

Article 13.

Removal or Resignation of Guardian; Successor Guardian; Estates Without Guardians;
Termination of Guardianship.

§ 35A-1290. Removal by Clerk.

(a) The clerk has the power and authority on information or complaint made to remove any guardian appointed under the provisions of this Subchapter, to appoint successor guardians, and to make rules or enter orders for the better management of estates and the better care and maintenance of wards and their dependents.

(b) It is the clerk's duty to remove a guardian or to take other action sufficient to protect the ward's interests in the following cases:

- (1) The guardian wastes the ward's money or estate or converts it to his own use.
- (2) The guardian in any manner mismanages the ward's estate.
- (3) The guardian neglects to care for or maintain the ward or his dependents in a suitable manner.
- (4) The guardian or his sureties are likely to become insolvent or to become nonresidents of the State.
- (5) The original appointment was made on the basis of a false representation or a mistake.
- (6) The guardian has violated a fiduciary duty through default or misconduct.
- (7) The guardian has a private interest, whether direct or indirect, that might tend to hinder or be adverse to carrying out his duties as guardian.
- (8) The guardian has been adjudged incompetent by a court of competent jurisdiction and has not been restored to competence.
- (9) The guardian has been convicted of a felony under the laws of the United States or of any state or territory of the United States or of the District of Columbia and his citizenship has not been restored.
- (10) The guardian was originally unqualified for appointment and continues to be unqualified, or the guardian would no longer qualify for appointment as guardian due to a change in residence, a change in the charter of a corporate guardian, or any other reason.
- (11) The guardian is the ward's spouse and has lost his rights as provided by Chapter 31A of the General Statutes.
- (12) The guardian fails to post, renew, or increase a bond as required by law or by order of the court.
- (13) The guardian refuses or fails without justification to obey any citation, notice, or process served on him in regard to the guardianship.
- (14) The guardian fails to file required accountings with the clerk.
- (15) The clerk finds the guardian unsuitable to continue serving as guardian for any reason.
- (16) The guardian is a nonresident of the State and refuses or fails to obey any citation, notice, or process served on the guardian or the guardian's process agent.
- (17) The guardian is a licensed attorney, and the clerk is in receipt of an order entered pursuant to G.S. 84-28 enjoining, suspending, or disbaring the attorney.

(c) Repealed by Session Laws 2017-158, s. 4, effective July 21, 2017. (1987, c. 550, s. 1; 2004-203, s. 31(b); 2017-158, s. 4.)

§ 35A-1291. Emergency removal; interlocutory orders on revocation.

The clerk may remove a guardian without hearing if the clerk finds reasonable cause to believe that an emergency exists that threatens the physical well-being of the ward or constitutes a risk of substantial injury to the ward's estate. In all cases where the letters of a guardian are revoked, the clerk may, pending the resolution of any controversy in respect to such removal, make such interlocutory orders and decrees as the clerk finds necessary for the protection of the ward or the ward's estate or the other party seeking relief by such revocation. (1987, c. 550, s. 1; 2004-203, s. 31(c).)

§ 35A-1292. Resignation.

(a) Any guardian who wishes to resign shall file a motion with the clerk setting forth the circumstances of the case. If a general guardian or guardian of the estate, at the time of making the application, also exhibits his final account for settlement, and if the clerk is satisfied that the guardian has fully accounted, the clerk may accept the resignation of the guardian and discharge him and appoint a successor guardian. The guardian so discharged and his sureties are still liable in relation to all matters connected with the guardianship before the discharge and shall continue to ensure that the ward's needs are met until the clerk officially appoints a successor. The guardian shall attend the hearing to modify the guardianship, if physically able.

(b) A general guardian who wishes to resign as guardian of the estate of the ward but continue as guardian of the person of the ward may apply for the partial resignation by petition as provided in subsection (a) of this section. If the general guardian also exhibits his final account as guardian of the estate for settlement, and if the clerk is satisfied that the general guardian has fully accounted as guardian of the estate, the clerk may accept the resignation of the general guardian as guardian of the estate, discharge him as guardian of the estate, and issue to him letters of appointment as guardian of the person, but the general guardian so discharged as guardian of the estate and his sureties are still liable in relation to all matters connected with the guardianship of the estate before the discharge. (1987, c. 550, s. 1; 2012-151, s. 12(d).)

§ 35A-1293. Appointment of successor guardian.

Upon the removal, death, or resignation of a guardian, the clerk shall appoint a successor guardian following the same criteria that would apply to the initial appointment of a guardian. (1987, c. 550, s. 1.)

§ 35A-1294. Estates without guardians.

(a) Whenever a general guardian or guardian of the estate is removed, resigns, or stops serving without making a full and proper accounting, the successor guardian, or the clerk if there is no successor guardian, shall initiate a proceeding to compel an accounting. The surety or sureties on the previous guardian's bond shall be served with notice of the proceeding.

(b) If no successor guardian has been appointed, the clerk may act as receiver or appoint some discreet person as a receiver to take possession of the ward's estate, to collect all moneys due the ward, and to secure, lend, invest, or apply the same for the benefit and advantage of the ward, under the direction of the clerk until a successor guardian is appointed. The accounts of the receiver shall be returned, audited, and settled as the clerk may direct. The receiver shall be allowed such amounts for his time, trouble, and responsibility as seem to the clerk reasonable and proper. Such receivership may continue until a suitable guardian can be appointed.

(c) When another guardian is appointed, he may apply by motion, on notice, to the clerk for an order directing the receiver to pay over all the money, estate, and effects of the ward. If no such guardian is appointed, the ward shall have the same remedy against the receiver on becoming age 18 or otherwise emancipated if the ward is a minor or on being restored to competence if the ward is an incompetent person. In the event of the ward's death, his executor, administrator, or collector, and the heir or personal representative of the ward shall have the same remedy against the receiver. (1987, c. 550, s. 1.)

§ 35A-1295. Termination of guardianship.

(a) Every guardianship shall be terminated and all powers and duties of the guardian provided in Article 9 of this Chapter shall cease when the ward does any of the following:

- (1) Ceases to be a minor as defined in G.S. 35A-1202(12).
- (2) Is adjudicated to be restored to competency pursuant to the provisions of G.S. 35A-1130.
- (3) Dies.
- (4) Is no longer under the jurisdiction of North Carolina because the court has issued a final order confirming transfer pursuant to the provisions of G.S. 35B-30(g).

(b) Notwithstanding subsection (a), a guardian of the estate or a general guardian is responsible for all accountings required by Article 10 of this Chapter until the guardian is discharged by the clerk. (1989, c. 473, s. 31; 2025-54, s. 5(d).)

§§ 35A-1296 through 35A-1300: Reserved for future codification purposes.