



# PROJECT GUARDIANSHIP

Changing the way we care for people.

# STRATEGIC PLAN

2025-2027



Since establishing independence in 2020, Project Guardianship (PG) has emerged as a leader on adult guardianship issues in New York. Our approach is rooted in values of dignity, compassion, equity, excellence and integrity, and leadership.

PG continues to provide person-centered guardianship for a growing number of New Yorkers with no other options. Our multidisciplinary teams deliver comprehensive services designed to preserve the dignity and maximize the independence of those in our care, including in sensitive, end-of-life moments. We use program data to continually improve the quality of our services, including by investing in staff training and launching new program areas, and to inform our advocacy agenda. We also share our findings with fellow caregivers.

We are committed to reducing the unnecessary use of guardianship by developing and promoting less-restrictive alternatives. We launched new initiatives, such as the Guardianship Prevention and Support Helpline, to divert people from guardianship arrangements where possible and formed partnerships to create new tools and processes that help New Yorkers retain autonomy as they age.



We believe that New York can and should be a place where all residents have access to high-quality decision-making supports and—when necessary—guardians, regardless of their financial or social circumstances. We founded a statewide coalition of nonprofit providers and allies that advocates for adequate public investments in guardianship services and alternatives.

Over the next three years, we will sustainably grow our guardianship services with a focus on supporting program staff through training, increased capacity, and opportunities for growth. PG will also facilitate the expansion of existing and new nonprofit guardianship programs statewide. We will double down on our work to develop and promote alternatives to guardianship. As we gain momentum in our work to reform the guardianship system in New York, we will pursue opportunities to engage and inform the national landscape.

Our 2025-2027 strategic priorities are rooted in our ongoing commitment to diversity, race equity, inclusion and accessibility, and advance our vision of a world where our older neighbors and those with disabilities are celebrated and provided with the support and care they need to thrive and live with pride.



# PERSON-CENTERED GUARDIANSHIP

Through direct service, training and education, and research and development, Project Guardianship brings person-centered guardianship to those who need it.

## 2020-2024

- ✓ Overcame the catastrophic impacts of Covid-19 on our clients and staff.
- ✓ Grew our court-appointed guardianship program to serve over 200 clients annually and added housing and benefits specialists to our multidisciplinary teams.
- ✓ Launched a training series and delivered general and custom sessions for health and social services providers, lawyers, and caregivers.
- ✓ Analyzed a decade of client data to understand and demonstrate the impact of our services on Medicaid cost-savings.



## 2025-2027

- **Diversify and increase revenue.** Increase funding for guardianship services to ensure fair pay and growth opportunities for staff, improve staff satisfaction and retention, and safeguard guardianship services in the event of future funding cuts.
- **Fundraise to expand nonprofit guardianship programs statewide.** Increase our caseload in New York City while supporting fellow providers across the state to do the same. Develop and execute a plan to help community-based organizations add guardianship to their suite of services.
- **Establish a robust data collection system and process** for guardians in our statewide network of nonprofit providers. Establish a system and process for gathering uniform data on a regular basis. In addition, work with funding agencies to create a singular guardianship database in New York.

# GUARDIANSHIP ALTERNATIVES

By developing and promoting alternatives to guardianship, Project Guardianship advocates for the least restrictive arrangement for those in need of care.

## 2020-2024

- ✓ Built and launched a Guardianship Prevention and Support Helpline, providing information and referrals to anyone with questions about Article 81 guardianship with a focus on promoting alternatives.
- ✓ Created a comprehensive website for the New York State Unified Court System with information about Article 81 guardianship and alternatives.
- ✓ Formed an interdisciplinary partnership to develop Supported Decision-Making tools and practices with and for older adults.



## 2025-2027

- **Increase the capacity of the Helpline** with a focus on disconnected regions and communities across New York. Pursue technology efficiencies to respond to the growing demand for resources.
- **Develop Supported Decision-Making tools and practices for older adults** and secure funding for a pilot project. Evaluate whether this model is effective in helping people retain autonomy as they age, including in instances of cognitive decline.
- **Explore an agency Power of Attorney (POA) program** in which Project Guardianship serves as POA for people who have nobody else in their lives to do so. Developing an agency POA program could help many more individuals avoid unnecessary guardianships.

# GUARDIANSHIP REFORM

Project Guardianship partners with fellow practitioners, advocates, and allies to influence the public agenda and realize an equitable guardianship system in New York.

## 2020-2024

- ✓ Established and led a statewide coalition of nonprofit guardians—called Guardianship Access New York (GANY)—and advocated and secured \$2 million in state funding for guardianship services and educational resources.
- ✓ Participated in New York’s Master Plan for Aging development process and advocated for the inclusion of guardianship reform.
- ✓ Initiated and contributed to media coverage of the guardianship crisis in New York with a focus on legislative and budgetary solutions.



## 2025-2027

- **Invest in external communications.** Build awareness of guardianship issues in New York through a thoughtful communications strategy that uses data, storytelling, and strategic partnerships to engage a broader base of allies in our guardianship reform work.
- **Secure full funding for a Statewide Initiative of Nonprofit Guardians (SING)** in the New York State Executive Budget. As lead organization, oversee funding, training, technical support, and reporting for a growing number of nonprofit providers.
- **Pursue legislative solutions to New York’s guardianship crisis**, such as an oversight mechanism to prevent the appointment of unqualified and exploitative guardians.
- **Encourage and participate in the national conversation** around guardianship. Explore opportunities to expand our impact beyond New York by connecting with fellow practitioners, intermediaries, government agencies, academics, and others working on guardianship issues around the country.



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