
11 available to the respondent;

12 (5) an evaluation of the probability that the incapacity may  
13 significantly lessen, and the type of services or treatment which will  
14 facilitate improvement in the respondent's condition or skills;

15 (6) a list of the names and addresses of all individuals who  
16 examined, interviewed, or investigated the respondent and of the names  
17 and addresses of all persons contacted in preparation of the report;

18 (7) a summary of the information which

19 (A) was supplied by the persons described in (6) of this  
20 subsection; and

21 (B) supports the conclusions of the report;

22 (8) a description of the alternatives to guardianship which  
23 were considered and not recommended and an explanation of why they are  
24 not feasible to meet the respondent's needs;

25 (9) a description of the present home and living arrangement  
26 of the respondent and of any other proposed placement and a recommenda-  
27 tion for the respondent's living arrangement that provides the least  
28 restrictive setting necessary to protect the respondent from serious  
29 illness, injury, or disease; and

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(10) a specification of the financial resources of the respondent, his entitlements to insurance benefits, and publicly operated or sponsored health, mental health, and welfare assistance which might be employed in the provision of services to him.

(d) If personal guardianship is recommended, the evaluation report required under (c) of this section shall include a guardianship outline which identifies

(1) potential guardians;

(2) the specific services necessary and available to protect the respondent from serious injury, illness, or disease and, to the extent possible, to return the respondent to full capacity in handling his own affairs;

(3) the means by which the services described in (2) of this subsection may be financed;

(4) the specific, least restrictive authority needed by the guardian to provide the services described in (2) of this subsection.

(e) The petitioner and the respondent may file responses to the evaluation report within 10 days of receiving it. The court may grant additional time if requested for cause.

Sec. 13.26.109. EVALUATIONS: RIGHT TO REMAIN SILENT; RESPONDENT'S ATTORNEY OR EXPERT. (a) A ward or respondent has the right to refuse to respond to questions in the course of examinations and evaluations. However, he may be required to submit to interviews for the purpose of ascertaining whether he lacks the capacity to make informed decisions about care and treatment services.

(b) Statements of a ward or respondent in the course of evaluations, examinations, and treatment under AS 13.26.090 - 13.26.155 are privileged, confidential, and not admissible without the ward's or respondent's consent in any civil or criminal proceeding other than

1 proceedings under AS 13.26.090 - 13.26.155. A ward or respondent at all  
2 times has the right to refuse to answer questions if the answers may  
3 tend to incriminate him.

4 (c) During any interview or testing conducted under AS 13.26.090 -  
5 13.26.155, a ward or respondent has the right to be accompanied by an  
6 attorney or expert of his own choosing.

7 (d) The court, if requested by a ward or respondent in preparation  
8 for and in connection with a hearing held under AS 13.26.090 - 13.26.155,  
9 shall appoint an expert having expertise in regard to the alleged or  
10 admitted incapacity to examine the respondent and testify on his behalf.  
11 The request shall be filed in court at least five days before the hear-  
12 ing. An expert appointed under this subsection may be the same expert  
13 appointed under AS 13.26.106(c).

14 Sec. 13.26.111. DUTIES AND POWERS OF RESPONDENT'S ATTORNEY. (a)  
15 The principal duty of an attorney representing a ward or respondent is  
16 to represent the ward or respondent zealously. Zealous representation  
17 includes at least

18 (1) personal interviews with the ward or respondent; unless  
19 good cause exists, the first contact with the ward or respondent shall  
20 be at least two weeks before the hearing;

21 (2) explaining, if possible, to the ward or respondent in  
22 terms which the ward or respondent can understand, the nature and  
23 possible consequences of the proceeding, the alternatives which are  
24 available, and the rights to which he is entitled;

25 (3) securing and presenting evidence and testimony and offer-  
26 ing arguments which would tend to protect the ward's or respondent's  
27 rights and which would tend to further his interests.

28 (b) To the maximum extent possible, the ward or respondent shall  
29 remain responsible for determining his interests. However, his attorney

1 may seek appointment of a guardian ad litem if the circumstances of  
2 AS 13.26.112 apply.

3 Sec. 13.26.112. APPOINTMENT OF A GUARDIAN AD LITEM. (a) Upon the  
4 request of a ward, a respondent, or the attorney of a ward or respondent,  
5 the court shall appoint a guardian ad litem to protect the rights of the  
6 ward or respondent in proceedings under AS 13.26.090 - 13.26.155 if the  
7 court is satisfied that because of impaired ability effectively to  
8 receive and evaluate information regarding the proceedings or because of  
9 impaired ability to communicate decisions regarding the proceedings, the  
10 ward or respondent cannot determine his own interests without assistance,  
11 and

- 12 (1) a guardian has not been appointed;
- 13 (2) his interests and those of his guardian conflict; or
- 14 (3) the appointment is otherwise in the interests of justice.

15 (b) The guardian ad litem shall assist the ward or respondent in  
16 determining his interests in regard to the legal proceedings in which he  
17 is involved. If the ward or respondent is entirely incapable of deter-  
18 mining his own interests, the guardian ad litem shall make that deter-  
19 mination and advise the court and counsel for all parties accordingly.  
20 The guardian ad litem shall

- 21 (1) inquire thoroughly into all the circumstances that a  
22 prudent individual in the position of the ward or respondent would  
23 consider in determining his own interests in the proceedings; and
- 24 (2) encourage the ward or respondent to participate, to the  
25 maximum extent of his capability, in all decisions and to act on his own  
26 behalf on all matters in which he is able.

27 (c) The attorney may also be the guardian ad litem for the ward or  
28 respondent if there is no other party readily available and able to  
29 serve as a guardian ad litem and whose interests would not conflict with

1 those of the ward or respondent.

2 Sec. 13.26.113. HEARING. (a) At the hearing scheduled under  
3 AS 13.26.106, the respondent has the right to

4 (1) present evidence on his own behalf;

5 (2) cross-examine witnesses who testify against him;

6 (3) remain silent;

7 (4) have the hearing open or closed to the public as he  
8 elects;

9 (5) be present unless the court determines that his conduct  
10 in the courtroom is so disruptive that the proceedings cannot reasonably  
11 continue with him present;

12 (6) be tried by jury on the issue of incapacity.

13 (b) The burden of proof by clear and convincing evidence is upon  
14 the petitioner, and a determination of incapacity shall be made before  
15 consideration of proper disposition.

16 (c) If the respondent is found to be incapacitated, the court  
17 shall determine the extent of the incapacity and the feasibility of  
18 alternatives to guardianship to meet the needs of the respondent.

19 (d) If it is found that alternatives to guardianship are feasible  
20 and adequate to meet the needs of the respondent, the court may dismiss  
21 the action and order an alternative form of protection.

22 (e) If it is found that the respondent is able to perform some,  
23 but not all, of the functions necessary to care for himself, and al-  
24 ternatives to guardianship are not feasible or adequate to provide for  
25 the needs of the respondent, the court may appoint a partial guardian,  
26 but may not appoint a full guardian.

27 (f) If it is found that the respondent is totally without capacity  
28 to care for himself and that a combination of alternatives to guardian-  
29 ship and the appointment of a partial guardian is not feasible or ade-

1 quate to meet the needs of the respondent, the court may appoint a full  
2 guardian.

3 (g) If it is necessary to appoint a guardian, the court shall  
4 consider the ward's preference.

5 (h) At the time a guardian is appointed, the court shall make a  
6 reasonable effort to acquaint the ward with his right to request, at a  
7 later time, his guardian's dismissal or a modification of the guardian-  
8 ship order. The court shall provide a written statement to the ward,  
9 explaining his rights and specifying the procedures to be followed in  
10 petitioning the court.

11 Sec. 13.26.114. PSYCHOTROPIC MEDICATION INFLUENCING WARDS OR  
12 RESPONDENTS AT JUDICIAL HEARINGS. (a) A ward or respondent has a right  
13 to participate to the maximum extent possible in all judicial proceed-  
14 ings concerning him and to be free from the influence of psychotropic  
15 medication during the proceedings.

16 (b) It is the responsibility of the attorney for the ward or  
17 respondent to determine if the ward or respondent is being treated with  
18 psychotropic medication the effects of which would continue during the  
19 judicial proceedings and, if so, to inform the court in writing a reason-  
20 able time before the hearing.

21 (c) The court, upon receipt of the information provided under (b)  
22 of this section, shall require a medical examination of the ward or  
23 respondent, if the court determines that the medical examination is  
24 necessary, and shall determine the advisability of continuation or  
25 suspension of the treatment for the duration of the judicial proceedings.  
26 The court may make any appropriate order it considers necessary. The  
27 court in making its determination shall balance the interest of maximum  
28 participation of the ward or respondent in the hearings against the  
29 medical and rehabilitative needs of the ward or respondent.

1 (d) If the ward or respondent is under the influence of psycho-  
2 tropic medication during the judicial proceeding determining capacity,  
3 the trier of fact shall take that fact into consideration in making its  
4 determination.

5 Sec. 13.26.116. GUARDIANSHIP ORDER. (a) If the court or jury  
6 determines that a person is incapacitated and the services of a guardian  
7 are necessary, the court shall enter an order which

8 (1) names the guardian and establishes a guardian-ward rela-  
9 tionship;

10 (2) includes findings of fact which support each grant of  
11 authority to the guardian;

12 (3) adopts a guardianship plan.

13 (b) The guardianship plan shall specify the authority which the  
14 guardian has with regard to

15 (1) medical care for the ward's physical condition;

16 (2) mental health treatment which the guardian considers to  
17 be in the ward's best interests;

18 (3) housing for the ward with consideration of the following:

19 (A) the wishes of the ward;

20 (B) the preferability of allowing the ward to retain  
21 local community ties; and

22 (C) the requirement for services to be provided in the  
23 least restrictive setting;

24 (4) personal care, educational and vocational services neces-  
25 sary for the physical and mental welfare of the ward and to return the  
26 ward to full capacity;

27 (5) application for health and accident insurance and any  
28 other private or governmental benefits to which the ward may be entitled  
29 to meet any part of the costs of medical, mental health, or related

1 services provided to the ward;

2 (6) physical and mental examinations necessary to determine  
3 the ward's medical and mental health treatment needs; and

4 (7) control of the estate and income of the ward to pay for  
5 the cost of services which the guardian is authorized to obtain on  
6 behalf of the ward.

7 (c) The guardianship plan may not be more restrictive of the  
8 liberty of the ward than is reasonably necessary to protect the ward  
9 from serious physical injury, illness or disease and to provide him with  
10 medical care and mental health treatment for his physical and mental  
11 health. The guardianship plan shall be designed to encourage a ward to  
12 participate in all decisions which affect him and to act on his own  
13 behalf to the maximum extent possible. The court may not assign a duty  
14 or power to a guardian unless the need for it has been proven to the  
15 satisfaction of the court and no less restrictive alternative or combi-  
16 nation of alternatives is sufficient to satisfy the need.

17 (d) The duration of the term of guardianship shall be determined  
18 by the court order. Upon receipt of a report or other information that  
19 requires further consideration, the court may order a review hearing if  
20 it determines that the hearing is in the best interests of the ward.

21 Sec. 13.26.117. GUARDIANSHIP IMPLEMENTATION REPORT. Within 90  
22 days after appointment as guardian, the guardian shall submit to the  
23 court a report. The report shall describe the guardian's program for  
24 implementing the guardianship plan. The primary goal of the program  
25 described in the report shall be, to the maximum extent possible, to  
26 develop or regain the ward's abilities to handle his own affairs. The  
27 report shall consider housing, medical care, and educational and voca-  
28 tional needs and resources. In developing the report, the guardian  
29 shall consult with his ward to the maximum extent possible. The office

1 of public guardian shall contact the guardian to offer assistance in  
2 preparing the report. The report shall specify the services which are  
3 necessary to meet the essential requirements for the ward's physical  
4 health or safety and the means for obtaining the services. The report  
5 shall specify the manner in which the guardian will exercise and share  
6 decision-making authority and other items which will assist in fulfill-  
7 ing the needs of the ward, the terms of the guardianship order, and the  
8 duties of the guardian.

9 Sec. 13.26.118. REPORTING. (a) A guardian shall submit a report  
10 to the court or request that a visitor be appointed to prepare and  
11 submit a report at least annually. A court-appointed visitor shall  
12 prepare the report at least once in each three-year period. The guard-  
13 ian shall submit an additional report to the court when

14 (1) the court orders it;

15 (2) there is a significant change in the capacity of the ward  
16 to meet the essential requirements for his health and safety or to  
17 protect his rights;

18 (3) the guardian resigns or is removed;

19 (4) the guardianship is terminated; or

20 (5) the ward requests it.

21 (b) The report shall contain, but is not limited to, the following  
22 information:

23 (1) the name and address of the ward and the guardian;

24 (2) the ward's present mental, physical, and social condi-  
25 tions and present living arrangements and the ward's opinion of these  
26 arrangements;

27 (3) changes in the capacity of the ward to meet essential  
28 requirements for his physical health and safety;

29 (4) the services being provided to the ward;

1 (5) the significant actions taken by the guardian during the  
2 reporting period in regard to his ward;

3 (6) a financial accounting of the estate which has been  
4 subject to the possession or control of the guardian;

5 (7) a list of the number and nature of the contacts between  
6 the guardian and ward if the ward does not reside with the guardian;

7 (8) any other information requested by the court or necessary  
8 or desirable in the opinion of the guardian or visitor.

9 Sec. 13.26.131. COSTS IN GUARDIANSHIP PROCEEDINGS. (a) Subject  
10 to (d) of this section, the state shall bear the costs of the visitor  
11 and expert appointed under AS 13.26.106(c).

12 (b) Subject to (c) and (d) of this section, the respondent shall  
13 bear the costs of the attorney appointed under AS 13.26.106(b), of the  
14 expert appointed under AS 13.26.109(d), of the guardian ad litem ap-  
15 pointed under AS 13.26.112, and of other court and guardianship costs  
16 incurred under this chapter.

17 (c) The state shall pay all or part of the costs described in (b)  
18 of this section if the court finds that the payment is necessary to  
19 prevent the respondent from suffering financial hardship or from becom-  
20 ing dependent upon a government agency or a private person or agency.

21 (d) The court may require the petitioner to pay all or some of the  
22 costs described in (a) and (b) of this section if the court finds that  
23 the petitioner initiated a proceeding under this chapter that was mali-  
24 cious, frivolous, or without just cause.

25 \* Sec. 8. AS 13.26.120 is amended to read:

26 Sec. 13.26.120. TERMINATION OF GUARDIANSHIP FOR INCAPACITATED  
27 PERSON. The authority and responsibility of a guardian for an incapa-  
28 citated person terminates upon the death of the guardian or ward, the  
29 determination of incapacity of the guardian, the [OR UPON] removal or

1 resignation of the guardian as provided in AS 13.26.125, or upon the  
2 expiration of the period specified by court order as the duration of the  
3 guardianship. Testamentary appointment under an informally probated  
4 will terminates if the will is later denied probate in a formal proceed-  
5 ing. Termination does not affect a guardian's [HIS] liability for prior  
6 acts nor his obligation to account for [FUNDS AND] assets of the [HIS]  
7 ward over which he exercised control.

8 \* Sec. 9. AS 13.26.125 is amended to read:

9 Sec. 13.26.125. REMOVAL OR RESIGNATION OF GUARDIAN; CHANGE IN OR  
10 TERMINATION OF GUARDIANSHIP [INCAPACITY]. (a) On petition of the ward,  
11 the guardian, or any person interested in the ward's [HIS] welfare, the  
12 court may (1) review and amend a decision of a guardian; or (2) if  
13 alternatives which are less restrictive than guardianship or less re-  
14 strictive than the existing guardianship plan would assist the ward in  
15 meeting his essential requirements for physical health and safety,  
16 modify the provisions of its order to (A) amend the guardianship plan  
17 or the responsibilities of the guardian; (B) remove a guardian and  
18 appoint a successor; or (C) terminate the guardianship [IF IN THE BEST  
19 INTERESTS OF THE WARD]. On petition of the guardian, the court may  
20 accept his resignation and make any other order which may be appropriate

21 (b) The [AN ORDER ADJUDICATING INCAPACITY MAY SPECIFY A MINIMUM  
22 PERIOD, NOT EXCEEDING ONE YEAR, DURING WHICH NO PETITION FOR AN ADJUDI-  
23 CATION THAT THE WARD IS NO LONGER INCAPACITATED MAY BE FILED WITHOUT  
24 SPECIAL LEAVE. SUBJECT TO THIS RESTRICTION, THE] ward, the guardian, or  
25 any person interested in the ward's [HIS] welfare may petition for an  
26 order that the ward [HE] is no longer incapacitated or no longer incapa-  
27 citated to the same extent as he was when the original guardianship  
28 order was made or when the court last amended the guardianship order.  
29 and for removal or resignation of the guardian, termination of the guard-

1 ianship, or a change in the responsibilities of the guardian. A request  
2 for this order may be made by informal letter to the court or judge and  
3 any person who knowingly interferes with transmission of this kind of  
4 request to the court or judge may be held in [ADJUDGED GUILTY OF] con-  
5 tempt of court.

6 (c) Before removing a guardian, changing his responsibilities,  
7 accepting the resignation of a guardian, or ordering that a ward's  
8 guardianship be changed or [INCAPACITY HAS] terminated, the court,  
9 following the same procedures to safeguard the rights of the ward as  
10 apply to a petition for appointment of a guardian and applying the least  
11 restrictive alternative necessary to meet the needs of the ward after  
12 consideration of alternatives to guardianship services, may send a  
13 visitor to the residence of the present guardian and to the place where  
14 the ward resides or is detained, to observe conditions and report in  
15 writing to the court.

16 (d) If at any time the ward requests or indicates to his guardian  
17 or to the agency responsible for his care or its employee that he desires  
18 a change in guardianship, the guardian or the agency providing care shall  
19 inform the court of the request or indication.

20 (e) If the guardian dies, or if on the basis of a petition filed  
21 under this section or a report or other information, there is probable  
22 cause to believe a guardian is not performing his responsibilities  
23 effectively and there is an imminent danger that the physical health or  
24 safety of the ward will be seriously impaired, the court shall take what-  
25 ever action is necessary to protect the ward, including the dismissal of  
26 the guardian and appointment of a temporary guardian without a hearing.

27 \* Sec. 10. AS 13.26.135 is amended to read:

28 Sec. 13.26.135. NOTICES IN GUARDIANSHIP PROCEEDINGS. (a) In a  
29 proceeding for the appointment, change in responsibilities, [OR] removal

1 of a guardian, or termination of guardianship, [OF AN INCAPACITATED  
2 PERSON] other than the appointment of a temporary guardian or temporary  
3 suspension of a guardian, notice of hearing shall be given to each of  
4 the following:

5 (1) the ward or respondent by the visitor as provided in  
6 AS 13.26.107 [THE PERSON ALLEGED TO BE INCAPACITATED AND HIS SPOUSE,  
7 PARENTS AND ADULT CHILDREN];

8 (2) any person who is serving as his guardian, conservator or  
9 who has his care and custody; [AND]

10 (3) in case no other person is notified under (4) [(1)] of  
11 this subsection, at least one of his closest adult relatives, if any can  
12 be found;

13 (4) the spouse, parents, and adult children of the ward or  
14 respondent;

15 (5) any person who performed an evaluation for the visitor's  
16 report within the previous two years;

17 (6) the ward's or respondent's attorney; and

18 (7) the ward's or respondent's guardian ad litem if one  
19 has been appointed.

20 (b) Notice shall be served personally on the ward's or respon-  
21 dent's [ALLEGED INCAPACITATED PERSON, AND HIS] spouse and parents if  
22 they can be found within the state. Except as provided in (a)(1) of  
23 this section, notice [NOTICE] to the spouse and parents, if they cannot  
24 be found within the state, and to all other persons [EXCEPT THE ALLEGED  
25 INCAPACITATED PERSON] shall be given as provided in AS 13.06.110.  
26 [WAIVER OF NOTICE BY THE PERSON ALLEGED TO BE INCAPACITATED IS NOT  
27 EFFECTIVE UNLESS HE ATTENDS THE HEARING OR HIS WAIVER OF NOTICE IS  
28 CONFIRMED IN AN INTERVIEW WITH THE VISITOR. REPRESENTATION OF THE  
29 ALLEGED INCAPACITATED PERSON BY A GUARDIAN AD LITEM IS NOT NECESSARY.]

1           (c) The notice shall set out the date, time, place, purpose and  
2           possible consequences of the hearing and the rights of the ward or  
3           respondent and any other parties to the proceedings.

4 \* Sec. 11. AS 13.26.140 is repealed and re-enacted to read:

5           Sec. 13.26.140. TEMPORARY GUARDIANS. (a) If during the pendency  
6 of an initial petition for guardianship it appears that the respondent  
7 is in need of immediate services to protect him against serious injury,  
8 illness, or disease and the respondent is not capable of procuring the  
9 necessary services, the petitioner may request the appointment of a  
10 temporary guardian to authorize the services. The request shall state  
11 the reasons and factual basis for the request. The petitioner shall  
12 immediately file the request with the court and serve copies on the  
13 respondent and his attorney. The court shall conduct a hearing within  
14 72 hours after the filing.

15           (b) At the temporary guardianship hearing, the respondent shall  
16 have the rights set out in AS 13.26.113(a).

17           (c) The burden of proof at the hearing shall be by clear and con-  
18 vincing evidence and shall be upon the petitioner.

19           (d) If the court determines that a temporary guardian should be  
20 appointed, it shall make the appointment and grant to the guardian only  
21 the authority that is least restrictive upon the liberty of the respon-  
22 dent and which enables the temporary guardian to provide the emergency  
23 services necessary to protect the respondent from serious injury, ill-  
24 ness, or disease.

25           (e) The temporary guardianship shall expire at the time of the  
26 appointment of a full or partial guardian or upon the dismissal of the  
27 petition for guardianship.

28           (f) If no guardianship petition is pending but the court is in-  
29 formed of a person who is apparently incapacitated and in need of emer-

1 agency life-saving services, the court may authorize the services upon  
2 determining that delay until a guardianship hearing can be held would  
3 entail a life-threatening risk to the person.

4 \* Sec. 12. AS 13.26 is amended by adding a new section to read:

5 Sec. 13.26.141. EMERGENCY POWERS. Notwithstanding the limits of a  
6 temporary guardianship or guardianship order, a temporary guardian and  
7 guardian at all times have the right to authorize the provision of  
8 emergency life-saving services. This right includes the power to autho-  
9 rize hospitalization without advance court approval.

10 \* Sec. 13. AS 13.26.145 is repealed and re-enacted to read:

11 Sec. 13.26.145. WHO MAY BE GUARDIAN; PRIORITIES. (a) The court  
12 may appoint a competent person, the public guardian, or a private asso-  
13 ciation or nonprofit corporation with a guardianship program for inca-  
14 pacitated persons, as guardian of an incapacitated person.

15 (b) The court may not appoint a person to be a guardian of an  
16 incapacitated person if the person

17 (1) provides, or is likely to provide during the guardianship  
18 period, substantial services to the incapacitated person in a profes-  
19 sional or business capacity, other than in his capacity as guardian;

20 (2) is, or is likely to become during the guardianship period  
21 a creditor of the incapacitated person, other than in his capacity as  
22 guardian;

23 (3) has, or is likely to have during the guardianship period,  
24 interests which may conflict with those of the incapacitated person; or

25 (4) is employed by a person who would be disqualified under  
26 (1) - (3) of this subsection.

27 (c) A person may be appointed as the guardian of an incapacitated  
28 person notwithstanding the provisions of (b) of this section if he is  
29 the spouse, adult child, parent, or sibling of the incapacitated person

1 and the court determines that the potential conflict of interest is  
2 insubstantial and that the appointment would clearly be in the best  
3 interests of the incapacitated person.

4 (d) Subject to (e) of this section, qualified persons have prior-  
5 ity for appointment as guardian in the following order:

6 (1) a person, association, or private nonprofit corporation  
7 nominated by the incapacitated person, if at the time of the nomination  
8 the incapacitated person had the capacity to make a reasonably intel-  
9 ligent choice;

10 (2) the spouse of the incapacitated person;

11 (3) an adult child or parent of the incapacitated person;

12 (4) a relative of the incapacitated person with whom the  
13 incapacitated person has resided for more than six months during the  
14 year before the filing of the petition;

15 (5) a relative or friend who has demonstrated a sincere,  
16 longstanding interest in the welfare of the incapacitated person;

17 (6) a private association or nonprofit corporation with a  
18 guardianship program for incapacitated persons;

19 (7) the public guardian.

20 (e) The priorities established in (d) of this section are not  
21 binding, and the court shall select the person, association, or non-  
22 profit corporation that is best qualified and willing to serve. The  
23 court shall also give consideration to a nomination by a person described  
24 in (d) of this section and to a nomination in the will of a deceased  
25 parent or spouse of the incapacitated person.

26 \* Sec. 14. AS 13.26.150 is repealed and re-enacted to read:

27 Sec. 13.26.150. GENERAL POWERS AND DUTIES OF GUARDIAN. (a) A  
28 guardian shall diligently and in good faith carry out the specific  
29 duties and powers assigned by the court. In carrying out his duties and

1 powers, the guardian shall encourage the ward to participate to the  
2 maximum extent of his capacity in all decisions which affect him, to act  
3 on his own behalf in all matters in which he is able, and to develop or  
4 regain, to the maximum extent possible, his capacity to meet the essen-  
5 tial requirements for his physical health or safety, to protect his  
6 rights, and to manage his financial resources.

7 (b) A partial guardian of an incapacitated person has only the  
8 powers and duties respecting his ward enumerated in the court order.

9 (c) A full guardian of an incapacitated person has the same powers  
10 and duties respecting his ward that a parent has respecting his uneman-  
11 cipated minor child except that the guardian is not liable for the care  
12 and maintenance of the ward and is not liable, solely by reason of the  
13 guardianship, to a person who is harmed by acts of the ward. Except as  
14 modified by order of the court, a full guardian's powers and duties  
15 include, but are not limited to, the following:

16 (1) he is entitled to custody of the person of his ward and  
17 shall assure that the ward has a place of abode in the least restrictive  
18 setting consistent with the essential requirements for the ward's physi-  
19 cal health and safety;

20 (2) he shall assure the care, comfort, and maintenance of the  
21 ward;

22 (3) he shall assure that the ward receives the services  
23 necessary to meet the essential requirements for the ward's physical  
24 health and safety and to develop or regain, to the maximum extent pos-  
25 sible, the capacity to meet his needs for physical health and safety;

26 (4) he shall assure through the initiation of court action  
27 and other means that the ward enjoys all personal, civil, and human  
28 rights to which the ward is entitled;

29 (5) he may give consents or approvals necessary to enable the

1 ward to receive medical or other professional care, counsel, treatment,  
2 or services except as otherwise limited by (e) of this section;

3 (6) if a conservator for the estate of the ward has not been  
4 appointed, the guardian may receive money and property deliverable to  
5 the ward and apply the money and property for support, care, and educa-  
6 tion of the ward; however, the guardian may not apply the ward's money  
7 or property for his services as guardian or for room and board which he,  
8 his spouse, parent, or child have furnished the ward unless, before  
9 payment, the court finds that the ward is financially able to pay and  
10 that the charge is reasonable; notice of a request for payment approval  
11 shall be provided to at least one relative of the ward if possible; the  
12 guardian shall exercise care to conserve any excess money or property  
13 for the ward's needs;

14 (7) if a conservator of the estate of the ward has been  
15 appointed, the guardian shall pay all of the ward's estate received by  
16 the guardian in excess of the money expended to meet current expenses  
17 for support, care, and education of the ward, to the conservator for  
18 management as provided in AS 13.26.165 - 13.26.315, and the guardian  
19 shall account to the conservator for money expended.

20 (d) A guardian of a ward, for whom a conservator has also been  
21 appointed, shall have the custody and care of the ward and is entitled  
22 to receive reasonable sums for his services and for room and board  
23 furnished to the ward as agreed upon between the guardian and the con-  
24 servator. The guardian may request the conservator to expend the ward's  
25 estate for the ward's care and maintenance.

26 (e) A guardian may not

27 (1) place the ward in a facility or institution for the  
28 mentally ill other than through a formal commitment proceeding under  
29 AS 47.30.070 in which the ward has a separate guardian ad litem;

1 (2) consent on behalf of the ward to an abortion, steriliza-  
2 tion, psychosurgery, or removal of bodily organs except when necessary  
3 to preserve the life or prevent serious impairment of the physical  
4 health of the ward;

5 (3) consent on behalf of the ward to the withholding of  
6 life-saving medical procedures;

7 (4) consent on behalf of the ward to the performance of an  
8 experimental medical procedure or to participation in a medical experi-  
9 ment not intended to preserve the life or prevent serious impairment of  
10 the physical health of the ward;

11 (5) consent on behalf of the ward to termination of the  
12 ward's parental rights;

13 (6) prohibit the ward from registering to vote or from casting  
14 a ballot at public election;

15 (7) prohibit the ward from applying for and obtaining a  
16 driver's license.

17 \* Sec. 15. AS 13.26.195 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

18 (d) The court shall investigate alternatives to a conservator and  
19 the use of a special conservator as provided in AS 13.26.205(c). A con-  
20 servator may be appointed only if a less restrictive protective order or  
21 the services of a special conservator are not adequate to protect the  
22 estate of the protected person. The court shall, to the extent pos-  
23 sible, consult with the protected person in determining what action  
24 should be taken.

25 \* Sec. 16. AS 13.26.205(c) is amended to read:

26 (c) Before approving a protective arrangement or other transaction  
27 under this section, the court shall consider the interests of creditors  
28 and dependents of the protected person and, in view of his disability,  
29 whether the protected person needs the continuing protection of a con-

1 servator. If only certain powers need be given to the conservator or  
2 the services of a conservator are needed only for a limited number of  
3 transactions, a special conservator may be appointed. The court may  
4 appoint a special conservator to assist in the accomplishment of any  
5 protective arrangement or other transaction authorized under this sec-  
6 tion who shall have the authority conferred by the order and serve until  
7 discharged by order after report to the court of all matters carried out  
8 under [DONE PURSUANT TO] the order of appointment.

9 \* Sec. 17. AS 13.26 is amended by adding a new section to read:

10 Sec. 13.26.218. PUBLIC BOND. (a) If the public guardian is  
11 appointed as a conservator, the court may not require a bond under  
12 AS 13.26.215.

13 (b) If the court requires a conservator to provide a bond under  
14 AS 13.26.215 and the conservator is financially unable to provide the  
15 bond, the court may order the cost of the bond to be paid from court  
16 funds.

17 \* Sec. 18. AS 13.26 is amended by adding new sections to read:

18 ARTICLE 6. PUBLIC GUARDIANS.

19 Sec. 13.26.360. PURPOSE. The legislature recognizes that many  
20 Alaskans, for reasons of incapacity or minority, are in need of a guard-  
21 ian or conservator. Often these persons cannot find a person able and  
22 willing to serve as guardian or conservator. The legislature intends  
23 through AS 13.26.360 - 13.26.410 to establish the office of public  
24 guardian for the purpose of furnishing guardianship and conservatorship  
25 services. It further intends by establishing this office to provide  
26 assistance to guardians throughout the state in securing necessary  
27 services for their wards and to assist the courts, attorneys, visitors,  
28 respondents, and proposed guardians in the orderly and expeditious  
29 handling of guardianship proceedings.

1           Sec. 13.26.370. PUBLIC GUARDIAN. (a) The public administrator  
2 (AS 22.15.310) shall also act as the public guardian for the judicial  
3 district for which he is appointed.

4           (b) A court may order the public guardian to act as full guardian,  
5 partial guardian, conservator, or special conservator for a person who  
6 is determined under this chapter to be in need of guardianship or con-  
7 servatorship service if no person or private guardianship association is  
8 willing and qualified to perform the function.

9           Sec. 13.26.380. POWERS AND DUTIES OF PUBLIC GUARDIAN. (a) The  
10 public guardian has the same powers and duties with respect to his wards  
11 and protected persons as a private guardian or conservator.

12           (b) The public guardian, when appointed as guardian or conserva-  
13 tor, shall endeavor, for as long as practical, to find a suitable pri-  
14 vate guardian or conservator for his ward or protected person. For each  
15 ward and protected person, the public guardian shall report to the court  
16 having jurisdiction of the ward or protected person, at least once every  
17 six months, his efforts to find a private guardian or conservator.

18           (c) The public guardian shall

19           (1) establish and maintain relationships with governmental,  
20 public, and private agencies, institutions, and organizations to assure  
21 the most effective guardianship or conservatorship program for each ward  
22 and protected person;

23           (2) visit each of his wards and protected persons at least  
24 once every quarter to monitor their welfare;

25           (3) keep and maintain financial and statistical records of  
26 all cases in which the public guardian provides guardianship or conser-  
27 vatorship services;

28           (4) provide information and referrals to the public regarding  
29 guardianship and conservatorship proceedings, but not information which

1 would identify a particular case;

2 (5) assist guardians and court-appointed visitors of wards  
3 and respondents in the preparation and revision of guardianship plans  
4 and reports;

5 (6) assist guardians to understand the disabilities of wards  
6 and to foster the increased independence of wards;

7 (7) assist guardians in securing the rights, benefits, and  
8 services to which their wards are entitled;

9 (8) develop and maintain a current listing of public and  
10 private medical, mental health, social advocacy, educational, rehabili-  
11 tative, counseling, therapeutic, homemaking, recreational, and financial  
12 services and programs available to assist wards and protected persons  
13 and their families.

14 (d) The public guardian may

15 (1) contract for services necessary to carry out the duties  
16 of his office;

17 (2) accept the services of volunteer workers or consultants  
18 and reimburse them for their necessary expenses.

19 Sec. 13.26.390. INTERVENTION. The public guardian may, on his own  
20 motion or at the request of the court, intervene in a guardianship or  
21 conservatorship proceeding if he or the court considers the intervention  
22 to be justified because

23 (1) an appointed guardian or conservator is not fulfilling  
24 his duties;

25 (2) the estate is subject to waste as a result of the costs  
26 of the guardianship or conservatorship;

27 (3) a willing and qualified guardian or conservator is not  
28 available; or

29 (4) the best interests of the ward, respondent, protected

1 person, or person who is the subject of a conservatorship proceeding  
2 require the intervention.

3 Sec. 13.26.400. DELEGATION OF POWERS AND DUTIES. The public  
4 guardian may employ staff and delegate to members of his staff or to  
5 volunteers his powers and duties as guardian or conservator and other  
6 powers and duties under this chapter. However, the public guardian  
7 retains responsibility for the proper performance of the delegated  
8 powers and duties. All delegations shall be to persons who meet the  
9 eligibility requirements of AS 13.26.145.

10 Sec. 13.26.410. ALLOCATION OF COSTS. (a) If a public guardian is  
11 appointed guardian or conservator, the administrative costs of his  
12 services and the costs incurred in the appointment procedure may not be  
13 charged against the income or the estate of the ward or protected person  
14 unless the court determines that the ward or protected person is finan-  
15 cially able to pay all or part of the costs.

16 (b) The court shall determine the ability of the ward or protected  
17 person to pay for administrative costs of a public guardian or costs  
18 incurred in the appointment procedure by determining the financial  
19 ability of the ward or protected person to pay a private guardian or  
20 conservator, considering the nature, extent, and liquidity of assets of  
21 the ward or protected person, the disposable net income of the ward or  
22 protected person, the nature of the guardianship or conservatorship, the  
23 type, duration and complexity of the services required, and any other  
24 foreseeable expenses.

25 (c) The public guardian shall investigate the financial status of  
26 (1) a person who requests the appointment of the public guardian as his  
27 guardian or conservator; and (2) a ward for whom a court has appointed  
28 the public guardian.

29 (d) The public guardian may require a person described in (c) of

1 this section to execute and deliver written requests or authorizations  
2 necessary under law to provide the public guardian with access to records  
3 of public or private sources, otherwise confidential, needed to evaluate  
4 the person's financial eligibility. The public guardian may, upon  
5 request and without payment of fees otherwise required by law, obtain  
6 information from any office of the state or of a political subdivision  
7 or agency of the state which possesses public records.

8 (e) The reasonable value of the services rendered without cost to  
9 the ward or protected person shall be allowed as a claim against the  
10 estate upon the death of the ward or protected person.

11 \* Sec. 19. AS 22.15.310 is amended to read:

12 Sec. 22.15.310. APPOINTMENT. When authorized by the supreme  
13 court, the presiding judge in each judicial district shall appoint a  
14 person to act as public administrator of the estates of deceased per-  
15 sons, [AND] as coroner, and as public guardian.

16 \* Sec. 20. AS 22.15.350 is amended to read:

17 Sec. 22.15.350. DUTIES [AS CORONER]. In addition to his other  
18 duties, a public administrator shall perform the duties set out in  
19 AS 22.15.110 and shall perform the duties of public guardian as set out  
20 in AS 13.26.360 - 13.26.410.

21 \* Sec. 21. AS 13.26.110 and 13.26.130 are repealed.

22 \* Sec. 22. TRANSITION. No later than July 1, 1984, all guardianships for  
23 incapacitated persons established before January 1, 1982, and in effect on  
24 January 1, 1982, shall be reviewed by the court. Until the review, a guard-  
25 ian appointed before January 1, 1982, whose guardianship is still in effect  
26 on January 1, 1982, shall retain the powers assigned to him, unless a petition  
27 for modification under AS 13.26.125 amended by sec. 8 of this Act is granted.  
28 Before the review, the guardian shall submit one report in the form pre-  
29 scribed in AS 13.26.118 added by sec. 6 of this Act.

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\* Sec. 23. This Act takes effect January 1, 1982.