



Dallas County Probate

## Court Investigators Office

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### Instructions for Individuals Wanting to File Guardianship Cases

The *Texas Practice of Law* statute permits only licensed attorneys to represent another person's interests in a court proceeding. This includes situations where one person seeks to become the guardian of another person. Accordingly, *pro se* guardianship applications cannot proceed through the guardianship legal process until an attorney licensed to practice law in Texas is retained. Therefore you may:

- Retain your own private attorney.
- Contact the Dallas Bar Lawyer Referral Service at 214.220.7444 for a list of attorneys in your area; you may specify probate attorneys if you choose.

\*\*\*If you cannot afford an attorney, here are some options for free legal assistance. Please start with Disability Rights to see if they can help with both a medical and legal representation.

- a. Disability Rights of Texas: 1420 Mockingbird Lane, Ste 450, Dallas, Texas 75247 214-630-0916 <https://disabilityrightstx.org>
- b. Legal Aid of North Texas: 1515 Main Street, Dallas 214-748-1234 Legal Aid of Northwest Texas - Dallas - Legal Aid Services ([legallaidoffices.com](http://legallaidoffices.com))
- c. Dallas Volunteer Attorney Program (DVAP): 1515 Main Street, Dallas 214-243-2236 Dallas Volunteer Attorney Program | Dallas, TX
- d. Dallas Bar Association Referral Services (DBA): 214-220-7400 Lawyer Referral Service ([dallasbar.org](http://dallasbar.org))
- e. Deedman School Of Law: SMU Law Clinic: <https://www.smu.edu/Law/Clinics>

\*\*\*\*If you are unable to successfully retain or obtain representation, please secure a letter of non-representation from either Legal Aid or DVAP and return, along with the completed 1102 Referral Form and/or CME, via email to CIAdmin@dallascounty.org. Our office will file your letter along with the completed document(s) for the Court to review.

Due to the changes to the Texas Estate Code on guardianships, and the new procedure implemented by the Judicial Branch Certification Commission (JBCC) on June 1, 2018 regarding criminal background checks, all applicants in guardianship cases are now required to register with JBCC. It is important to note that registering with JBCC is independent of completing the guardianship training module online and printing the completion certificate – *these are two separate requirements*. For guardianships of the estate valued at \$50,000 or more a fingerprint background must be completed through Identigo. **It is also important to note that these background checks can take up to eight weeks to come back to our office from JBCC.**

- <http://www.txcourts.gov/jbcc/register-a-guardianship/>
- <https://uenroll.identogo.com/workflows/111VVQ> Service Code: 1 1 1 V V Q
- JBCC GUARDIANSHIP TRAINING NOW AVAILABLE IN SPANISH.