



**Georgia Department
of Human Services**
Division of Aging Services

Public Guardianship Office Section

Understanding Guardianship

Carleton Coleman, Section Manager

stronger families

FOR A STRONGER GEORGIA



Division of Aging Services

— VISION —

LIVING LONGER,

LIVING SAFELY,

living well



Public Guardianship Office

The Public Guardianship Office (PGO) of the Division of Aging Services (DAS) is assigned oversight and delivery of guardianship case management services on behalf of Department of Human Services (DHS).



What is Guardianship?

Guardianship is a determination that a person needs assistance making decisions due to the lack of capacity in making important decisions about his or her safety.



The Probate Court Process

PETITION

A petition, paperwork identifying specific facts as to why a person needs a guardian appointed, is submitted to the court.



EVALUATION

The court order an evaluation to be completed on the person in need of a guardian.



HEARING

A hearing is held for both sides to present evidence.



GUARDIANSHIP

If guardianship is needed, the court determines who will serve.

When no one qualifies to serve, **Department of Human Services** is appointed as “guardian of last resort” with PGO responsible for carrying out the guardianship duties.



DECISION

The court decides if a guardian is needed based on evaluations and evidence.

The probate court determines the guardian when a person is found to lack capacity using the “order of preference” outlined in O.C.G.A. 29-4-3.

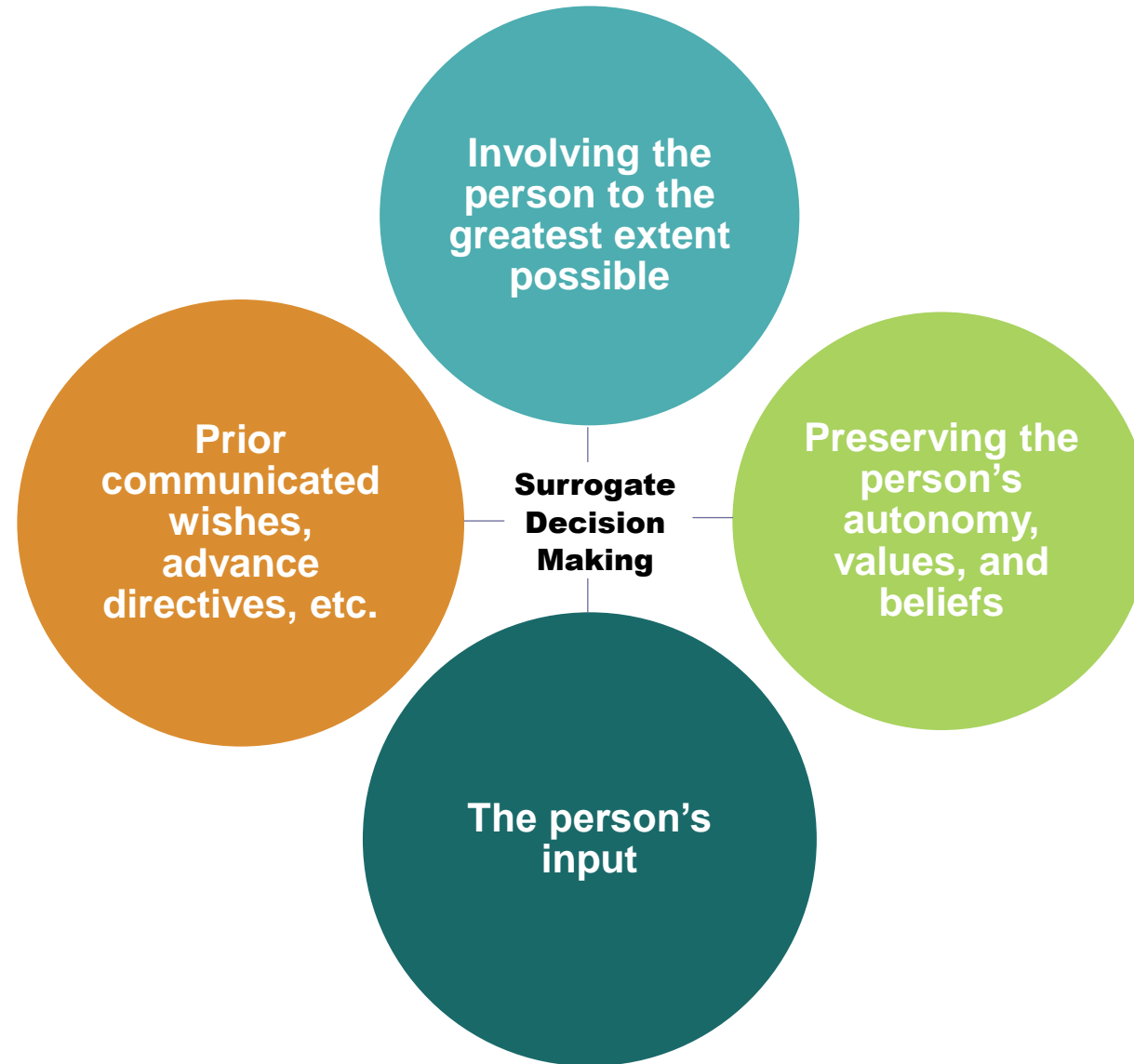


PGO Main Functions

- 1 Guardian of last resort when DHS is appointed
- 2 Surrogate decision maker
- 3 Advocate
- 4 Coordinates and monitors services



PGO Practices Surrogate Decision Making



Services Provided to the Client

Case Managers are responsible for the person's support, care, comfort, health and education including:

Assisting with
obtaining living
arrangements

Scheduling and
attending medical
appointments
including consent for
treatment

Arranging
transportation

Ensuring needs are
met in homes and
licensed facilities

Exploring and
securing needed
resources

Working with
providers and other
stakeholders on the
person's behalf



Services Not Provided to the Client

Case Managers are not responsible for:

Involuntarily
commitment

Physically
control or
restraint

Prevention of
chronic drug or
alcohol abuse

Control over
communication
or visitation

Changing
perceived bad
behavior

Controlled or
locked facility
placement

Forcing
medication or
nutrients



Things To Remember

DHS is appointed Guardian.

Guardianship is all about **the client** and **his or her best interests**, **not** the desires and/or demands of family and community.



Questions

Carleton F. Coleman

Public Guardianship Section Manager

carleton.coleman@dhs.ga.gov

404-463-3065 (O) | 706-260-8724(C)

