Packet 15

Appointment of a Guardian – Minor

Forms and Procedures

For Wyoming

RESPONDENT

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<u>LIST OF FORMS – PACKET 15</u> <u>GUARDIANSHIP OF A MINOR – RESPONDENT</u>

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- 2. Information and Instructions for Response to Petition for Guardianship
- 3. Acknowledgement and Acceptance of Service
- 4. Parental Consent to Appointment of Guardian
- 5. Answer to Petition for Appointment of Guardian of a Minor
- 6. Pretrial Disclosures
- 7. Request for Setting
- 8. Order Setting Hearing

^{*} Other forms may be required by your Court.

INSTRUCTIONS TO RESPOND TO PETITION FOR APPOINTMENT OF GUARDIAN OF A MINOR

These standard instructions are for informational purposes only and are not meant to be legal advice about your specific case. If you choose to represent yourself, you are bound by the same procedures and rules as a lawyer.

Use these Instructions **ONLY** when you have been named as the Respondent/Defendant in a Petition for Guardianship.

GENERAL INFORMATION

- 1. The Court requires proof that you received the *Petition for Appointment of Guardian of a Minor* and a *Summons*. A <u>Sheriff</u> will have to personally serve you with the *Petition* and *Summons* unless the Petitioner gives you file-stamped copies of the papers and you sign an *Acknowledgment and Acceptance of Service* form. You must sign the *Acknowledgment* form in the presence of a notary.
- 2. If you and the Petitioner(s) already agree about how you want the guardianship arrangement to be handled, you may complete and sign a *Parental Consent to Appointment of Guardian of Minor* form. This form must be signed in the presence of a Notarial Officer (notary public).
- 3. If you do not agree to the Petitioner(s) having guardianship of your child, then it is **very important that you file an** *Answer to Petition for Appointment of Guardian of a Minor* **with the court**, as described below. Generally, if you were served within the State of Wyoming, you will have 20 days after you are served with the Petition for Appointment of Guardian of a Minor to file your Answer. If you were served outside the State of Wyoming, you generally will have 30 days to file an Answer. On the same day that you file the Answer with the District Court Clerk, you must send a copy of that Answer to the Petitioner, who is the person that is asking to be named the child's guardian. If that person has a lawyer, you would send the Answer to his or her lawyer, instead.
- 4. It is **also very important that you appear for the court hearing**. Make sure that the Court and the Petitioner(s) have your current address and telephone number.
- 5. You can read **Common Questions about Guardianship for a Minor** at http://www.legalhelpwy.org/index.php/get-legal-help/self-help-2/family-law/guardianships/guardianship-of-a-minor-child/common-questions/. This may help you to better understand the Guardianship process.

COMMON TERMS

- 1. The "Petitioner" is the person who filed the Petition for Appointment of Guardian of a Minor.
- 2. The "Respondent" is the person answering the Petition (that would be you).
- 3. "Guardian" means a person who has been appointed by the court to exercise the powers granted by the court. The term includes a plenary (full), limited, emergency and standby guardian, but does not include a Guardian Ad Litem.
- 4. "Minor" means a child under the age of 18. There is an instance where a child under age 18 is not considered a minor, and that would be if he or she had been emancipated, but if that were the case, then there would be no need for a guardian.
- 5. "Ward" means the minor child or children for whom a guardian is being requested.

FORMS

Check with the District Court Clerk where the Petitioner filed the case to determine if that court has any special requirements. You can find a directory of the District Courts at: https://www.courts.state.wy.us/district-courts/district-court-locations/.

STEPS FOR ANSWERING OR RESPONDING TO THE PETITION

Step 1: Complete the Answer form.

If you have been served with the Petition, or have signed an Acknowledgement and Acceptance of Service form, you should file an *Answer to Petition for Appointment of Guardian of a Minor* with the District Court Clerk where the Petition was filed. Your Answer is simply telling (in writing) the Judge what you object to and why, and that you do not want a guardian appointed for the minor child(ren). If you fail to file your Answer, an Order may be entered and the Petitioner may receive the relief he or she asked for in the Petition for Appointment of Guardian of a Minor.

- Answer to Petition for Appointment of Guardian of a Minor:
- ✓ Go through each numbered paragraph in the first section of the Petition for Appointment of Guardian of a Minor and decide whether you agree (admit), do not agree (deny), or do not have enough information to agree or not agree. The paragraphs you must respond to are usually found before you see the word "WHEREFORE."

- ✓ Respond to Paragraph 1: Enter the number of each paragraph you admit to. (Example: 1 and 3)
- ✓ Respond to Paragraph 2: Enter the number of each paragraph you deny. (Example: 1, 2, and 3)
- ✓ Respond to Paragraph 3: Enter the number of each paragraph you cannot answer. (Example: 3)
- ✓ Sign the Answer.
- ✓ Complete the Certificate of Service section of the Answer on the same day you file the Answer with the District Court Clerk. (See Step 2.)
- ✓ Make at least two copies after completing and signing the form (one for yourself and one for the Petitioner). The original will be filed with the District Court Clerk. (See Step 2.)

Step 2: File Your Papers with the Court and send a copy to the Petitioner.

You must complete all of the following steps in a single day:

- 1. Fill out and sign the Certificate of Service section on the last page of the Answer.
- 2. File the completed and signed original Answer with the District Court Clerk, but be sure to make at least two copies of the Answer (one for yourself and one to send to the Petitioner) before you file the document.
- 3. Hand deliver, fax, or use first class mail to send a copy of the Answer to the Petitioner. If the Petitioner has a lawyer, you would send the Answer to his or her lawyer instead.

Step 3: Complete your *Pretrial Disclosures* Form (if you plan to use witnesses or evidence).

Prior to the hearing, the judge may order that you send a list of your witnesses and other evidence to the court and opposing party a certain number of days before the hearing or by a specific date. If you do not follow these instructions, the judge may not allow you to use your witnesses or other evidence. You can use the *Pretrial Disclosures* form to prepare your witness and evidence lists for the other parties. You will file this form with the District Court Clerk and send a copy to the Petitioner in the same manner as you did in Step 2 above. You do not have to file the Pretrial Disclosure form and the Answer at the same time, but you must file it at least 30 days before the first hearing, or by the date specified by the judge.

• Pretrial Disclosures form

- ✓ Fill in the information at the top of the first page. The names, case number and court information should match the information on the Petition for Appointment of Guardian of a Minor.
- ✓ Enter the names and contact information for any witnesses in the first table on page 4.
- ✓ For each witness, check whether you expect to use them or if you will only use them if necessary.
- ✓ In the second table, enter a name for each piece of evidence ("Document or Exhibit") you might want to show the court. Example: "Exhibit A: Ward's Medical Records."
- ✓ Enter a short description ("Summary of Evidence") for each piece of evidence. Example: "These medical records describe the child's special care needs."
- ✓ For each piece of evidence, check whether you expect to use it or if you will only use it if necessary.
- ✓ Sign the Pretrial Disclosures form.
- ✓ Complete the Certificate of Service section on the same day you file the document.
- 1. Make at least two copies of the completed form (one for yourself and one for the Petitioner). Hand deliver, fax, or use first class mail to send a copy of the Pretrial Disclosures form to the Petitioner. If the Petitioner has a lawyer, you would send the form to his or her lawyer instead.

Step 4: Go to the Hearing.

You and the Petitioner must appear at the hearing. This is very important. If you do not appear at the hearing, the Court will most likely allow the Petitioner to become the guardian of your child.

- 1. There is a chance that the Court will send you a letter before the court date. If you receive this, make sure to follow the instructions exactly.
- 2. It is the duty of the Petitioner to present evidence showing that you, as the parent/respondent are aware of the proceedings and that you agree to the Guardianship. If you do not agree or consent to the Guardianship, the Petitioner must present evidence showing that you, as the parent, are either unwilling or unable to take care of your child, and the Court must find that you are unfit as a parent. Be prepared to offer evidence such as witnesses (family, friends, teachers, medical providers) showing that you have provided for your children and are a fit parent.

- 3. If the Court appoints a Guardian, the Court will issue Letters of Guardianship as a formal notice of the appointment and will provide you with a copy of the Order Appointing Guardian for Minor.
- 4. If the Court awards Guardianship to the Petitioner, this does not mean that you do not have any more rights to your child. You can ask for visitation with the child(ren). And if your circumstances change, so that you believe you are in a better position to have your child(ren) back, then you may file a Motion to Terminate Guardianship and request another hearing. At this hearing, you will want to put on evidence (witnesses, documentation) that you are able to provide a stable life for your child, and show what you have done differently since the last hearing.

STATE OF WYOMING)		IN THE DISTRICT COURT
COUNTY OF) SS)		JUDICIAL DISTRICT
IN THE MATTER OF THE GUARDIANSHIP OF	<u></u>))))	Probate No
Minor child(ren).)	
ACKNOWI	LEDGEMENT	Γ AND ACCEPI	CANCE OF SERVICE
I, (Print Respondent's Name))		, hereby acknowledge
receipt of a copy of the Sun	imons and Peti	ition for Appointn	nent of Guardian of a Minor filed in
this case. In accepting serv	ice of process,	I retain all defens	ses or objections to the lawsuit or to
the jurisdiction or venue of	the court exce	pt for objections b	pased on a defect in the Summons or
in the service of the <i>Summo</i>	ns. I understa	nd that I must ans	swer or otherwise plead within 20
			ceived outside of Wyoming) and that
•	-		of this Court and serve the same upon
			vil Procedure within the time limits
	·		ne relief demanded in the <i>Petition for</i>
Appointment of Guardian o		-	
Appointment of Guardian o	, a minor with	out a trial of othe	i neuring.
DATED this	day of		, 20
	(Res	spondent's Signati	ure)
	Rest	ondent's Phone I	Number:
	Resp	ondent's Address	3:
	Rest	ondent's City/Sta	nte/Zip Code:

Subscribed and sworn to before me on this	day of	, 20
WITNESS my hand and official seal.		
	Notarial Offi	cer
My Commission Expires:		
<u>CERTIFICATE (</u>	OF SERVI	<u>CE</u>
I certify that on	_ (date) the o	original of this document was
filed with the Clerk of District Court; and, a true as	nd accurate co	py of this document was served
on each of the following:		
Must be sent to every party to the case or their attoo other party's attorney's Name and Address. You n	nust indicate N	- •
Other Party/Other Party's Attorney's Name and Address		nod of Service
		and Delivery
		exed to this number:
		aced in United States Mail and Delivery
		exed to this number:
		aced in United States Mail
		and Delivery
	□Fa	xed to this number:
		aced in United States Mail
		and Delivery
		xed to this number:aced in United States Mail
	Your signatu	_
	Print name	

STAT	E OF WYOMING)	IN THE DISTRICT COURT
COUN	NTY OF) SS)	JUDICIAL DISTRICT
GUAF	IE MATTER OF THE RDIANSHIP OF)	Probate No
	Minor child(ren).		
	PARENTAL	CONSENT TO APPOINT	MENT OF GUARDIAN
STAT	E OF	•	
COUN	NTY OF) ss.)	
	I, (full name)		, being first duly sworn upon oath,
hereby	y state as follows:		
1.	I reside at	, County of	,
2.	I am the [] parent /[] legal guardian of the minor	child(ren) involved in these proceedings.
3.	Said minor child(ren)):	
	<u>Child #1</u>		
		_, was born on	(date of birth), and
	presently resides at _		(address).
	<u>Child #2</u>		
		_, was born on	(date of birth), and
	presently resides at _		(address).

, was born on	(date of birth), and
presently resides at	(address).
I believe it would be in the best interests of	of said minor child(ren) to be placed under the:
permanent guardianship	
temporary guardianship (for a period of	of no longer than one year)
emergency guardianship	
standby guardianship	
of	(name of proposed guardian)
If you have additional information for the	e court to consider, such as why you believe the
•	s best interest, you may provide that information
here:	s best interest, you may provide that information
nere.	
DATED:, 20	
	·
	(Signature of Natural Parent/Legal Guardian
	(Signature of Natural Parent/Legal Guardian Phone Number:
	(Signature of Natural Parent/Legal Guardian Phone Number: Address:
	(Signature of Natural Parent/Legal Guardian Phone Number:
DATED:, 20	(Signature of Natural Parent/Legal Guardian Phone Number: Address: City/State/Zip Code:
DATED:	(Signature of Natural Parent/Legal Guardian Phone Number: Address:
DATED:	(Signature of Natural Parent/Legal Guardian Phone Number: Address: City/State/Zip Code:

My commission expires:

Parental Consent to Appointment of Guardian Approved by Wyoming Supreme Court (2016) Page 2 of 2

STATE OF WYOMING)	IN THE DISTRICT COURT
) SS () () () () () () () () () () () () ()	JUDICIAL DISTRICT
IN THE MATTER OF THE GUARDIANSHIP OF	<pre>Probate No</pre>
Minor child(ren).))
ANSWER TO PETITION FOR API	POINTMENT OF GUARDIAN OF MINOR
The Respondent sets forth the follow Appointment of Guardian of a Minor ("Petiti	ving as the answers and responses to the <i>Petition for</i> ion"):
1. Respondent admits the allegation of the <i>Petition</i> .	(list paragraphs that you believe are accurate)
2. Respondent denies the allegations of the <i>Petition</i> .	s in Paragraphs (list paragraphs that you believe are not accurate)
3. Respondent does not have inform	nation sufficient to either admit or deny the
allegations in Paragraphs(list paragra	of the <i>Petition</i> .
	ectfully requests that the court find in favor of ent of Guardian of a Minor be denied, and for such
other relief as the court deems proper.	, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , ,
DATED this day of	, 20
	(Signature of Respondent)
	(Printed Name of Respondent)

(Phone Number)	
(Address – to receive mailings)	
(City, State, Zip)	

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I certify that on	_(date) the original of this ANSWER TO
PETITION FOR APPOINTMENT OF GUARDIA	AN OF A MINOR was filed with the Clerk of
District Court; and, a true and accurate copy of th	is document was served on the other party by
☐ Hand Delivery OR ☐ Faxed to this number	OR Dy placing it
in the United States mail, postage pre-paid, and add	dressed to the following:
(Print name and address of other party) TO:	
	Your signature Print Name

STATE OF WYOMING)	IN THE DISTRICT COURT
COUNTY OF) SS)	JUDICIAL DISTRICT
IN THE MATTER OF THE GUARDIANSHIP OF) -) -)	Probate No
Minor child(ren).	_,)	
	PRETRIAL DISCLOSU	URES
before trial. Within 14 days may serve and promptly f objections to the use under R 26(a)(3)(B), and (ii) any objections admissibility of materials ide	thereafter, unless a different ile with the Clerk of Distance 32 (a) of a deposition dection, together with the ground entified under Rule 26(a)(3)(402) and 403 of the Wyoming	time is specified by the court, a party trict Court a list disclosing (i) any esignated by another party under Rule ands therefore, that may be made to the C). Objections not so disclosed, other Rules of Evidence, are waived unless
Petitioner,		_ (print name), OR \(\subseteq \text{Respondent,} \)
	(print name), submit	s the following pretrial disclosures,
pursuant to Wyoming Rule of	of Civil Procedure 26(a)(3),	required in pretrial proceedings. This
information must be made av	vailable to the opposing party	y or the opposing party's counsel and
the Court at least thirty (30) d	ays before the trial.	
A. The name and	, if not previously provided,	the address and telephone number of
each witness, separately ident	ifying those whom the party	expects to present and those whom the
party may call if the need aris	es.	
B. The designation	on of those witnesses whose	testimony is expected to be presented
by means of a deposition and	, if not taken stenographicall	y (i.e. by a court reporter), a transcript
of the pertinent portions of the Pretrial Disclosures – Guarda Approved by Wyoming Supres Page 1 of 4	ianship (Minor)	

C. An appropriate identification of each document or other exhibit, including summaries of other evidence, separately identifying those which the party expects to offer and those which the party may offer if the need arises.

NOTE: Supplementation of disclosures and responses. Wyoming Rules of Civil Procedure 26(e)(1) states that: A party who has made a disclosure or responded to a request for discovery with a disclosure or response is under a duty to supplement or correct the disclosure or response to include information thereafter acquired, if ordered by the court or in the following circumstances:

A party is under a duty to supplement at appropriate intervals, its disclosures if the party learns that in some material respect the information disclosed is incomplete or incorrect and if the additional or corrective information has not otherwise been made known to the other parties during the discovery process or in writing.

DATED this	day of	, 20
		Signature
		Printed name:
		Address:
		Phone Number:

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I certify that on	_(date)	the original of this document was
filed with the Clerk of District Court; and, a true ar	nd accur	rate copy of this document was served
on each of the following:		
Must be sent to every party to the case or their atto	rney if 1	represented. Print the other party's or
other party's attorney's Name and Address. You m	ust indi	cate Method of Service.
Other Party/Other Party's Attorney's Name and Address		Method of Service
		Hand Delivery
		Faxed to this number:
		☐Placed in United States Mail
		Hand Delivery
		Faxed to this number:
		Placed in United States Mail
		Hand Delivery
		Faxed to this number:
		Placed in United States Mail
		Hand Delivery
		Faxed to this number:
		Placed in United States Mail
	Your s	ignature
	Print n	ame

(check	one)
4	_

		(cneck	one)
Name of Witness	Address and Telephone Number	Expect to call witness to testify	May call witness to testify if the need arises
Additional sheets of p	paper are attached if needed		
		(ch	eck one)
Document or Exhibit	Summary of Evidence	Expect to	May offer

Document or Exhibit	Summary of Evidence	Expect to offer	May offer if the need arises

Additional sheets of paper are attached if needed

STATE OF WYOMING COUNTY OF)) SS)	IN THE DISTRICT COURT
		JUDICIAL DISTRICT
IN THE MATTER OF THE GUARDIANSHIP OF)) -)	Probate No
Minor child(ren),	_,)	
	REQUES	ST FOR SETTING
		(name), Petitioner Respondent,
respectfully requests a time	and date for a h	earing/trial of the above-captioned matter on the
Petition for Appointment of	Guardian of a N	Minor, or on the
Time re	equested for the	hearing/trial: Hours Minutes
Natica: Any party raquesti	ng the reporting	of a particular matter by the official court reporter
-		rial court reporter as soon as possible, but no later
		tter is set for hearing. You can provide notice to the
	•	written request. Please note that if providing notice
_		ed by the court reporter no later than three working
		rict Court will be able to inform you which court
reporter to contact. The three	ee-day notice re	quirement will not be waived by the Court. The
notice is required for all civ	il matters includ	ling jury trials. If a hearing is not recorded by an
official court reporter, a trar	script of the hea	aring will not be available. It is very difficult to
appeal the Judge's decision	if you do not ha	we a transcript of everything that is said at the trial.
Rule 904 of the Uniform Ru	les of the Distri	ct Courts of the State of Wyoming.
DATED this	day of	, 20
	Signat Phone	Number:

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I certify that on	(date) the original of this document was
filed with the Clerk of District Court; and, a true	and accurate copy of this document was served
on each of the following:	
Must be sent to every party to the case or their at	torney if represented. Print the other party's or
other party's attorney's Name and Address. You	must indicate Method of Service .
Other Party/Other Party's Attorney's Name and Address	ss Method of Service
	Hand Delivery
	Faxed to this number:
	Placed in United States Mail
	Hand Delivery
	Faxed to this number:
	Placed in United States Mail
	Hand Delivery
	Faxed to this number:
	Placed in United States Mail
	Hand Delivery
	Faxed to this number:
	Placed in United States Mail
	Your signature
	Print name

STATE OF WYOMING)	IN THE DISTRICT COURT
COUNTY OF) SS)	JUDICIAL DISTRICT
IN THE MATTER OF THE GUARDIANSHIP OF)) –)	Probate No
Minor child(ren).		
	ORDER SET	ITING HEARING
having considered the same be set for a hearing. IT IS THEREFOR	e and being otherw	the Court on a Request for Setting; and the Court vise fully advised, hereby finds said matter should at a hearing on the <i>Petition for Appointment of</i>
•		ed in the Request for Setting) is hereby scheduled
		County Courthouse, located at
		on the day of, 20,) minutes/hour(s)/day(s) have been set aside for
		inuances or canceling of the hearing date based on
DATED this	day of	, 20
Copies sent to: Petitioner/Petitioner's Attor		Address
Respondent/Respondent's A		

Order Setting Hearing – Guardianship (Minor) Approved by Wyoming Supreme Court (2016) Page 1 of 1