

## **Information and Contacts for Pursuing Guardianship**

If you have a child who has special needs in NY and is turning 18, you will be required to file a formal Article 17A Guardianship in Surrogate's Court in order to have a court order/legal authority making you the legal NY guardian of that child so that you can make medical and/or financial decisions for that child who is no longer a minor.

Prior to the age of 18, a disabled child's parents are the legal NY guardian of a minor child who has special needs. As such, they have the legal authority to make medical and/or financial decisions for such a child under the age of 18.

Once that disabled child reaches the age of 18, the parents no longer have any legal authority to make financial or medical decisions unless they have filed for legal guardianship.

Parents can print out a guardianship application (form 17A) through the New York State Unified Court System, and process through the Suffolk County Surrogate Court. This allows parents to work through the process on their own (without an attorney).

Form 17A can be found at:

<http://ww2.nycourts.gov/forms/surrogates/guardianship.shtml>

For families seeking to engage with an attorney to complete the process, the following local professionals may be able to assist you:

**Regina Brandow, Esq**

<https://www.brandowlaw.com/>  
(631) 675-2540

**Andrew M. Cohen, Esq.**

<http://www.amcohenlaw.com/services/guardianship>  
(516) 877-0595

**Craig Marcott, Inc.**

<https://specialneedslifeservices.com/>  
(631) 286-1061

**\*\*The Port Jefferson School district provides the above references for information purposes only and cannot endorse a specific provider\*\***