

Special Needs Planning Newsletter: Guardians and Conservators Don't Have to Do It Alone

Section 1.01 Chattanooga's Resources for Newly-Appointed Fiduciaries

by **Cameron Kapperman, Special Needs Planning Attorney**

Recently I took a trip to the Davidson County courthouse in Nashville where the presiding judge mentioned the Office of Conservatorship Management. While appointing a mother as conservator for her child, the judge explained that this office is unique in the state of Tennessee and is designed to assist court-appointed guardians and conservators in caring and providing for their loved ones with special needs. The judge urged the mother to take advantage of this resource, which serves as a user-friendly conduit for newly-appointed conservators to plug into the vast community of resources available in Metropolitan Nashville and Davidson County.

As an attorney who often advises guardians and conservators, I frequently have clients who have questions concerning their day-to-day duties, as well as questions about resources that might be available to them. So, I was curious to see exactly what Davidson County's Office of Conservatorship Management offers to newly-appointed fiduciaries. Quite simply, it serves as an incredible resource that deserves emulation across Tennessee.

The [office's stated goals](#) are:

- To review the care and management provided by guardians and conservators to help provide for the health, safety, and welfare of individuals under a guardianship or conservatorship;
- Add an additional layer of review of the management of the assets by guardians and conservators;
- Help provide or direct to resources that are available to promote successful conservatorships; and
- Educate conservators, guardians, and the general public about guardianship and conservatorships in Davidson County.

To accomplish these goals, the office has created an online repository of information, complete with educational YouTube videos, links to resources for fiduciaries, and a form to directly contact the office with any questions that may arise for a fiduciary acting on behalf of an individual with special needs. Through this office, Davidson County has truly embodied the concept of "it takes a village" to assist guardians and conservators in dealing with the uncertainties and difficulties of caring for their loved ones.

While your city may not (yet) have its own Office of Conservatorship Management, it is important to recognize that there are a variety of resources available to guardians and conservators. For example, in Chattanooga, Siskin Children's Institute has compiled an [excellent list](#) of county and regional agencies that provide support and resources for individuals with special needs, and the Hamilton County Chancery Court also provides [detailed information](#) to help assist newly appointed fiduciaries in navigating the legal aspects of guardianships and conservatorships. Additionally, the vast majority of the resources available on the website for Davidson County are also applicable to guardians and conservators in Hamilton County.

Assuming responsibility over another individual's person and property can often be a daunting task, but it is important to remember that no one has to do it alone. There are plenty of resources available to guardians and conservators that help make the process easier, while simultaneously ensuring that individuals with special needs have access to the best possible care.

Contact Us to Learn about Resources Available at Chambliss

Some of our client materials include:

- The Conservatorship Process
- The Conservator's Obligations
- Special Needs Planning Resources
- Conservatorship FAQs

If you or someone you know needs help navigating this process, or simply could benefit from information regarding resources that might be available, our team at Chambliss is happy to help.