WINGS MINNESOTA
Working Interdisciplinary Network
of Guardianship Stakeholders in Minnesota

ORGANIZATIONAL BYLAWS

MISSION

The mission of the Working Interdisciplinary Network of Guardianship Stakeholders in Minnesota (hereafter WINGS MN) is to support elders, persons with disabilities, family members and helpers, service providers, guardians, and conservators through education to understand best practices, rights of persons with guardians/conservators, and responsibilities of guardians/conservators.

WINGS MN aims to build a system that prioritizes supported decision-making and less restrictive alternatives to guardianship, and that maximizes autonomy for persons under guardianship.

WINGS MN further aims to sustain cooperative conversations where all guardianship stakeholders work to improve outcomes and increase self-determination for people who may need assistance making legal or medical choices.

OBJECTIVES

To carry out its mission, WINGS MN shall:

• Include a broad range of stakeholders in its membership, reflecting the full range of people affected by and involved in guardianship, conservatorship, and alternative support systems;
• Provide education and outreach regarding guardianships, conservatorships, and alternatives to the widest possible range of stakeholders;
• Advocate for training and support to those engaging the guardianship/conservatorship system and/or exploring alternatives to guardianship/conservatorship;
• Support policy initiatives aimed at:
  o Preserving, as far as practicably possible, the rights and independence of persons with intellectual, developmental, and cognitive disabilities, mental health issues, and dementia;
  o increasing the use of alternatives to guardianship and conservatorship, particularly by developing and expanding resources for supported decision-making;
  o eliminating unnecessary guardianship/conservatorships and promoting the use of limited guardianship/conservatorships in place of full guardianship/conservatorships; and
  o improving guardianship and conservatorship systems and procedures.
• Promote high standards for guardians, conservators, social service and health care providers, attorneys, judges, and all other professionals involved in the
guardianship/conservatorship system;
- Promote collaboration between WINGS MN members and other stakeholders, including at the national and international levels; and
- Regularly assess WINGS MN’s priorities.

**MEMBERSHIP**

WINGS MN will strive to maintain a wide interdisciplinary representation of stakeholders, with membership of up to 40 members. The initial WINGS MN members shall consist of the members of the WINGS MN Steering Committee (see list of initial WINGS MN members, attached as Appendix 1); henceforth this group shall be called WINGS MN, and the term “Steering Committee” shall be sunsetted. WINGS MN should seek to draw new members from the following groups, and such other groups as the members may vote to add:
- Individuals from various populations at risk for guardianship/conservatorship and their supporters;
- Advocacy groups for various populations at risk for guardianship/conservatorship;
- State, county, and federal agencies involved with populations at risk for guardianship/conservatorship;
- The Minnesota Judicial Branch;
- Elected officials;
- Providers of guardianship/conservatorship services and alternatives;
- Medical providers in fields relevant to guardianship/conservatorship and alternatives;
- Education professionals, especially those involved in special education;
- Attorneys representing clients in the guardianship/conservatorship system and in alternatives to guardianship/conservatorship;
- Service providers to various populations at risk for guardianship/conservatorship;
- College and university faculty in fields relevant to guardianship/conservatorship and alternatives;
- Members reflecting the state’s geographic diversity; and
- Members from diverse and culturally specific communities.

**Member Elections & Term Limits**

Members of WINGS MN shall be elected by simple majority vote of the members at the annual meeting, and shall be appointed to three-year terms.

The Executive Committee will present a list of proposed members and officers for election each year at least 30 days before the annual meeting. Current members may also nominate proposed members at the annual meeting.

Members may be re-elected.

The initial terms of individual members shall be staggered, so that one-third of the positions are up for election each year.

**Membership Expectations**

Members are expected to attend the meetings and may be released from WINGS MN by the
Executive Committee for failing to attend three meetings in a calendar year.

LEADERSHIP

The Executive Committee of WINGS MN shall consist of two Co-Conveners (one designated by the Judicial Branch), Recorder, Technology Lead, Treasurer, and Summit Coordinator.

The Executive Committee, with the exception of the Co-Convener designated by the Judicial Branch, shall be chosen by majority vote of the members at the annual meeting.

Members of the Executive Committee other than the Summit Coordinator shall serve a term of two years and may be re-elected for one additional term in the same office.

The Summit Coordinator’s term will be for one year.

The initial election of officers shall stagger the officers’ terms so that no more than three officers are elected in any given year.

MEMBER & LEADERSHIP VACANCIES

When an existing member or officer leaves for any reason during a term, the Executive Committee shall nominate a new member or officer within 90 days for approval by members at the next WINGS MN meeting.

New members nominated to fill a vacancy will preferably represent the same or similar constituency or perspective as the outgoing member.

SUBCOMMITTEES

Standing and ad hoc sub-committees may be created by the members for the purpose of carrying out the objectives of WINGS MN and will meet as necessary, either in-person or by electronic means.

WINGS MN members shall review sub-committee projects for consistency with the organization’s objectives.

VOTING

WINGS MN members will vote on decisions and actions of WINGS MN. Voting will normally be conducted as part of a meeting, requiring a simple majority of members present.

The Executive Committee may call for electronic voting on issues of urgency that need to be addressed prior to the next meeting. Electronic voting requires a response from a simple majority of members.
MEETINGS

WINGS MN Meetings
WINGS MN shall generally meet every month. The meeting agenda shall be circulated by the Co-Conveners in advance of the meeting.

The meetings shall be open to the public, unless the Executive Committee has called for a closed discussion on a particular topic.

Upon approval, by the Executive Committee in advance of the meeting, or by majority vote of the members in attendance, the agenda may be modified to extend an opportunity for a guest to speak.

Annual WINGS MN Summit
Each year, WINGS MN shall hold a Summit to raise awareness of WINGS MN’s efforts. Content may include listening to the challenges facing those dealing with issues related to guardianship and conservatorship and alternatives; educating stakeholders about guardianship, conservatorship, and alternatives; and identifying potential projects that fall within the bounds of WINGS MN’s objectives.

Annual Business Meeting
Every January, or on some other annual basis, WINGS MN shall hold a business meeting. The purposes of this meeting are:

• to assess how well WINGS MN is meeting its objectives and whether needs and priorities have, or should be, changed;
• to review and approve proposed changes to the bylaws;
• to hear and discuss reports from the Executive Committee and any subcommittees; and
• to conduct elections of members and Executive Committee.

The annual business meeting shall be open to attendance by the general public, either in-person or through electronic means.

BYLAWS PUBLICATION AND REVISION

The current bylaws of WINGS MN will be published on the WINGS MN webpage.

The Executive Committee will appoint a sub-committee at least every other year to review the bylaws and propose any revisions for consideration.

Proposed revisions must be circulated to the members at least thirty days before the annual business meeting. The bylaws may be revised by a simple majority vote of the members at the annual business meeting.
Appendix I – Initial WINGS MN Members

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Organization</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Ashley-Wurtmann, Ben</td>
<td>Department of Human Services Behavioral Health Division</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Blakley, Dan</td>
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<td>Boyko, Cate</td>
<td>National Center of State Courts</td>
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<td>Burke, Sean</td>
<td>MN Elder Justice Center</td>
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<td>Carlson, Kathleen</td>
<td>Center for Excellence in Supported Decision Making, Volunteers of America MN</td>
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<td>Hennen, Cheryl</td>
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<td>Hudson, Amanda</td>
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<td>Kantke, John</td>
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<td>Kleist, Barb</td>
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