



An affiliate of the National Guardianship Association

Information and resources for individuals, family members, and professionals about Guardianship and Conservatorship.



Welcome to the Massachusetts Guardianship Association

The Guardian

May 2015

Note from the MGA President....

It's hard to believe that summer is just around the corner. 2015 continues to be an exciting year for the Massachusetts Guardianship Association. We're approaching the year's mid-point, and we are looking for members to take on more active roles in 2016. Please email me if you are interested in becoming more active in the organization or are interested in entering a role of leadership!



This is our third edition of our new e-format of our Newsletter, "The Guardian." I would love to hear from you, our members, on how you're finding the new format.

Sarah W. Peterson, Esq.



Membership

Our new online system for registration and payment is now up and running. We are now using PayPal for online payments. For those who feel more comfortable with paper, you are also welcome to complete your registration by mail with payment by check. Please note that we have a new mailing address, which is: MGA Membership, P.O. Box 320621, West Roxbury, MA 02132. Information on registration can be found [here](#). The MGA is now offering rolling membership, whereby you will receive 12 months of membership starting on the date of your application/renewal. Please renew your membership by June 15, 2015 to ensure that your listing on our "Members Directory" is not interrupted, and that you continue to receive our e-Newsletter.

MGA in the Community

Save the Date(s)!

The MGA will be offering a two-part conference series in collaboration with the Social Law Library this fall. We will be offering discounted admission prices to MGA members! The programs will be held on September 16, 2015 and October 21, 2015 from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. The September 16, 2015 program will cover the topics of Substituted Judgment/Rogers Cases and Financial Issues and will feature an opening address by the Honorable Chief Justice Angela Ordoñez of the Probate & Family Court. The October 21, 2015 program will cover End of Life/Life Sustaining Treatment and Ethical Issues. Members will receive additional information, including links for registration by email in the coming weeks.

The MGA annual networking breakfast will be held on December 10, 2015. This is always a wonderful event and a great opportunity to meet your fellow members and learn more about the MGA. More details will follow in the coming weeks.



[Legal News, Resources, and Information](#)

New Massachusetts Regulations went into effect on December 19, 2014, requiring all licensed hospitals, clinics, and long-term care facilities to distribute information regarding advanced care planning, palliative care, hospice care, and end of life care options to adults with serious advancing illness. The Department of Public Health has published a new informational brochure called, "[Know Your Choices: A Guide for Patients with Serious Advancing Illness.](#)"

The new regulatory citations are: 105 CMR 130.000 (Hospitals), 105 CMR 140.000 (Clinics), and 105 CMR 150.000 (Long-Term Care Facilities).

Honoring Choices Massachusetts is offering a Health Care Proxy Instructions and Forms in nine languages to help adults with limited English proficiency exercise their right to appoint a Health Care Agent. The Instructions and Forms are no cost and available to view and print on the [Honoring Choice](#) website. What a wonderful resource!

[SHOWING COMPASSION FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES](#)

By Kristen Alberino

Social Security Public Affairs Specialist
in Quincy, MA



May is Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS) Awareness Month. ALS, also known as Lou Gehrig's disease, is a rapidly progressive and fatal neurological disease that attacks

the body's ability to control muscle movement by ceasing the transmission of messages to muscles.

Social Security has identified ALS as a medical condition so severe it obviously meets our agency's strict definition of disability and has included it on our Compassionate Allowances list. Our agency expedites the benefit application process for these applicants. [Click here](#) to read more about Compassionate Allowances.

May is also Mental Health Awareness Month. This invisible disease comes in many forms, and it's imperative that we approach people with mental health issues with compassion and empathy.

ALS and mental illness are just examples of the types of disabilities for which workers may receive Social Security disability benefits. The list is too long for one article, but includes cancers, diseases, birth defects, physical disabilities caused by accidents, and organ-related disabilities such as congestive heart failure.

Many people don't think of disability as something that could happen to them. Statistics say the chances of becoming disabled are greater than most realize. 56 million Americans, or 1-in-5, live with a disability. 38 million Americans, or 1-in-10, live with a severe disability. A sobering fact for 20 year-olds is that more than 1-in-4 of them will become disabled before reaching retirement age. Disability can happen to anyone.

When disability does happen, Social Security can help people meet their basic needs. Our disability program provides financial and medical benefits for those who qualify to pay for doctors' visits, medicines, and treatments.

Our beneficiaries are just like you. They have the same hopes and dreams. What makes their stories different is that they live with debilitating diseases that inhibit their ability to work. Social Security disability beneficiaries are among the most severely impaired people in the country. Our Faces and Facts of Disability webpage highlights stories about people who have disabilities. We invite you to learn the facts about the disability insurance program, and see and hear the stories of hardship and perseverance at [by clicking here](#). These stories are just examples of the 38 million Americans who live with disabling conditions and need Social Security's support to make ends meet.

Thank you all for your continued support of the MGA! We look forward to seeing you at an upcoming event!

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