



An independent, grassroots advocacy organization run by and for people with developmental disabilities.

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Office of Administration
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Speaking for Ourselves is an independent grassroots, self-advocacy organization run by people with developmental disabilities.

1. More than 500 people with I/DD have been put under guardianship in the last five plus years. We are asking that the proposed regulations be changed to prevent this removal of a lifetime of loss of their freedom, decision-making and being put under the control of the State.
2. An advocate for each person with I/DD should be provided during the Guardianship procedures to help protect their rights.
3. People with I/DD should be able to make the decisions they are able to and not have all their rights removed via Guardianship.
4. Many people with I/DD are able to make some decisions about their lives without having the total removal of their rights through the imposition of Guardianship.
5. People with I/DD are at risk of being placed unnecessarily under Guardianship when they have no family.
6. Alternatives to Guardianship should be considered such as Supported Decision-Making and Powers of Attorney.
7. Guardianship hearings are often done in 5-10 minutes with no representation and no knowledge of the person or their abilities.
8. While Limited Guardianship could be helpful, in practice it is treated by most parties as Full Guardianship.
9. Once Guardianship is imposed it is almost impossible to get it removed even if the person's ability changes. Almost no one in Pennsylvania is able to have their Guardianship removed. Reliable reports say only ten people with I/DD had their Guardianship removed in the last ten years.

Sincerely,

Debbie Robinson

Debbie Robinson
Executive Director