

GUARDIANSHIP COPY

I'm here to explain surrogate decision-making. This isn't something most people want to think about, but it is important. Planning will help ensure that your wishes are followed, and make a difficult situation easier for your loved ones. If you become incapacitated and do not have an advance directive, your health care provider will look for what's called a "surrogate decision-maker" to make medical decisions for you.

Who are surrogate decision-makers?

Maryland law defines who surrogates are and their order of priority. If one level of surrogate decision-maker is not available, only then can your health care provider consult with someone on the next level. First on the surrogate decision-maker list is a court-appointed guardian. Then comes your spouse or domestic partner. Next in line are any adult children, then your parents, followed by adult siblings.