

GTS Glossary for Guardians



Term	Definition
Abuse	The infliction of injury, unreasonable confinement, intimidation or punishment with resulting physical harm, pain or mental anguish. The willful deprivation by a caretaker of goods or services which are necessary to maintain physical or mental health.
Adjudication of Incapacity	The legal proceeding by which a court determines that an individual is incapacitated.
Administrative Office of the Pennsylvania Courts (AOPC)	The AOPC assists the Supreme Court in administering Pennsylvania's judicial system.
Alleged Incapacitated Person (AIP)	A person who is claimed to be incapacitated in a Petition for Adjudication of Incapacity. If the petition is granted, the person is referred to as an Incapacitated Person (IP).
Annual Expenses	Annual expenses should include any payments made for the care and maintenance of the incapacitated person. The amount you enter for each type of expense should reflect the total spent during the entire report period and not an average or monthly amount. Expenses may include living expenses, home and car expenses, food, clothing, utility bills, etc.
Assets	The physical property (house, car, etc.), bank accounts, and other investments owned by the person under guardianship.
Assisted Living Residence or Assisted Living Facility	A housing facility for a person with a disability and/or in need of assistance with daily tasks and provides some skilled health care services.
Attorneys' Fees	The payment for legal services.
Bond	As used in Pennsylvania's Orphans' Court, a type of fiduciary bond, sometimes referred to as a surety bond, required by a court to be filed by a guardian to insure proper performance of his or her duties. Black's Law Dictionary, 201 (9th ed. 2009).



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Case File Number	Describes the number assigned to the case by the county court. The format of a case file number varies by county.
Clerk of the Orphans' Court Office	In most counties, the Clerk of the Orphans' Court Office accepts guardianship reports filed by guardians and is responsible for monitoring guardian compliance in the timely filing of reports.
Emergency Guardian	An emergency order temporarily appointing a guardian due to the immediate risk to the alleged incapacitated person. An emergency guardianship may be in effect for up to 72 hours. If the emergency continues, then the emergency order may be extended for no more than 20 days for guardian of the person, and up to 30 days for the guardian of the estate. After expiration of the emergency order or any extension, a full guardianship proceeding must be held by the court.
Expense	Any cost incurred by the person under guardianship during the reporting period. Includes mortgage payments, rent, food, clothing, monthly bills, insurance, gifts, donations, etc.
Fiduciary	A person or organization that acts on behalf of another person or persons, putting their clients' interests ahead of their own, with a duty to preserve good faith and trust. https://www.investopedia.com/terms/f/fiduciary.asp
Fiduciary Duty	"A duty to act for someone else's benefit, while subordinating one's personal interests to that of the other person." Black's Law Dictionary, 581 (9th ed. 2009).
Final Decree	An order of the court that represents the final decision on the question of incapacity. A Final Decree may indicate that a person is incapacitated and in need of guardianship, or that the petition for guardianship is denied.
Final Report	The last "Report of Guardian of the Estate" or "Report of Guardian of the Person" that a guardian files due to the incapacitated person's death, a court order ending the guardianship and/or the guardian's appointment, transfer of guardianship, expiration of a limited duration order, or adjudication of capacity.



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Financial Exploitation	The illegal or improper use of funds, property, or assets of a person under guardianship.
Flag	A visual indicator, inserted by GTS, on an Inventory or annual report that alerts the court that a specific condition associated with a concern of loss or neglect scenario is present based on the data provided on the report.
Gift	Any gift or donation given using the funds of a person under guardianship. All gifts and donations, regardless of monetary value, must be approved by the court.
Group Home	A home where a small number of unrelated people in need of care, support, or supervision can live together.
Guardian	A fiduciary responsible for the care and management of the estate (i.e., a guardian of the estate) or the person (i.e., a guardian of the person) of an incapacitated person. See 20 Pa.C.S. § 102.
Guardian Agency	An organization that employs professional guardians.
Guardian Alert	An electronic notification generated by the system when the guardian has been removed from a case for abuse, neglect or financial exploitation. When an alert is placed on a guardian, court staff in every county that has an active case for the guardian is notified and the guardian may be notified.
Guardianship	The legal arrangement under which a guardian has the legal right and duty to care for an incapacitated person and/or his or her property. See Black's Law Dictionary, 776 (9th ed. 2009).
Guardianship Tracking System (GTS)	Statewide application to track annual report compliance on all guardianships for incapacitated adults in Pennsylvania.
Incapacitated Person (IP)	"An adult whose ability to receive and evaluate information effectively and communicate decisions in any way is impaired to such a significant extent that he is partially or totally unable to manage his financial resources or to meet essential requirements for his physical health and safety." 20 Pa.C.S. § 5501.



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Income	<p>All income amounts are entered as annual amounts on the Inventory and Annual Report of Guardian of the Estate.</p> <p>Any income received during the report period should include all earned income (derived from paid employment) and unearned income (unrelated to employment like interest income, alimony, and dividends). The 'Other' income source should be used to enter all gifts received by the incapacitated person, or other contributions made the guardian to the incapacitated person, lottery winnings, restitution, and any other sources.</p>
Interested Party	<p>An entity who has a recognizable stake in the outcome of a matter before a court but may not be directly involved in the litigation process. Interested Parties in GTS are frequently entities who are legally entitled to receive notification of the filing of guardian reports.</p>
Initial Estate Value	<p>The total estate asset amount reported on the Inventory.</p>
Inventory	<p>Only a Guardian of the Estate needs to file an Inventory. The Inventory should contain, so far as the guardian has been able to discover using reasonable efforts, a list of all real estate, personal property, bank accounts, securities, and any other assets belonging to the Incapacitated Person with values stated as of the date of the guardian's appointment. The Guardian's Inventory should also include all debts, liabilities, and expenses of the Incapacitated Person. The assets which appear on the Inventory constitute the principal of the Incapacitated Person's Estate. (Philadelphia Orphans' Court Guardianship Handbook)</p>
Invasion of Principal	<p>Any expenditure of principal of the person under guardianship above what is covered with the person under guardianship's monthly income. All Invasion of Principal must be approved by the court.</p>
Judicial Authority	<p>The judicial authority is any judge who signs a guardianship order and/or presides over guardianship hearings and other matters.</p>
Jurisdiction	<p>The court where the original petition for guardianship is filed.</p>
Less Restrictive Alternative	<p>Any alternative to a plenary (full) guardianship that allows an AIP to retain some or all their rights and autonomy.</p>



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Limited Guardianship	A guardianship for a person whom the court finds to be partially incapacitated, wherein the guardian has only those powers consistent with the court's findings of the person's limitations. See 20 Pa.C.S. § 5512.1(b), (d).
Neglect	"The failure to provide for oneself or the failure of a caretaker to provide goods or services essential to avoid a clear and serious threat to physical or mental health. An older adult who does not consent to the provision of protective services will not be found to be neglected solely on the grounds of environmental factors which are beyond the control of the older adult or the caretaker, such as inadequate housing, furnishings, income, clothing or medical care." 35 P.S. § 10225.103.
Non-Professional or Family/Lay Guardian	A guardian appointed to two or fewer guardianships at the same time. The guardian is related to, or a friend of, the person under guardianship.
Notice of Filing	The order appointing the guardian identifies the person or persons entitled to receive notice of the filing of the Inventory and/or annual reports. The guardian shall serve a notice of filing within ten days after filing the Inventory and/or annual reports(s).
Office of Elder Justice in the Courts (OEJC)	The OEJC educates judges, court staff, attorneys, guardians, the public, and others about the warning signs of elder abuse, and how to respond to suspected elder abuse. The OEJC also promotes best practices addressing elder abuse and neglect, as well as in the area of guardianship and access to justice in the Commonwealth's courts.
.PDF Document	A Portable Document Format (PDF) is an electronic file type that is supported by most computer applications. Supplemental documents (visitation log, bank statements, etc.) submitted with the Inventory and/or annual reports in GTS must be in .PDF format.
Personal Allowance	Funds provided to incapacitated persons for their personal needs.
Personal Care Homes	"Any premises in which food, shelter and personal care assistance or supervision . . . are provided for a period exceeding twenty-four hours for four or more adults who are not relatives of the operator," who do not require the services in or of a licensed long-term care



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	facility, but “who require assistance or supervision in such matters as dressing, bathing, diet, financial management, evacuation of a residence in the event of an emergency or medication prescribed for self-administration.” 62 P.S. § 1001.
Petition for Adjudication of Incapacity	The petition filed pursuant to 20 Pa.C.S. § 5501 et seq. to have an alleged incapacitated person declared incapacitated.
Petitioner	The person or agency filing a petition requesting a guardian be appointed for an individual.
Plenary Guardianship	A guardianship for a person the court finds to be totally incapacitated and in need of complete guardianship services. See 20 Pa.C.S. § 5512.1(c) & (e).
Post-Adjudication	Actions taken after the hearing in which a court determines that an individual is incapacitated and a guardianship is ordered.
Pre-Adjudication	Actions taken before a petition for guardianship is granted and a guardian is appointed.
Principal (Finances) (From GBB)	The balance of funds or assets of the IP as of the date on which the guardian was appointed, or that are later acquired, that are not monthly income.
Principal (Guardianship Organization)	The CEO/CFO/owner/boss of the organization.
Professional Guardian	A person serving as guardian for three or more non-family members at the same time.
Protection from Abuse Order (PFA)	A court order directing an abuser to cease abusing an individual and to take additional precautions to ensure the safety of that individual.
Registered GTS User	A user of the Guardianship Tracking System that has created an account in GTS using their User Access Code provided by the court.
Report of Guardian of the Estate	A report filed annually by the Guardian of the Estate which identifies all financial transactions that occurred for the incapacitated person



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	during the previous year. A list of assets and current values are also included.
Report of Guardian of the Person	A report filed annually by the Guardian of the Person which describes the incapacitated person's physical condition, living situation and any changes that have occurred since the last report.
Representative Payee	The person or organization selected by a federal or state agency to receive benefits on behalf of a beneficiary.
Responsible Agent	The person identified as the representee of a guardianship agency on a case. The Responsible Agent is the person responsible for filing the guardianship reports on behalf of the guardianship agency.
Successor Guardian	A successor guardian is appointed by the court to replace a current guardian that is no longer willing or able to serve as guardian.
Transfer of Asset	When the ownership of an asset (car, real estate, or other personal belongings) of a person under guardianship is transferred or given to another person. Transferring certain assets, such as person under guardianship's real estate, must have prior court approval.
Transfer of Case	If the person under guardianship moves to a new jurisdiction (county) or state, the court where the guardianship was originally filed must be notified in a timely fashion. The originating court will determine if the case needs to be transferred to the new jurisdiction.
Unspent Income	Any income of the person under guardianship that remains after all expenses during a reporting period are paid. Unspent income from a previous year is captured as income on the Annual Report of Guardian of the Estate in Part IV, question 2.
User Access Code	A User Access Code is a unique identifier provided by the court that allows a guardian to access GTS. The User Access Code is unique to each guardian and allows access to case information and the ability to file reports on the cases in which the guardian is active.