

Chapter 620

(Senate Bill 508)

AN ACT concerning

Estates and Trusts – Guardianship of Minors – Appointment by Court

FOR the purpose of altering the circumstances under which a court may appoint a guardian of the person of a minor; providing that the appointment of a guardian of the person of a minor does not require the termination of parental rights; and generally relating to the appointment of a guardian of the person of a minor.

BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
Article – Estates and Trusts
Section 13–701
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2017 Replacement Volume and 2021 Supplement)

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
Article – Estates and Trusts
Section 13–702(a)
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2017 Replacement Volume and 2021 Supplement)

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Article – Estates and Trusts

13–701.

(a) Unless prohibited by agreement or court order, the surviving parent of a minor may appoint by will one or more guardians and successor guardians of the person of an unmarried minor.

(b) The guardian need not be approved by or qualify in any court.

13–702.

(a) (1) [If neither parent is serving as guardian of the person and no testamentary appointment has been made, on] **ON** petition by any person interested in the welfare of the minor, and after notice and hearing **AS PRESCRIBED BY THE MARYLAND RULES**, the court may appoint a guardian of the person of an unmarried minor **IF THE COURT FINDS, BY A PREPONDERANCE OF THE EVIDENCE, THAT:**

(I) THE APPOINTMENT IS IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF THE MINOR;

(II) NO TESTAMENTARY APPOINTMENT HAS BEEN MADE; AND

(III) 1. NO PARENT IS WILLING OR ABLE TO SERVE AS GUARDIAN OF THE PERSON OF THE MINOR;

2. EACH PARENT CONSENTS TO THE APPOINTMENT OF THE GUARDIAN OF THE PERSON; OR

3. NO PARENT FILES AN OBJECTION TO THE APPOINTMENT OF THE GUARDIAN OF THE PERSON.

(2) If the minor is at least 14 years old, and if the person otherwise is qualified, the court shall appoint a person designated by the minor, unless the decision is not in the best interests of the minor.

(3) This section may not be construed to require court appointment of a guardian of the person of a minor if there is no good reason, such as a dispute, for a court appointment.

(4) THIS SUBSECTION MAY NOT BE CONSTRUED TO PROVIDE THAT THE APPOINTMENT OF A GUARDIAN OF THE PERSON OF A MINOR REQUIRES THE TERMINATION OF ANY PARENTAL RIGHTS WITH RESPECT TO THE MINOR UNDER TITLE 5 OF THE FAMILY LAW ARTICLE.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect October 1, 2022.

Enacted under Article II, § 17(c) of the Maryland Constitution, May 29, 2022.