

## Chapter 3

# DECISION MAKING

**This Chapter covers the following subject matter:**

- **Guardians and Guardianships**  
A guardianship is a court order granting someone the legal authority to handle the affairs of a person who is incapable of managing his or her own affairs. This section explains when a guardianship is appropriate, how a guardian is appointed, the guardian's duties, and alternatives to guardianship.
- **Financial Decisions**  
Explains some of the ways in which someone else can be appointed to handle your money and property without the necessity of a guardianship, including Powers of Attorney, Joint Bank Accounts, Living Trusts, Representative Payees, and Illinois Volunteer Money Management Program.
- **Health Care Decisions**  
Explains ways in which someone else can make decisions concerning your health care, including a Power of Attorney, a Living Will, a Mental Health Treatment Preference Declaration and a Do Not Resuscitate Order. The section also explains how the Health Care Surrogate Decision Maker Law recognizes the right of family and others to make health care decisions for you in the absence of a valid Power of Attorney.
- **Wills, Trusts, and Estates**  
Gives a general summary of Illinois laws which affect what happens to a senior's property when he or she dies. This Section is intended to enable seniors to start thinking about what options they may have, and addresses matters such as wills, the rules of descent and distribution, taking an estate through probate court, small estates, trusts, and owning property in joint tenancy.

