

633.551 Guardianships and conservatorships — general provisions.

1. The determination of incompetency of the proposed ward or ward and the determination of the need for the appointment of a guardian or conservator or of the modification or termination of a guardianship or conservatorship shall be supported by clear and convincing evidence.

2. The burden of persuasion is on the petitioner in an initial proceeding to appoint a guardian or conservator. In a proceeding to modify or terminate a guardianship or conservatorship, if the guardian or conservator is the petitioner, the burden of persuasion remains with the guardian or conservator. In a proceeding to terminate a guardianship or conservatorship, if the ward is the petitioner, the ward shall make a prima facie showing of some decision-making capacity. Once a prima facie showing is made, the burden of persuasion is on the guardian or conservator to show by clear and convincing evidence that the ward is incompetent.

3. In determining whether a guardianship or conservatorship is to be established, modified, or terminated, the district court shall consider if a limited guardianship or conservatorship pursuant to [section 633.635](#) or [633.637](#) is appropriate. In making the determination, the court shall make findings of fact to support the powers conferred on the guardian or conservator.

4. In proceedings to establish, modify, or terminate a guardianship or conservatorship, in determining if the proposed ward or ward is incompetent as defined in [section 633.3](#), the court shall consider credible evidence from any source to the effect of third-party assistance in meeting the needs of the proposed ward or ward. However, neither party to the action shall have the burden to produce such evidence relating to third-party assistance.

5. Except as otherwise provided in [sections 633.672](#) and [633.673](#), in proceedings to establish a guardianship or conservatorship, the costs, including attorney fees and expert witness fees, shall be assessed against the ward or the ward's estate unless the proceeding is dismissed either voluntarily or involuntarily, in which case fees and costs may be assessed against the petitioner for good cause shown.

[97 Acts, ch 178, §4](#); [2007 Acts, ch 134, §15, 28](#)

Referred to in [§633.556](#), [633.570](#), [633.635](#), [633.717](#)