

## The Appointment of the Public Guardian

The Public Guardian is appointed as the guardian of a person when there is a need for a legal substitute decision maker and there is no other person suitable or able to be the guardian. The Public Guardian is the guardian of last resort.

The Public Guardian can be appointed by the Guardianship Tribunal at a hearing at which the person with the disability and other interested parties attend. The Public Guardian can also be appointed by the Supreme Court.

### What happens after the appointment?

When the Guardianship Tribunal appoints the Public Guardian, a written order and the reasons for the decision are sent to the Public Guardian's central office in Parramatta. The Public Guardian generally needs the information contained in the order and reasons before responding to requests for decisions or consents.

Once received, the order and reasons will be sent to the team which covers the area in which the person resides for implementation. The Office of the Public Guardian is divided into regional teams each with its own branch office as follows:

- the Hunter team located at level 3, 4 Watt St, Gosford,
- the Sydney team located at Level 2, Suites 204-206, 83 York Street, Sydney, and
- the Rural/outer metropolitan west team located in the central office at Level 6, 160 Marsden Street, Parramatta (further contact details listed below).

A member of staff from the central or regional office may not contact you immediately following the hearing. If you are not contacted and have important information to provide to the Public Guardian or require a decision or consent to be provided, contact the central office and ask to speak to the Duty Officer.

For urgent consents required after hours call (02) 8688 2650 and you will hear a recorded message which will give you the number of a pager service. Give the pager service your name and number and the duty officer will return your call.

### What can you expect from the Public Guardian?

The Public Guardian has been appointed to make a decision or provide consent on behalf of the person under guardianship and to promote their best interests for a limited period.

This does not mean that the Public Guardian becomes the case manager or the carer for the person.

In making a decision the Public Guardian will need to gain information on the decision or consent required from people involved with the person under guardianship. This can be done by telephone or by a visit. The Public Guardian will listen to what the person under guardianship wants and make an objective assessment of the risks and benefits of the decision, seeking professional opinion where necessary.

### Complaints

If you are concerned about an action taken by a staff member of the Office of the Public Guardian or a decision made by the Public Guardian contact the Regional Manager of the area in which the person resides. If you are not satisfied with a response from the Regional Manager, write to the Complaints Support Officer at the address listed below. That person will investigate the complaint and provide you with a response.

For further information contact:  
**The Information & Support Branch of the Office of the Public Guardian**  
**Locked Bag 5116 Parramatta NSW 2124**  
Phone: 02 8688 6070 Freecall: 1800 451 510 Fax: 02 8688 9797  
e-mail: [informationssupport@opg.nsw.gov.au](mailto:informationssupport@opg.nsw.gov.au)  
[www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/opg](http://www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/opg)