

Alternatives to Guardianship

- **Are there options which are less restrictive than guardianships and conservatorships?**

Yes! Other options include:

- Powers of attorney agreements
- Social security representative payees
- Supported decision making tools and agreements

- **What is power of attorney?**

A power of attorney is a written legal document which authorizes one person to act on behalf of another person.

There are two types of Powers of Attorney in Iowa:

- Financial Powers of Attorney
- Durable Medical Powers of Attorney

Additional information about powers of attorney and how to create the necessary documents can be found at the Iowa Bar Association's Website:

<https://www.iowabar.org/?pg=PowersOfAttorneyOI>

- **What is a representative payee?**

A representative payee is a person or organization that is appointed to review the Social Security benefits for an individual who cannot manage their own benefits. The payee must use the benefits to pay for the needs of the beneficiary and is required to submit a report about the expenses. A payee only has authority to managed the Social Security benefits and not other sources of income.

- **What is supported decision making?**

Supported decision making isn't a legal document but is a way for a person with a disability to exercise their independence to make their own decisions while receiving help from another trusted person. The parties can choose to fill out a form to document the specifics of the agreement and how the support person provides guidance.

- How is supported decision making different from having a guardian, conservator, or power of attorney?
 - Supported decision making works outside the court system and is a less restrictive alternative to the options listed above.
 - Supported decision making places the individual that may need assistance at the center of the decision-making process.
- Additional information can be found at the following links:
 - <https://supporteddecisions.org/>

- <https://www.aclu.org/other/how-make-supported-decision-making-agreement>