

1 AN ACT relating to the use of juries in competency hearings conducted in
2 guardianship proceedings.

3 ***Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky:***

4 ➔Section 1. KRS 387.570 is amended to read as follows:

- 5 (1) At a hearing convened pursuant to KRS 387.500 to 387.770 for the purpose of
6 determining the disability of a respondent, the respondent shall ~~have a jury trial and~~
7 ~~shall~~ have the right to present evidence and to confront and cross-examine all
8 witnesses.
- 9 (2) The hearing may be closed to the public on request of the respondent or his counsel.
- 10 (3) The respondent shall ***have the right to*** be present at the hearing, and his presence
11 may be waived only ***by his failure to appear at the hearing or*** upon a
12 determination of the court that his attendance would subject him to serious risk of
13 harm. Such determination shall be evidence only of the respondent's inability to
14 attend the hearing and shall not be considered in determining the need for
15 guardianship or conservatorship.
- 16 (4) The court may remove itself to the place of residence of the respondent to conduct
17 the hearing in the presence of the respondent.
- 18 (5) The burden of proof shall be on the Commonwealth to prove the disability or partial
19 disability of the respondent by clear and convincing evidence.
- 20 (6) The respondent will not be determined partially disabled or disabled unless at least
21 one (1) of the persons who participated in the interdisciplinary evaluation required
22 by KRS 387.540 testifies in person at the hearing. This section shall not be
23 interpreted to preclude the respondent from requiring the testimony of more than
24 one (1) person participating in the preparation of the evaluation report.

25 ***(7) The hearing shall be a jury trial, unless:***

26 ***(a) The respondent if present, counsel for the respondent, and the attorney for***
27 ***the Commonwealth agree to a bench trial;***

- 1 **(b) No objection to a bench trial is made by an interested person or entity; and**
 2 **(c) The interdisciplinary evaluation report prepared for the proceeding reflects**
 3 **a unanimous consensus of the persons preparing it that the respondent is**
 4 **disabled or partially disabled, the court has reviewed the report, and the**
 5 **court finds no cause to require a jury trial.**

6 ➔Section 2. KRS 387.580 is amended to read as follows:

- 7 (1) At a hearing convened under KRS 387.500 to 387.770 for a determination of partial
 8 disability or disability, the **court, or the jury if one is impaneled,**~~jury~~ shall:
- 9 (a) Inquire into the nature and extent of the general intellectual functioning of the
 10 respondent;
- 11 (b) Inquire into the respondent's capacity to make informed decisions concerning
 12 his personal affairs and financial resources;
- 13 (c) Determine whether the respondent is disabled, partially disabled, or has no
 14 disability in relation to the management of his financial resources; and
- 15 (d) Determine whether the respondent is disabled, partially disabled, or has no
 16 disability in relation to the management of his personal affairs.
- 17 (2) If the respondent is found not to be disabled or partially disabled, the petition shall
 18 be dismissed.
- 19 (3) If the respondent is found to be disabled or partially disabled, the court shall, at the
 20 same hearing, without a jury, determine:
- 21 (a) The type of guardian or conservator to be appointed;
- 22 (b) The specific legal disabilities to which the respondent is subject, if the
 23 respondent has been determined to be partially disabled;
- 24 (c) Whether the respondent retains the right to vote;
- 25 (d) The corresponding powers and duties of the limited guardian or limited
 26 conservator, if the respondent has been determined to be partially disabled;
- 27 (e) The individual or entity to be appointed by the court as limited guardian,

- 1 guardian, limited conservator, or conservator;
- 2 (f) The individual or entity, if any, to be appointed as standby guardian or
- 3 conservator; and
- 4 (g) The duration of the term of guardianship or conservatorship.