



**LEGAL GUIDE**  
*for*  
**CANCER PATIENTS**



## INTRODUCTION

If you are reading the introduction to this Guide, it is likely that you or someone you care about is fighting or has fought a battle with cancer. It is also likely that in addition to dealing with treatment decisions like radiation versus chemotherapy, numerous doctors' visits, telling family, friends and co-workers, and simply coming to terms with this illness, you are overwhelmed by the myriad of other issues that one is confronted with when you or a loved one receives a cancer diagnosis. Such issues include guardianship for cancer survivors with children, employment issues, insurance coverage, and concerns about privacy, to name just a few.

This Guide, prepared by a committee of Texas attorneys, is intended to be an informative resource upon which you or your loved one can rely to answer legal questions like, "Am I entitled to time off work?", "Should I have a will?" and "How do I tell my doctors that I don't want to be placed on life support if my condition is terminal?" Each attorney who helped prepare this Guide has been personally touched by cancer in some way - whether through family or after personally fighting the battle - and drew upon those experiences while preparing this guide. We hope it answers many of the legal questions that are on your mind.

Cancer often forces us to contemplate our own mortality in a new way, and causes us to think about estate planning and other end-of-life issues. That said, in today's world, cancer is a battle that is so often won. Therefore, please do not be alarmed by the end-of-life advice found in this Guide, including our recommendation that you have a will. We should all have a will, but it sometimes it takes a serious illness before we really give it much thought.

We hope that this Guide will provide answers to many of the questions you face during this journey and most importantly, we wish you victory in this fight!

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*(The issues covered in this Guide are changing on a regular basis. As a result, we encourage you to check for updates to the TYLA Legal Guide for Cancer Patients website at [www.tyla.org](http://www.tyla.org).)*



BE AN UNCOMMON LEADER.®

**NOTICE:** The Texas Young Lawyers Association prepared this Guide to help you understand the laws that affect your daily life and to help familiarize you with the legal issues that may surface during a battle with cancer. Please note that this Guide is solely intended to provide general information only and is not a substitute for legal counsel. The laws outlined in the Guide are subject to change at any time. If you have a specific legal problem, we suggest that you consult an attorney.

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**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Informed Consent ..... 1

Insurance Issues ..... 3

Privacy (HIPAA) ..... 11

Clinical Trials ..... 17

Employment Law Issues ..... 21

Disability ..... 35

Liability Issues ..... 47

Guardianship ..... 51

Estate Planning ..... 57

End of Life Decisions ..... 63

Helpful Resources ..... 69