DePalma LAW

The Guardian Selection Workbook

Choosing the people you trust with the people you love.

THE GOOD PARENTS COLLECTION

A note before you begin

Some of the most loving parents aren't rich. Start with love, capacity and shared values, then consider financial support separately. This workbook helps you prepare for conversations with candidates and your attorney. It does not nominate or appoint a guardian. Do not sign it as a legal instrument.

This resource is for personal organization and education. It is not legal advice, a will, a guardian appointment, a custody order, or an authorization to make decisions. Consult an attorney about applicable law and properly executed documents. Keep completed pages secure and share only with trusted people as appropriate.

Prepared for DePalma Law • Review edition • November 2026

Start with your children

How many children need care? What are their ages and individual needs?

How important is keeping siblings together?

What school, home and community connections matter most?

Identify possible guardians

Candidate 1: relationship, location and strengths

Candidate 2: relationship, location and strengths

Candidate 3: relationship, location and strengths

Rank your values

List your five most important parenting values in order.

What are your non-negotiables?

Where could you accept a different approach?

Compare candidate 1

Name; willingness, relationship with children and parenting approach

Health, energy, capacity, housing and relocation considerations

How well does this person match your ranked values? Concerns?

Compare candidate 2

Name; willingness, relationship with children and parenting approach

Health, energy, capacity, housing and relocation considerations

How well does this person match your ranked values? Concerns?

Compare candidate 3

Name; willingness, relationship with children and parenting approach

Health, energy, capacity, housing and relocation considerations

How well does this person match your ranked values? Concerns?

Have the conversation

What will you ask about discipline, education, religion and traditions?

What concerns or limits did the candidate express?

What support would make the arrangement workable?

Plan for immediate care

Who nearby could help in the first hours?

Who could help if the first person is unavailable?

What legal authority or school permissions must be arranged?

Separate love from money

What financial resources could support your children?

Who could responsibly manage those resources?

What insurance, trust or beneficiary questions should you ask your attorney?

Check legal eligibility

Where does each candidate reside? What relationship do they have to the children?

What existing parental rights, orders or relocation issues need review?

Ask counsel about Massachusetts parental appointments or Florida preneed declarations and nonresident restrictions, as applicable.

Record your reasoning

Preferred candidate and reasons (planning notes only)

Alternate candidate and reasons

Concerns about other candidates to discuss privately with counsel

Review your plan

What has changed since your last review?

Which conversations or documents remain outstanding?

Date reviewed; next review; attorney appointment