

**Sixty-seventh Legislative Assembly of North Dakota
In Regular Session Commencing Tuesday, January 5, 2021**

HOUSE BILL NO. 1049
(Judiciary Committee)
(At the request of the Supreme Court)

AN ACT to create and enact a new section to chapter 30.1-28 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to restrictions on visitation, communication, and interaction with the ward.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:

SECTION 1. A new section to chapter 30.1-28 of the North Dakota Century Code is created and enacted as follows:

Restrictions on visitation, communication, and interaction with the ward - Removal of restriction.

1. If it is in the best interests of the ward, a guardian may restrict visitation, communication, and interaction with the ward.
2. A family member, friend, the ward, clergy member, attorney, agency charged with the protection of vulnerable adults, or other interested person may move the court to remove the restriction on visitation, communication, and interaction with the ward.
3. The motion must state:
 - a. The movant's relationship to the ward;
 - b. Whether the guardian is unreasonably or arbitrarily denying or restricting visitation, communication, or interaction between the restricted party and the ward; and
 - c. The facts supporting the movant's allegation that the guardian is unreasonably or arbitrarily denying or restricting visitation, communication, or interaction between the restricted party and the ward.
4. The movant shall serve the motion on the guardian, the ward, the ward's spouse, and any other interested person.
5. The court shall set a hearing on the motion and provide notice of the hearing to the movant, the guardian, the ward, the ward's spouse, and any other interested person.
6. The court shall take into consideration the ward's wishes, and may conduct an in-camera interview with the ward and appoint a visitor or guardian ad litem.
7. If the court grants the motion for visitation, communication, or interaction, the court may impose conditions on visitation, communication, and interaction between the restricted party and the ward.
8. If the visitation, communication, or interaction is not in the best interests of the ward, the court may prohibit visitation, communication, or interaction between the restricted party and the ward.
9. The court may award reasonable costs and attorney's fees to the prevailing party if the court finds:
 - a. The guardian unreasonably, arbitrarily, or in bad faith denied or restricted visitation, communication, or interaction between the restricted party and the ward; or

b. The motion was frivolous.

10. Costs and attorney's fees awarded against the guardian may not be paid from the ward's estate.
11. If a movant for visitation, communication, and interaction states the ward's health is in significant decline or the ward's death may be imminent, the court shall conduct an emergency hearing on the motion as soon as practicable but not later than fourteen days after the date the motion is filed or at a later date upon a showing of good cause.

Kim A. Hoopes
Speaker of the House

David
President of the Senate

Bruce J. Reeb
Chief Clerk of the House

David Morgan
Secretary of the Senate

This certifies that the within bill originated in the House of Representatives of the Sixty-seventh Legislative Assembly of North Dakota and is known on the records of that body as House Bill No. 1049.

House Vote: Yeas 91 Nays 0 Absent 3

Senate Vote: Yeas 47 Nays 0 Absent 0

Bruce J. Reeb
Chief Clerk of the House

Received by the Governor at 12:32 PM. on March 9, 2021.

Approved at 1:15 PM. on March 9, 2021.

Doug Burgum
Governor

Filed in this office this 10th day of March, 2021,

at 11:08 o'clock A. M.

Christine
Secretary of State