



Texas Parents' Guardian Readiness Checklist 2026

A calm planning checklist for continuity of care

1. Name the right people

- ☐ Designate a guardian and at least one alternate in a valid will or written declaration that satisfies Texas execution requirements.
- ☐ Confirm each candidate is willing, eligible, able to serve, and aligned with your parenting, faith, education, and family priorities.
- ☐ Document who should not serve and discuss whether the reason belongs in the legal instrument or the attorney's file.
- ☐ Revisit the choice after death, divorce, incapacity, relocation, estrangement, or a major change in the proposed guardian's life.

2. Build short-term continuity

- ☐ Create an emergency contact card for school, childcare, pediatrician, relatives, and trusted neighbors.
- ☐ Use appropriate child-specific medical consent or nonparent-caregiver authorization for a person who may need to act temporarily.
- ☐ Maintain current insurance, medications, allergies, physicians, routines, and critical support information.
- ☐ Give the temporary caregiver clear access instructions without sharing unnecessary financial or confidential information.

3. Protect the child's property

- ☐ Decide who manages inherited property and whether that person should be different from the child's day-to-day caregiver.
- ☐ Use trust or custodial planning appropriate to the amount, asset, age, family structure, and desired level of protection.
- ☐ Coordinate life insurance, retirement accounts, payable-on-death designations, business interests, and real estate with the plan.
- ☐ Avoid naming a minor directly without understanding who can receive and manage the asset and when control passes to the child.

4. Make the plan usable

- ☐ Tell the proposed guardian and one backup where the signed originals and emergency instructions are located.
- ☐ Keep the attorney, insurance professional, financial adviser, school, physician, and key family contacts current.
- ☐ Review the plan annually and after every major family, health, residence, beneficiary, or asset change.
- ☐ Do not rely on a casual note or assume a nomination transfers custody automatically; the court retains a qualification and best-interest role.

STANDARDIZED TEXAS PATH

For a straightforward family that wants a standardized, self-directed Texas plan, visit TexanWillsAndTrusts.com. Texan Wills & Trusts is a separate standardized planning platform.

CUSTOM COUNSEL PATH

Choose BOOK LAW FIRM for blended families, special-needs beneficiaries, business ownership, conflict, tax issues, custom trusts, or other facts requiring coordinated legal advice. Start at booklawfirm.com/start-here/.

General educational information only; not legal advice and not a guarantee of appointment. A Texas court applies statutory qualification and the child's best interest. Reviewed August 2026. Primary sources: Texas Estates Code Chapter 1104; Texas Family Code Chapters 32 and 34; Texas Property Code Chapter 141.

MY NEXT FAMILY-READINESS ACTION

Guardian and alternate candidates to discuss:

Document, beneficiary designation, or emergency instruction to review: