

(755 ILCS 5/11a-18) (from Ch. 110 1/2, par. 11a-18)  
Sec. 11a-18. Duties of the estate guardian.

(a) To the extent specified in the order establishing the guardianship, the guardian of the estate shall have the care, management and investment of the estate, shall manage the estate frugally and shall apply the income and principal of the estate so far as necessary for the comfort and suitable support and education of the ward, his minor and adult dependent children, and persons related by blood or marriage who are dependent upon or entitled to support from him, or for any other purpose which the court deems to be for the best interests of the ward, and the court may approve the making on behalf of the ward of such agreements as the court determines to be for the ward's best interests. The guardian may make disbursement of his ward's funds and estate directly to the ward or other distributee or in such other manner and in such amounts as the court directs. If the estate of a ward is derived in whole or in part from payments of compensation, adjusted compensation, pension, insurance or other similar benefits made directly to the estate by the Veterans Administration, notice of the application for leave to invest or expend the ward's funds or estate, together with a copy of the petition and proposed order, shall be given to the Veterans' Administration Regional Office in this State at least 7 days before the hearing on the application.

(a-5) The probate court, upon petition of a guardian, other than the guardian of a minor, and after notice to all other persons interested as the court directs, may authorize the guardian to exercise any or all powers over the estate and business affairs of the ward that the ward could exercise if present and not under disability. The court may authorize the taking of an action or the application of funds not required for the ward's current and future maintenance and support in any manner approved by the court as being in keeping with the ward's wishes so far as they can be ascertained. The court must consider the permanence of the ward's disabling condition and the natural objects of the ward's bounty. In ascertaining and carrying out the ward's wishes the court may consider, but shall not be limited to, minimization of State or federal income, estate, or inheritance taxes; and providing gifts to charities, relatives, and friends that would be likely recipients of donations from the ward. The ward's wishes as best they can be ascertained shall be carried out, whether or not tax savings are involved. Actions or applications of funds may include, but shall not be limited to, the following:

(1) making gifts of income or principal, or both, of

1. the estate, either outright or in trust;</DIV"

(2) conveying, releasing, or disclaiming his or her

contingent and expectant interests in property, including marital property rights and any right of survivorship incident to joint tenancy or tenancy by the entirety;</DIV"

(3) releasing or disclaiming his or her powers as trustee, personal representative, custodian for minors, or guardian;</DIV"

(4) exercising, releasing, or disclaiming his or her powers as donee of a power of appointment;</DIV"

(5) entering into contracts;

(6) creating for the benefit of the ward or others, revocable or irrevocable trusts of his or her property that may extend beyond his or her disability or life.</DIV"

(7) exercising options of the ward to purchase or exchange securities or other property;</DIV"

(8) exercising the rights of the ward to elect benefit or payment options, to terminate, to change beneficiaries or ownership, to assign rights, to borrow, or to receive cash value in return for a surrender of rights under any one or more of the following:</DIV"

(i) Life insurance policies, plans, or benefits.

(ii) Annuity policies, plans, or benefits.

(iii) Mutual fund and other dividend investment

plans.</DIV"

(iv) Retirement, profit sharing, and employee welfare plans and benefits;</DIV"

(9) exercising his or her right to claim or disclaim

an elective share in the estate of his or her deceased spouse and to renounce any interest by testate or intestate succession or by inter vivos transfer;</DIV"

- (10) changing the ward's residence or domicile; or
- (11) modifying by means of codicil or trust

amendment the terms of the ward's will or any revocable trust created by the ward, as the court may consider advisable in light of changes in applicable tax laws. The guardian in his or her petition shall briefly outline the action or application of funds for which he or she seeks approval, the results expected to be accomplished thereby, and the tax savings, if any, expected to accrue. The proposed action or application of funds may include gifts of the ward's personal property or real estate, but transfers of real estate shall be subject to the requirements of Section 20 of this Act. Gifts may be for the benefit of prospective legatees, devisees, or heirs apparent of the ward or may be made to individuals or charities in which the ward is believed to have an interest. The guardian shall also indicate in the petition that any planned disposition is consistent with the intentions of the ward insofar as they can be ascertained, and if the ward's intentions cannot be ascertained, the ward will be presumed to favor reduction in the incidents of various forms of taxation and the partial distribution of his or her estate as provided in this subsection. The guardian shall not, however, be required to include as a beneficiary or fiduciary any person who he has reason to believe would be excluded by the ward. A guardian shall be required to investigate and pursue a ward's eligibility for governmental benefits.</DIV"

(b) Upon the direction of the court which issued his letters, a guardian may perform the contracts of his ward which were legally subsisting at the time of the commencement of the ward's disability. The court may authorize the guardian to execute and deliver any bill of sale, deed or other instrument.

(c) The guardian of the estate of a ward shall appear for and represent the ward in all legal proceedings unless another person is appointed for that purpose as guardian or next friend. This does not impair the power of any court to appoint a guardian ad litem or next friend to defend the interests of the ward in that court, or to appoint or allow any person as the next friend of a ward to commence, prosecute or defend any proceeding in his behalf. Without impairing the power of the court in any respect, if the guardian of the estate of a ward and another person as next friend shall appear for and represent the ward in a legal proceeding in which the compensation of the attorney or attorneys representing the guardian and next friend is solely determined under a contingent fee

arrangement, the guardian of the estate of the ward shall not participate in or have any duty to review the prosecution of the action, to participate in or review the appropriateness of any settlement of the action, or to participate in or review any determination of the appropriateness of any fees awarded to the attorney or attorneys employed in the prosecution of the action.

(d) Adjudication of disability shall not revoke or otherwise terminate a trust which is revocable by the ward. A guardian of the estate shall have no authority to revoke a trust that is revocable by the ward, except that the court may authorize a guardian to revoke a Totten trust or similar deposit or withdrawable capital account in trust to the extent necessary to provide funds for the purposes specified in paragraph (a) of this Section. If the trustee of any trust for the benefit of the ward has discretionary power to apply income or principal for the ward's benefit, the trustee shall not be required to distribute any of the income or principal to the guardian of the ward's estate, but the guardian may bring an action on behalf of the ward to compel the trustee to exercise the trustee's discretion or to seek relief from an abuse of discretion. This paragraph shall not limit the right of a guardian of the estate to receive accountings from the trustee on behalf of the ward.

(e) Absent court order pursuant to the "Illinois Power of Attorney Act" enacted by the 85th General Assembly directing a guardian to exercise powers of the principal under an agency that survives disability, the guardian will have no power, duty or liability with respect to any property subject to the agency. This subsection (e) applies to all agencies, whenever and wherever executed.

(f) Upon petition by any interested person (including the standby or short-term guardian), with such notice to interested persons as the court directs and a finding by the court that it is in the best interest of the disabled person, the court may terminate or limit the authority of a standby or short-term guardian or may enter such other orders as the court deems necessary to provide for the best interest of the disabled person. The petition for termination or limitation of the authority of a standby or short-term guardian may, but need not, be combined with a petition to have another guardian appointed for the disabled person.

(Source: P.A. 89-672, eff. 8-14-96; 90-345, eff. 8-8-97; 90-796, eff. 12-15-98.)