



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.
- Call Legal Aid of North West Texas (LANWT) to determine if you qualify for their low-income program at 214.748.1234.

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 JBCC. **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/>
- JBCC GUARDIANSHIP TRAINING NOW AVAILABLE IN SPANISH.