

**HOUSE SUBSTITUTE FOR  
SENATE BILL NO. 529**

A bill to amend 2008 PA 260, entitled  
"Guardianship assistance act,"  
by amending sections 2, 3, 4, 5a, 5b, 6, 7, 8, and 9 (MCL 722.872,  
722.873, 722.874, 722.875a, 722.875b, 722.876, 722.877, 722.878,  
and 722.879), sections 2, 3, 4, and 9 as amended and sections 5a  
and 5b as added by 2009 PA 15 and section 6 as amended by 2011 PA  
229, and by adding sections 5c and 5d.

**THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF MICHIGAN ENACT:**

- 1           Sec. 2. As used in this act:
- 2           (a) "Child" means a person less than 18 years of age.
- 3           (b) "Department" means the department of **HEALTH AND** human
- 4 services.
- 5           (c) "Eligible child" means a child who meets the eligibility

1 criteria set forth in section 3 for receiving guardianship  
2 assistance.

3 (d) "Guardian" means a person appointed by the court to act as  
4 a legal guardian for a child under section 19a or 19c of chapter  
5 XIIIA of the probate code, MCL 712A.19a and 712A.19c.

6 (e) "Guardianship assistance agreement" means a negotiated  
7 binding agreement regarding financial support as described in  
8 section 5 for children who meet the qualifications for guardianship  
9 assistance as specified in this act or in the department's  
10 administrative rules.

11 (f) "Legal custodian" means an individual who is at least 18  
12 years of age in whose care a child remains or is placed after a  
13 court makes a finding under section 13a of chapter XIIIA of the  
14 probate code, MCL 712A.13a.

15 (g) "Probate code" means the probate code of 1939, 1939 PA  
16 288, MCL 710.21 to ~~712A.32-712B.41~~.

17 (h) "Relative" means an individual who is at least 18 years of  
18 age and related to the child by blood, marriage, or adoption, as  
19 grandparent, great-grandparent, great-great-grandparent, aunt or  
20 uncle, great-aunt or great-uncle, great-great-aunt or great-great-  
21 uncle, sibling, stepsibling, nephew or niece, first cousin or first  
22 cousin once removed, or the spouse of any of the above, even after  
23 the marriage has ended by death or divorce. The parent of a man who  
24 the court has found probable cause to believe is the putative  
25 father if there is no man with legally established rights to the  
26 child may be considered a relative under this act but this is not  
27 to be considered as a finding of paternity and does not confer

1 legal standing on the putative father.

2 (I) "SUCCESSOR GUARDIAN" MEANS A PERSON APPOINTED BY THE COURT  
3 TO ACT AS A LEGAL GUARDIAN WHEN THE PRECEDING GUARDIAN IS NO LONGER  
4 ABLE TO ACT AS A RESULT OF HIS OR HER DEATH OR INCAPACITATION UNDER  
5 SECTION 19A OR 19C OF CHAPTER XIIIA OF THE PROBATE CODE, MCL  
6 712A.19A AND 712A.19C. SUCCESSOR GUARDIAN DOES NOT INCLUDE A PERSON  
7 APPOINTED AS A GUARDIAN IF THAT PERSON'S PARENTAL RIGHTS TO THE  
8 CHILD HAVE BEEN TERMINATED OR SUSPENDED.

9 (J) ~~(i)~~—"Title IV-E" refers to the federal assistance provided  
10 through the United States ~~department~~ **DEPARTMENT** of ~~health~~ **HEALTH**  
11 and ~~human services~~ **HUMAN SERVICES** to reimburse states for foster  
12 care, adoption assistance payments, and guardianship assistance  
13 payments.

14 Sec. 3. A child is eligible to receive guardianship assistance  
15 if the department determines that all of the following apply:

16 (a) The child has been removed from his or her home as a  
17 result of a judicial determination that allowing the child to  
18 remain in the home would be contrary to the child's welfare.

19 (b) The child has resided in the home of the prospective  
20 guardian for, at a minimum, 6 consecutive months.

21 (c) Reunification ~~or~~ **AND** placing the child for adoption ~~is~~ **ARE**  
22 not an appropriate permanency ~~option~~ **OPTIONS**.

23 (d) The child demonstrates a strong attachment to the  
24 prospective guardian and the guardian has a strong commitment to  
25 caring permanently for the child **UNTIL THE CHILD REACHES 18 YEARS**  
26 **OF AGE**.

27 (e) If the child has reached 14 years of age, he or she has

1 been consulted regarding the guardianship arrangement.

2       Sec. 4. (1) Subject to subsection (2), a guardian who meets  
3 all of the following criteria may receive guardianship assistance  
4 on behalf of an eligible child:

5       (a) The guardian is the eligible child's relative or legal  
6 custodian.

7       (b) The guardian is a licensed foster parent and approved for  
8 guardianship assistance by the department. The approval process  
9 shall include criminal record checks and child abuse and neglect  
10 central registry checks on the guardian and all adults living in  
11 the guardian's home as well as fingerprint-based criminal record  
12 checks on the guardian. If the guardian's fingerprints are stored  
13 in the automated fingerprint identification system under section 5k  
14 of 1973 PA 116, MCL 722.115k, the department shall use those  
15 fingerprints for the criminal record check required in this  
16 subdivision.

17       (c) The eligible child has resided with the prospective  
18 guardian in the prospective guardian's residence for a minimum of 6  
19 months before the application for guardianship assistance is  
20 received by the department.

21       (2) Only a relative who is a licensed foster parent caring for  
22 a child who is eligible to receive title IV-E-funded foster care  
23 payments for 6 consecutive months is eligible for federal funding  
24 under title IV-E for guardianship assistance. A child who is not  
25 eligible for title IV-E funding who is placed with a licensed  
26 foster parent, related or unrelated, and who meets the requirements  
27 of section 3(a) to (e) may be eligible for state-funded

1 guardianship assistance.

2 (3) If a child is eligible for title IV-E-funded guardianship  
3 assistance under section 3 but has a sibling who is not eligible  
4 under section 3, both of the following apply:

5 (a) The child and any of the child's siblings may be placed in  
6 the same relative guardianship arrangement in accordance with  
7 chapter XIIA of the probate code, ~~of 1939, 1939 PA 288, MCL 712A.1~~  
8 ~~to 712A.32,~~ if the department and the relative agree on the  
9 appropriateness of the arrangement for the sibling.

10 (b) Title IV-E-funded relative guardianship assistance  
11 payments may be paid on behalf of each sibling placed in accordance  
12 with this subsection.

13 **(4) A SUCCESSOR GUARDIAN MAY RECEIVE GUARDIANSHIP ASSISTANCE**  
14 **PAYMENTS IF THE ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA SET FORTH IN SECTION 3 ARE**  
15 **MET.**

16 Sec. 5a. For a child whose permanency plan includes placement  
17 with a guardian and will include the receipt of guardianship  
18 assistance payments, the department shall include in the case  
19 service plan for the child all of the following:

20 (a) The steps that the child placing agency or the department  
21 has taken to determine that reunification ~~or~~ **AND** placing the child  
22 for adoption ~~is~~ **ARE** not an appropriate permanency ~~option~~ **OPTIONS**.

23 (b) The reason for any separation of siblings during  
24 placement.

25 (c) The reason a permanent placement through guardianship is  
26 in the child's best interest.

27 (d) The way in which the child meets the eligibility criteria

1 for a guardianship assistance payment.

2 (e) The efforts the child placing agency or the department has  
 3 made to discuss adoption by the prospective guardian as a permanent  
 4 alternative to legal guardianship and ~~, in the case of a relative~~  
 5 ~~foster parent who has chosen not to pursue adoption,~~ documentation  
 6 of the reasons **THE PROSPECTIVE GUARDIAN HAS CHOSEN NOT TO PURSUE**  
 7 **ADOPTION.**

8 (f) In cases where the parental rights have not been  
 9 terminated, the efforts the department has made to discuss with the  
 10 child's birth parent or parents the guardianship assistance  
 11 arrangement, or the reasons why the efforts were not made.

12 Sec. 5b. The legal guardianship shall be a judicially created  
 13 relationship as provided for under sections 19a and 19c of chapter  
 14 XIIIA of the probate code, ~~of 1939, 1939 PA 288,~~ MCL 712A.19a and  
 15 712A.19c, between the child and his or her guardian that is  
 16 intended to be permanent and self-sustaining as evidenced by the  
 17 transfer to the guardian of the following parental rights with  
 18 respect to the child:

- 19 (a) Protection.
- 20 (b) Education.
- 21 (c) Care and control of the person.
- 22 (d) Custody of the person.
- 23 (e) Decision making.

24 **SEC. 5C. (1) SUBJECT TO PROVISIONS OF THIS ACT, THE DEPARTMENT**  
 25 **MAY PAY GUARDIANSHIP ASSISTANCE TO AN ELIGIBLE SUCCESSOR GUARDIAN**  
 26 **ON BEHALF OF AN ELIGIBLE CHILD.**

27 **(2) THE SUCCESSOR GUARDIAN SHALL APPLY FOR GUARDIANSHIP**

Senate Bill No. 529 as amended December 3, 2015

1 ASSISTANCE UNDER THIS ACT TO THE DEPARTMENT.

2 (3) THE PRECEDING GUARDIANSHIP ASSISTANCE AGREEMENT MAY BE  
3 TRANSFERRED TO A SUCCESSOR GUARDIAN WHO HAS BEEN APPOINTED BY THE  
4 COURT. THIS OCCURS WHEN THE SUCCESSOR GUARDIAN ENTERS INTO A  
5 WRITTEN, BINDING GUARDIANSHIP ASSISTANCE AGREEMENT WITH THE  
6 DEPARTMENT.

[ (4) PAYMENT OF GUARDIAN ASSISTANCE SHALL NOT BE MADE TO A  
SUCCESSOR GUARDIAN UNTIL THE COURT APPOINTS A SUCCESSOR GUARDIAN. IF THE  
SUCCESSOR GUARDIAN BEGAN CARING FOR THE CHILD BEFORE THE COURT APPOINTS  
THE SUCCESSOR GUARDIAN, GUARDIANSHIP ASSISTANCE PAYMENTS CAN BE MADE  
RETROACTIVELY TO EITHER THE DATE OF DEATH OF THE RELATIVE GUARDIAN, THE  
DATE OF INCAPACITY OF THE RELATIVE GUARDIAN, OR THE DATE THE SUCCESSOR  
GUARDIAN ASSUMED CARE OF THE CHILD, WHICHEVER IS LATER.

7 (5) A SUCCESSOR GUARDIAN MAY BE ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE  
8 GUARDIANSHIP ASSISTANCE ON BEHALF OF AN ELIGIBLE CHILD IF THE  
9 DEPARTMENT DETERMINES THAT ALL OF THE FOLLOWING APPLY:

10 (A) A GUARDIANSHIP ASSISTANCE AGREEMENT FOR THE CHILD WAS IN  
11 EFFECT BEFORE THE APPOINTMENT OF THE SUCCESSOR GUARDIAN.

12 (B) THE SUCCESSOR GUARDIAN WAS APPOINTED BY THE COURT AS A  
13 RESULT OF THE DEATH OR INCAPACITATION OF THE PRECEDING GUARDIAN.

14 (C) THE PRECEDING GUARDIAN HAD AN ACTIVE GUARDIANSHIP  
15 ASSISTANCE AGREEMENT FOR THE CHILD BEFORE HIS OR HER DEATH OR  
16 INCAPACITATION.

17 (D) THE SUCCESSOR GUARDIAN MEETS ALL OF THE CONDITIONS SET  
18 FORTH IN THIS ACT.

19 SEC. 5D. THE DEPARTMENT MAY PROMULGATE RULES ACCORDING TO THE  
20 ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES ACT OF 1969, 1969 PA 306, MCL 24.201 TO  
21 24.328, THAT ARE NECESSARY TO IMPLEMENT AND ADMINISTER THE PROGRAM  
22 UNDER THIS ACT IN COMPLIANCE WITH FEDERAL LAW.

23 Sec. 6. (1) Except as provided in subsection (2), the  
24 department shall not provide guardianship assistance after 1 of the  
25 following occurs:

26 (a) The child reaches 18 years of age.

27 (b) The department determines that the guardian is no longer

1 legally responsible for support of the child.

2 (c) The department determines that the child is no longer  
3 receiving any support from the relative guardian.

4 (d) The death of the child.

5 (e) The child is adopted by the guardian or another individual  
6 under the Michigan adoption code, chapter X of the probate code,  
7 MCL 710.21 to 710.70, or the adoption laws of any other state or  
8 country.

9 (f) The guardianship is terminated by order of the court  
10 having jurisdiction in the guardianship proceeding.

11 (g) The death of the guardian **UNLESS A SUCCESSOR GUARDIAN HAS**  
12 **BEEN APPOINTED BY THE COURT.**

13 (2) The department may provide extended guardianship  
14 assistance until the youth reaches the age of 21 if the youth meets  
15 the requirements set forth in the young adult voluntary foster care  
16 act, **2011 PA 225, MCL 400.641 TO 400.671.**

17 (3) The department shall send notice of termination of  
18 guardianship assistance under this section by mail to the guardian  
19 at the guardian's current or last known address and to the court  
20 with jurisdiction over the guardianship case. Notice mailed under  
21 this subsection shall include a statement of the department's  
22 reason for termination.

23 Sec. 7. The guardian **OR SUCCESSOR GUARDIAN** shall apply for and  
24 maintain on behalf of the child any public or private medical  
25 insurance or assistance for which the child is eligible, including  
26 eligibility under applicable laws providing financial assistance  
27 for medical or health care expenses.



1           Sec. 8. (1) The department is responsible for collecting,  
2 assembling, and reporting all data and information required for  
3 reporting purposes.

4           (2) The guardian **OR SUCCESSOR GUARDIAN** shall cooperate with  
5 the department and provide all information that the guardian **OR**  
6 **SUCCESSOR GUARDIAN** possesses as requested by the department to  
7 facilitate compliance with this section.

8           Sec. 9. An applicant for guardianship assistance under this  
9 act or a guardian, **SUCCESSOR GUARDIAN**, or child who has received  
10 guardianship assistance under a guardianship assistance agreement  
11 may appeal a decision of the department denying the application,  
12 establishing or modifying the guardianship assistance, or  
13 terminating guardianship assistance according to the administrative  
14 procedures act of 1969, 1969 PA 306, MCL 24.201 to 24.328.