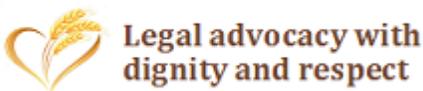


KANSAS GUARDIANSHIP PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Kansas Guardianship Program is a partnership involving the State of Kansas and citizen volunteers.



VOLUNTEER ADVOCATES NEEDED

The program seeks individuals interested in volunteering for this important advocacy work.

To learn more about the program and how to apply to become a volunteer, visit our website at www.ksgprog.org or call 1-800-672-0086

Every year many adults in Kansas are declared legally unable to manage their lives and financial affairs. Some individuals have family members who are appointed by the courts to serve as guardians or conservators. There are, however, a significant number of adults who have no family able to or willing to provide the necessary care involved in guardianship or conservatorship.

The KGP recruits citizen volunteers willing to be appointed as guardian or conservator to advocate for and protect the rights of these vulnerable, at-risk individuals. We maintain that if guardianship or conservatorship is imposed, the person should be assured the benefit of someone to act as an advocate and protector.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF A GUARDIAN OR CONSERVATOR

The responsibilities of a guardian or conservator are to:

advocate for and exercise authority as necessitated by the person's limitations,

access services and supports including physical, psychological and emotional care and treatment,

monitor quality of supports and services,

provide necessary paperwork such as court reports and accountings, applications for supports, services and benefits, etc.,

provide necessary consents,

visit ward or conservatee regularly,

manage the finances and estate on behalf of conservatee.

DEFINITIONS

Pursuant to K.S.A. Chapter 59, Article 30

Adult with an impairment in need of a guardian or a conservator, or both – any adult person whose ability to receive and evaluate information effectively, or to communicate decision, or both, is impaired to such an extent that the person lacks the capacity to manage such person's estate, or to meet essential needs for physical health, safety or welfare, and who is in need of a guardian or a conservator, or both.

Ward – is a person who has a guardian.

Conservatee – is a person who has a conservator.

The goal of the KGP is to provide that qualified, caring and trained volunteers are available throughout the State of Kansas to serve as court appointed guardians or conservators for individuals in need of this level of protection and advocacy and who do not have family members capable of or willing to assume such responsibilities and who meet program eligibility criteria.

CHARACTERISTICS NEEDED IN A GUARDIAN OR CONSERVATOR

It is a significant matter to ask someone to accept both legal and moral responsibility for the well-being of another person – someone who is often previously unknown and not a family member. Nevertheless, the KGP seeks this considerable personal commitment from volunteers who agree to serve as guardians or conservators.

The process of a guardian or conservator becoming an effective advocate takes time and commitment.

The KGP seeks volunteers with the following characteristics.

- compassion
- wisdom
- integrity
- dependability
- self-initiative
- desire to serve as a personal advocate
- interest in learning new information
- ability to make wise and appropriate decision regarding another person

OVERVIEW OF PROCESS

Recruiting Volunteers

KGP recruits volunteers willing to accept appointment by and responsibility to the courts to serve as guardian or conservator.

Training Volunteers

KGP provides one-on-one training and a comprehensive information and reference manual.

Matching and Nomination

KGP matches the abilities and interests of the possible ward or conservatee with those of a volunteer.

Following the Appointment

After the court appointment occurs, the KGP:

- contracts with the volunteer serving as guardian or conservator to provide advocacy and protection,
- requires monthly reports of advocacy activities undertaken on behalf of the person,
- provides a monthly stipend to offset-out-of-pocket expenses to the guardian or conservator for services on behalf of the person,
- provides ongoing training, monitoring, support and assistance to the volunteers.

Referral

DCF adult protective services social workers and KDADS state hospital social workers make referrals to KGP for approved volunteers to be nominated to the court for appointment as guardian or conservator.

Legal Services

DCF and KDADS legal services petitions the court for the determination of possible need for a guardian or conservator.

The District Court determines the need for and level of guardianship or conservatorship services and makes the appointment of the guardian or conservator.

The Kansas Guardianship Program was initiated in 1979 under the administration of Kansas Advocacy and Protective Services, Inc. The 1995 Kansas Legislature established the program as a separate public instrumentality pursuant to K.S.A. 74-9601 et seq., as amended. The KGP is governed by a seven-member board of directors, six of whom are appointed by the Governor and one by the Chief Justice. Funds are provided by the State of Kansas.