

NAMING A GUARDIAN FOR YOUR MINOR CHILDREN

If you don't name a guardian for your minor children in your Will, the court will make this choice for you without your input. The following actions should be considered when deciding who to name:

- (1) **Age and maturity.** You may think of your parents as prospective guardians, but consider the age and general health of your chosen guardian and whether he or she will be able to physically handle the demands of raising children. On the other hand, you also want to consider whether he or she is mature enough to handle the demands of raising children.
- (2) **Values.** Does the chosen guardian share your basic values and goals as a parent so your children will be raised similarly to the way you would have raised them?
- (3) **Religious viewpoint.** Does the chosen guardian share your religious beliefs?
- (4) **Geographic location.** Consider whether your children would have to deal with moving in addition to the loss of their parent(s). Geographic location is also important if you wish your children to stay in the same school district as when you were alive.
- (5) **Existing family structure, including other children.** Is the chosen guardian in the position to care for all your children? How will your families blend if the guardian has children of his or her own?
- (6) **Relationship with your children.** Does the chosen guardian have an existing relationship with your children? Do your children feel comfortable around him or her?