

## ***LETTER FROM JUDGE TO ADULT GUARDIANS***

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Dear Ohio Guardian,

On March 10, 2015, the Supreme Court of Ohio announced the adoption of Rules of Superintendence for the Courts of Ohio 66.01-66.09. The new rules, recommended by the Advisory Committee on Children and Families of the Supreme Court, will govern adult guardianships in Ohio. The rules will take effect June 1, 2015, and will make positive changes to Ohio's adult guardianship practice.

The rules seek to standardize guardianship practices throughout Ohio by establishing clear minimum standards and responsibilities for probate courts and guardians. The new rules cover a wide breadth of topics, including person-center planning, guardianship compensation, and complaint process, amongst other critical topics to ensure the best interest of persons under guardianship. Because knowledgeable and educated guardians are a cornerstone of Ohio's adult guardianship system, the new rules also set forth specific education requirements intended to ensure guardians have a clear understanding of a guardian's ongoing duties and responsibilities to the court and Ohio's adult wards.

Pursuant to Superintendence Rule 66.06, as of June 1, 2015, court-appointed guardians will be required to take a one-time six-hour course on the fundamentals of adult guardianship. The Rule distinguishes between new guardianship appointments (made after June 1, 2015) and individuals serving as guardians as of June 1, 2015.

- Guardians appointed after June 1, 2015, with no experience as a guardian within the five previous years, will have six months from the date of the appointment to complete the fundamentals course
- Guardians serving on June 1, 2015, or individuals who have served as a guardian during the five previous years, will have until June 1, 2016, to complete the fundamentals course.

Additionally, Superintendence Rule 66.07 delineates requirements for a three-hour continuing education course every calendar year after completing the initial fundamentals course. The rule also directs guardians to inform and document compliance with the education requirements to the court in which they practice. Guardians who do not complete the education requirements will be ineligible for new adult guardianship appointments.

To assist guardians in meeting the education requirements and gain full understanding about the expectation laid-out in the rules, the Supreme Court of Ohio Judicial College is

offering the six-hour fundamentals course in three forms. Refer to the enclosed flyer and registration form to attend a regional live course, broadcast version of the course, or online self-study course. Three-hour continuing education course will be available beginning in the first quarter of 2016. The live courses will be provided free of charge, delivered regionally and monthly. Current information on course dates, locations, and registration can be found at the following link: <http://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/Boards/judCollege/adultGuardianship/default.asp>

Continuing education credits (CLE) will be requested for each course developed by the Judicial College. Adult guardianship education may also be provided by another entity, with approval from your local courts.

In addition to the education requirements, Superintendence Rule 66.05 requires the courts to conduct, or cause to be conducted, a criminal background check on each applicant to serve as a guardian of an adult ward. Probate courts may accept certificates of good standing with disciplinary information issued by the Supreme Court from attorneys in lieu of the background check.

These new rules promote uniformity, consistency, and positive change to Ohio's probate courts. We recognize the important role Ohio's adult guardians play in ensuring the safety and well-being of people under guardianship, and we look forward to working with you in the future.

PAUL PRICE

Probate Judge