

***Volunteer Guardianship
Monitoring and Assistance:
Serving the Court and the Community***

Program Coordinator's Handbook

**ABA Commission on Law and Aging, 2011
Adapted with Permission from *Coordinator's Manual*,
AARP Legal Counsel for the Elderly, 1992**

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The ABA encourages the use of the handbook, its forms, and appendices in the development of volunteer guardianship monitoring and assistance programs in any interested court, with attribution to the ABA Commission on Law and Aging.

Erica Wood and Ellen Klem
ABA Commission on Law and Aging
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I. Introduction

We were able to personally visit all wards under guardianship who reside within 150 miles from the courthouse. We used trained volunteers, master's degree-level social work students. It's a great way to extend the resources of the court.

—Survey response from 2010 Inventory of National College of Probate Judges, ABA Commission on Law and Aging.

You have embarked on an important and exciting venture: using volunteers to strengthen court oversight of guardians for incapacitated adults. A court-based volunteer guardianship monitoring and assistance program can be a win for all—a win for the court in cost-effective accountability; a win for the volunteer in satisfaction with public service; a win for the guardian in court assistance; and a win for vulnerable individuals in quality of care.

There is no single way to operate such a volunteer program. Courts can and should adapt the tools in this handbook to suit their needs and develop the program in workable stages. The first step involves thinking about volunteer roles, staffing, funding, community partners, and much more.

The purpose of the program will, to some degree, dictate the structure. For example, if the court is mandated by legislation to begin monitoring cases more closely, the program may need the capacity to monitor all cases on a regular basis. On the other hand, if the court is dealing with just a handful of problem cases that surface annually, the size may be dramatically different. Common reasons for establishing volunteer monitoring and assistance programs include: responding to a legislative mandate, improving the linkage between the court and community services, saving money—and of course simply verifying that people under guardianship are being well-served by their guardians.

NOTE: Guardianship terminology differs by state. In this handbook, the generic term “guardianship” refers to guardians of the person, as well as guardians of the property, frequently called “conservators” unless otherwise specifically indicated.

II. Program Development: Getting Started

A. Using Volunteers

1. Weighing the Pros and Cons

Using trained volunteers can *extend the court's capacity*. They can *save money* in that hiring additional staff is costly, even prohibitive. While a volunteer program is not free, it can be operated at minimal cost. The program start-up may take some energy, but over time the long-term maintenance is less demanding. Volunteers can even help in the administration of the volunteer program itself.

However, there may also be challenges in using volunteers in court. Be sure to anticipate and address any staff concerns such as those voiced below:

"A volunteer program takes more time than it's worth—volunteers need so much attention."

It is true that operating a volunteer program will require a commitment of time and resources. Volunteers need attention like any other members of your staff. However, if you already have made the commitment to increase your monitoring, volunteers are a cost-effective way to do it. In the AARP demonstration project, volunteers contributed 3 to 5 hours of service for every hour of staff time.

"Staff in our court are negative about the idea because they think it will make more work for them."

Indeed, if the volunteers do the job right, they may generate additional work for court staff. However, the volunteers also may free up staff to use their expertise more productively. Encourage all staff affected to air their concerns and involve key staff in setting up the procedures.

In the AARP demonstration program even the most skeptical staff were won over by the volume and quality of work done by the volunteers. In the first year of the project, two volunteers at one site visited nearly 300 individuals and reviewed over 440 annual accountings. In the D.C. Guardianship Assistance Program in 2009 – 2010, student volunteers contributed, on average, a combined total of 392 hours per month.

"Volunteers will upset the applecart. They will want to change everything and won't understand our systems."

With the addition of volunteers the work of your court will be more visible and you may well open the system to more criticism. Volunteers will expect that you take their recommendations seriously. Usually it takes some time for volunteers and staff to strike the appropriate balance. Selecting volunteers who are flexible and communicate well is important. For example, in the early AARP demonstration projects, some volunteers were initially disturbed that court files were very out of date. Staff felt defensive about the inaccurate records—a situation that had built up over many years, and over which they had little control. Fortunately, rather than being sidetracked by mutual distrust, staff

and volunteers began working to update the records. If court staff are candid about what needs to be done, volunteers will pitch in.

"Volunteers are unreliable. You can't count on them."

The court can set the standards for how and when volunteers work, and then recruit people who are willing to adhere to them. If volunteers know the score at the outset they will keep to a schedule if you do.

"You can't control the quality of volunteers' work. They will go off and do something the court doesn't approve of."

In this respect, they are probably no different than paid staff. The quality of the volunteers' work will be a direct reflection of the training and supervision given them. Written materials, policies, checklists, and forms will help keep them on the right path.

2. Creating Volunteer Roles

The court should decide what roles volunteers will play: (1) court visitors; (2) auditors; (3) records researchers—or a combination of all three.

The court visitor monitors individuals under guardianship and whose care is the responsibility of court-appointed guardians. The court visitor goes out into the community to visit incapacitated individuals to ensure that they are receiving proper care. In addition to speaking with the person, the visitor also speaks to the guardian, the caregiver, or whomever else is involved in the case. The visitor then prepares a written report to the court with recommendations for any changes needed. For a complete job description, see [Court Visitor Job Description](#). The following questions will help in planning the court visitor role:

- Does the court currently visit individuals under guardianship?
- What monitoring role do the professional visitors serve?
- What is the flow of work for the professional visitors?
- What action is taken to address “problems” identified by any professional visitors?
- Why does the court want to use volunteer visitors?

In **Tarrant County, Texas, Probate Court #1**, volunteers and law students visit incapacitated persons and write follow-up reports flagging problems for action by court investigators. Some of the volunteers are retired individuals who have been with the program for many years.

With more than a dozen years with the Tarrant County Probate Court #1 in Fort Worth, Texas, one of the court’s most experienced volunteers noted that the hours are flexible, there is little pressure, the job is satisfying, and he receives unparalleled support from the coordinator. He was recognized for his work before the chair of the

U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging in 2007.

In **Tarrant County, Texas, Probate Court #2**, undergraduate and master's level social work students make annual visits to incapacitated individuals. After training, they visit the court weekly to check out case files. The students make visits and write and submit court visitor reports. They review the cases at weekly supervision meetings with the program manager to identify problems for follow up.

The court auditor assists the court staff with reviewing annual financial accountings from guardians of the property. The accountings are checked for accuracy, proper expenditures and investments, and to see whether the estates were being properly used for the care and benefits of individuals under the court's protection. For a complete job description, see [Court Auditor Job Description](#). The following questions will help in planning the court auditor role:

- What is the court's current auditing system like?
- What monitoring role do any professional auditors serve?
- What is the flow of work for staff auditors?
- What is the course of action to address "problem" audits?
- Why does the court want to use volunteer auditors?
- How will they fit into the court's auditing system?

Records researchers review guardianship records with staff supervision, and make sure the information is correct. They update and prepare the records for the use by the staff and court visitors. See more about their role at [Records Researcher Job Description](#). The following questions will help in planning the records researcher role:

- How current are the court records on contact information for guardians?
- Does the court currently have a way to update and check guardian contact information?
- Is there a specific place in the database and/or file for guardian contact information?
- To whom would volunteers report in checking on guardian contact information?

SAFE Program Model

A similar volunteer model for using volunteers to strengthen court oversight of guardians was pioneered by the **Special Advocates for Elders (SAFE)** program in Washoe County, Nevada. Special Advocates for Elders recruited, trained, and supported volunteer advocates who formed one-on-one relationships with elders,

investigated the care they received, and reported to the guardianship judge. Since 1998, SAFE served elders who were vulnerable to financial exploitation, neglect, and other forms of abuse, but was forced to close in 2011 because of lack of funding due to the economic recession.

3. Considering Community Volunteers and Students

After courts have decided what roles volunteers should play, they must decide what type of individuals can best fulfill those roles—volunteers or students. Some courts have successfully used social work, law, or other students, while others have relied on retired or other community volunteers. Consider the following questions:

- Can the court afford not to have visitors or auditors for weeks or several months at a time? Students are only available during the school's calendar year.
- How much time can the coordinator devote to recruitment? Community volunteers come and go. The need to recruit is continuous. With the student model, there is no recruitment, as the universities provide the cadre of interested students.
- How much time can be devoted to training and orientation? A student's field placement lasts no more than a year. The coordinator must orient and train a new group of students every fall.
- What about time for supervision? Students need an especially significant amount of supervision and interaction with the coordinator because they are receiving credit for their work. Moreover, the coordinator must set aside time for working with the university faculty and staff.
- What kind of background is the court seeking? Community volunteers have a wide variety of backgrounds—health care, law, business and finance, nursing, teaching, homemakers, social work, and more. Students are limited to one area of study. For example, social work students are learning skills for interacting effectively with a range of individuals, as well as evaluating a person's living situation, access to services, emotional, medical, and physical well being. Law students are trained to identify legal problems and protect legal rights.

The Guardianship Assistance Program of the **D.C. Superior Court, Probate Division** was established in August 2008. A core component of the program is participation of social work student volunteers. For the academic year 2009 – 2010, the court partnered with four local schools of social work to serve as a field placement site for seven students pursuing their master's degrees. The court hired a social worker to coordinate the program. The students spent between 14 and 16 hours per week in the program. The students were referred to the program by their universities. The student volunteers, after training, served as court visitors. (D.C. Superior Court, *Guardianship Assistance Program End of Year Report 2009 – 2010*)

3. Developing Volunteer Job Descriptions

Job descriptions should give applicants a clear picture of what they will be doing as a volunteer and state any specific time commitment expected. One way to emphasize the commitment is through a “Volunteer Contract,” at [Appendix A, Volunteer Contract](#), that spells out the responsibilities of both the volunteer and the coordinator. The following job descriptions for the three volunteer roles may be modified for a particular court’s program.

Court Visitor Job Description

The court visitor’s job is to monitor the care of individuals with court-appointed guardians. This gives the court first-hand information about people for whom the court has ultimate responsibility. The court visitor is assigned a case, gets necessary information from court files, and makes an appointment to visit the guardian and the individual. After the visit, the volunteer fills out a report indicating the status and any recommendations for action. Court staff and/or the judge then review the volunteer’s report to determine whether further action is necessary. Because of severe physical or mental limitations of incapacitated persons they may visit, it is helpful for visitors to have sufficient experience not to become shocked or depressed by what they encounter in their work.

Duties and Responsibilities

- Complete initial orientation/training and attend quarterly meetings of volunteers.
- Arrange with the coordinator a mutually agreeable time to receive and discuss assignments.
- Visit guardian and incapacitated person (and caregiver, if appropriate) and record information as necessary.
- Complete and submit case report forms with observations and any recommendations for action.
- Follow up on cases as requested by the coordinator.
- Complete assignments in a timely manner and according to court procedures.
- Complete quarterly time sheets; submit annual volunteer evaluation form.
- Notify the coordinator in a timely way of any problems with assignments or absences from the program.
- Assist the guardian, as appropriate, in identifying and contacting needed community-based services.

Qualifications

- Good listening skills; friendliness, patience and tact
- Ability to work cooperatively with a wide variety of individuals, including people with significant physical and mental impairments and varying socio-economic backgrounds
- Willingness to complete case reports on forms provided by the court in a timely manner
- Ability to write clearly and provide information in a complete, accurate, and succinct manner
- Ability to remain objective and non-judgmental in making reports to the court
- Ability to hold information in confidence
- Strong desire to help people and to further the goals of the monitoring project
- Willingness to provide own transportation to make visits

Commitment

- Renewable one-year commitment
- Contribute 8-10 hours per month; flexible schedule

Court Auditor Job Description

The court auditor monitors the financial reports ["accountings"] submitted to the court by the guardian of the property ["conservator"] to oversee how funds of the protected person are spent on his or her behalf. The court can then have some confidence that the estate is being handled properly and in the person's best interest. The volunteer auditor comes to the court on a scheduled basis to review the financial reports. The volunteer auditor uses a standard form to report any discrepancies or problems to the coordinator or other court staff for possible action.

Duties and Responsibilities

- Complete initial orientation/training and attend quarterly meetings of volunteers.
- Arrange with coordinator a mutually agreeable schedule to perform tasks.
- Review financial records of conservatorship cases as assigned by coordinator; note any problems on standard form and pass on to coordinator for possible action.
- Follow up on cases as requested by coordinator.

- Complete assignments in a timely manner and according to court procedures.
- Notify the coordinator promptly of any problems with assignments, schedule changes, or planned absences from job.
- If requested by the coordinator, assist the conservator as appropriate in completing necessary accountings and forms.
- Complete and submit quarterly time sheets and progress reports submit annual volunteer evaluation form.

Qualifications

- Experience in accounting, tax return preparation, business, estates, or law
- Patience and tenacity; attention to detail
- A strong desire to help people and to further the goals of the guardianship monitoring program
- Ability to hold information in confidence
- Willingness to adhere to court auditing procedures
- Ability to write clearly and provide information in a complete, accurate, and succinct manner

Commitment

- Renewable one year commitment
- Contribute 8-10 hours monthly

Records Researcher Job Description

The records researcher reviews guardianship records, as assigned by court staff, and checks to find out whether the information is correct. The purpose is to update court records for use by the court staff and the court visitors. Verifying records involves telephoning, Web searches, and letter-writing or e-mailing, and requires perseverance and patience. Records researchers perform their tasks at the court on a scheduled basis. They keep records of their work and bring to the attention of the coordinator any problems they encounter.

Duties and Responsibilities

- Complete initial orientation/training and attend quarterly meetings of volunteers.
- Arrange with the coordinator a mutually agreeable schedule to perform tasks.

- Review and verify court files or databases of guardianship cases as assigned by coordinator.
- Complete assignments in a timely manner and according to court procedures.
- Complete quarterly time sheets and report on number of cases researched.
- Notify the coordinator in an accurate, complete, and timely way of any problems with assignments, schedule changes, or planned absences from the program.
- Submit annual volunteer evaluation form.

Qualifications

- Resourceful person with good investigative skills
- Patience and tenacity; attention to detail
- Willingness to learn court procedures and abbreviations used in record keeping
- Strong desire to help people and further the goals of the court monitoring program
- Ability to hold information in confidence

Commitment

- Renewable one-year commitment
- Contribute 8 – 10 hours per month; scheduled basis

5. Serving As Program Coordinator

The program should have an individual designated as a coordinator of volunteers. The position does not have to be full-time—a luxury that many courts cannot afford. However, whoever is in the position must be free to devote the time and thought necessary to operate a good program.

Like many management positions, the role of program coordinator calls for disparate talents, including interpersonal skills, administrative proficiency, and substantive knowledge. Familiarity with the guardianship system and court procedures is essential. The strongest program coordinator is someone who possesses the requisite interpersonal skills to:

1. discern the talents and abilities of each volunteer and recognize what motivates them;

2. work effectively with a diverse group of people; and
3. communicate effectively.

At the same time, the program coordinator needs to have good administrative skills for:

- recruitment and selection of volunteers;
- placement and scheduling of volunteers;
- development of initial and ongoing training;
- tracking the progress of cases; and
- reporting the results of the program's efforts

There are several means for staffing the coordinator position. One method is to shift some of the duties of a current court staff member so that new program coordinator responsibilities can be assigned. However, if these new duties are merely piled on an already over-worked staff member, the program is doomed to failure. It is often the case that the staff person with the best people skills is already carrying a full load. If so, consider shifting some of that person's routine duties to someone else, so that the individual can devote more attention to the volunteer program. Or consider starting with a smaller number of volunteers.

Another option for staffing is to recruit a volunteer to coordinate the program. Consider people with a variety of backgrounds—for instance, retired court staff, attorneys, volunteer managers, social workers, or student interns from paralegal programs or law schools. A strong staff liaison person is still needed, but less of his or her time will be required once the program is started.

Some courts have been successful in securing additional funding to support a paid staff position, usually part-time. If the court is under legislative mandate to begin monitoring guardianships, a case can be made that funding a volunteer program is a cost effective way to accomplish this function. See the coordinator job description at [Appendix B, Program Coordinator Job Description](#); and the D.C. Court Position Description for the Guardianship Assistance Program coordinating student volunteers at [Appendix C, DC Coordinator Position Description](#).

The majority of courts in the 2010 National College of Probate Judges inventory reported using between six and ten trained volunteers. The AARP program estimated that **at least ten hours of staff time per week** is needed for coordination—and that for a program of up to 10 volunteers, existing staff may be able to manage, whereas for over 10 active volunteers, additional staffing may be required. However, staff time varies from court to court depending on the number and kind of volunteers and their job responsibilities. For example, one coordinator stated:

I would say you need 16 to 24 hours a week for 10 volunteers. The coordinator performs court tasks, including preparing court orders, verifying ward locations and phone numbers, assigning visits according to visitors' location, logging the court orders, logging reports once completed, reviewing reports with volunteers, and flagging the cases for a visit the next year.

Estimates of staff time might be reduced if supplemented by volunteers to help with administrative tasks, such as preparing cases for monitoring, and other basic record-keeping. An experienced volunteer can even serve as coordinator, with staff assistance.

The ***Guardianship Monitoring Program in Ada County, Boise, Idaho***, established in 2000, has had a full-time administrator who managed on average 45 volunteers and 1,500 cases. Volunteers were recruited through the AARP state office, United Way, and other local service organizations. Volunteers were trained as: (1) researchers who pulled case files to check on basic information and whether the guardian/conservator reports were filed; (2) visitors, who conducted home visits to incapacitated persons and minor children with guardians, on average two or three cases per month; and (3) auditors, who reviewed inventories and annual accountings and flagged possible problems for staff review. The county also funded a part-time administrative assistant to help with the management of the large caseload. The Ada County program remains active, protecting the most vulnerable populations in the county.

6. Addressing Liability and Insurance Issues

If the court is using volunteers for the first time, the court must address liability issues. Because states vary considerably in the legal framework to protect volunteers and courts, a full discussion of the issues particular to each state is beyond the scope of the handbook. However, some common issues include:

- (1) potential liabilities for acts committed by a volunteer;
- (2) errors and omissions of volunteers in the performance of their duties;
- (3) acts committed against volunteers;
- (4) accidental injuries to volunteers;
- (5) loss or damage to volunteers' property in the course of their duties; and
- (6) the need for bonding.

In some states, volunteers operating under the auspices of courts are considered to be unpaid public employees, protected by the doctrine of judicial immunity and fully covered by workers compensation. In addition, the federal *Volunteer Protection Act* of 1997 eliminates the liability of a volunteer for damage caused by his or her simple or ordinary negligence, if the volunteer was acting within the scope of his or her

responsibility to a nonprofit organization or governmental entity. However, the Act protects only the individual volunteer and not the governmental entity itself. Moreover, the protection for volunteers does not extend to damage caused by acts involving motor vehicles, or acts caused by gross negligence or by willful or criminal conduct. States can impose certain conditions on volunteer immunity, including that entities using the volunteers be adequately insured to offer recovery to victims harmed. See <http://uscode.house.gov/download/pls/42C139.txt>. Also, some states have legislation that specifically protects volunteers in a variety of state and non-profit settings.

Seek Legal Opinion

Because state laws vary considerably, program coordinators should seek an opinion on liability issues from the county attorney or the state attorney general's office.

Examine Similar Court/Governmental Volunteer Programs

If the court system or county departments are already using volunteers, they may already have researched liability issues. For example, many courts operate CASA or court-appointed special advocate programs to protect the interests of children, and have established liability policies.

Use of Automobiles

If the program will not provide coverage for volunteers' use of automobiles in the course of their work, ask volunteers to verify that they have personal coverage, and alert them to check with their insurance agents to ensure that their personal policies cover them for volunteer work.

Basic Risk Management Policies

Most important is to develop and adhere to policies and procedures that minimize potential risk—such as careful screening of volunteers, criminal background checks and thorough training. If your court or county has risk management personnel, involve them in planning the program.

B. Establishing the Program

1. Identifying Funding Support

While a volunteer monitoring and assistance program gives the court “a lot of bang for the buck,” it is not free. In the 2010 NCPJ inventory, five courts with volunteer programs estimated the cost at between \$10,000 and \$30,000 annually—mostly from the “general court budget.” A budget for the program should include some or all of the following:

- full or part-time salary of a program coordinator;
- space;
- telephone;

- computer costs;
- copying;
- liability insurance;
- mileage and parking for volunteers; and
- volunteer recognition.

Once there is an estimate of costs, determine whether some costs can be absorbed into the existing court budget or may require new funds. If the legislature has mandated that the court improve monitoring, the first approach could be to the court's regular funding source—for example, the state office of judicial administration or local county commissioners. Some courts have increased the fee for all guardianship cases to raise the necessary funding.

Other funding sources include foundations, the local agency on aging, or United Way. A funding proposal can emphasize that the program's purpose is to protect the community's most vulnerable people. The court is in a unique position to ensure that these individuals are getting proper services and care, thereby using funding dollars very effectively. Outside funders are particularly likely to offer seed money to establish a program, with the expectation that the court will seek long-term funding from the state or county. They also may provide a small fund to help with specific volunteer-related expenses such as recognition events or mileage reimbursement—and they should be well recognized for this. The court might consider forming a non-profit agency to raise and receive funds for a volunteer monitoring program—a common approach with drug courts.

While some judges may be reluctant to seek support due to concerns over possible conflict issues or little fundraising experience, they often are pleasantly surprised at the positive community response.

2. Convening a Planning Group

The next step is to convene a working group to develop the program. The working group should include any or all of the following:

- court staff members who will be significantly impacted by the program, including the judge, referee or hearing officers, court clerk, or other administrative staff;
- agency staff from organizations like Adult Protective Services, the Area Agency on Aging, case management programs, disability organizations, and service providers;
- attorneys and health care workers who specialize in problems of incapacitated individuals;
- guardians or any local or state guardianship association;

- community programs, such as the Retired Senior Volunteer Program, AARP, the Alzheimer's Association, and more.

3. Preparing Court Records

The task of preparing the court records for monitoring generally involves the following three steps. With training, volunteer “records researchers” can assist in any or all of the steps.

Step One: Initial Review

An initial review of the case files should aim to determine the status of cases (e.g., guardianship never ordered, individual deceased, temporary guardianship terminated). Cull out those cases that do not appear to be active.

Generally, the two ways to determine whether a guardianship case is still active are: (1) reviewing the main database or case record; and (2) actually looking in the file jacket. A staff person or volunteer can review the guardianship database to see if a death certificate has been filed or the guardianship terminated for some other reason. However, the database is only as good as the latest information entered. In practice, some deaths or changes in location may not have not been entered, and staff or volunteers may need to pull out and review the actual files. The idea is to develop a list of basic guardianship files believed to be active—which are then ready for further sorting and investigation.

Step Two: Further Investigation

Use the list generated in step one to locate current contact information for the incapacitated individual. In some cases, where there is a recent status report or financial accounting, it may be easy to find a current address. In other cases, where the latest file document may be a petition from years ago, more investigation is necessary. Using the last-known names and addresses from the file, verify the current address of the guardian and incapacitated person through phone calls, letters, or even e-mail. Noting the names and addresses of other interested parties in the file, such as attorneys, may be a good lead. Voter registration rolls, current phone books, or e-mail “white pages,” bar association directories, and jury lists may help, as well. Be a detective!

Some courts have simply mailed all guardians a letter requesting current contact information. This reduces the number of cases that need investigation, but requires a mass mailing—and also that someone process the responses and enter the updated information in the database.

Step Three: Development of Regular Updating Procedures

Consider procedures to regularly update contact information going forward. For example:

- Make sure that the current address of the guardian and the individual under guardianship are requested on the guardian report and accounting forms. When the forms are filed, check the addresses against the last ones in the database and update them if necessary.
- Be sure any guardianship case database includes a field for the last known contact information of the guardian and incapacitated person.
- Date any contact information added so that a reviewer can see at a glance how recent it is.
- Consider adding a tickler to the database or file for bringing up cases that need more frequent review. Some cases are problematic enough from the onset that the court knows a visitor should go out every few months. In other cases, the visitor may find a condition, such as severe bedsores, that warrants a return visit in the near future.

In courts that use a database or records system developed by a state office of judicial administration, it can be difficult to get permission for volunteers to access the system. The coordinator may need to keep a separate index of guardianship cases on a simple Excel or Access program database that is readily accessible and includes the current contact information.

Finally, keep in mind that volunteers can become frustrated researching only the oldest cases—and may be more satisfied investigating a mix of the oldest and more recent ones.

4. Thinking About Program Evaluation

Evaluating a monitoring program from the onset gives the court the information needed to keep it running smoothly. Evaluation need not be a formal or elaborate process. It can be merely a periodic check with staff and volunteers. But using common evaluation methods, such as surveys and data collection, often can give a more objective picture—to get good feedback for improvement and support.

Court staff and volunteers can be cheered by the program's successes, as well as alerted to any emerging problems. Because they work independently (and sometimes outside the courthouse), volunteers often are gratified to learn how many cases were handled or resulted in court action, and court staff frequently are surprised to see how much has been accomplished.

If the court's funding comes through the general judicial budget, court staff may be interested in receiving data about the program's productivity and success in preventing abuse. The state judicial office may see the program as a model that other courts could emulate. If the court secured grants, the funders will want information about the quality and quantity of services. Finally, the community at large, including the media, will have a better picture of the program if its accomplishments can be demonstrated.

Evaluation measures include but are not limited to:

- number of cases handled;
- volunteer and court staff time contributed;
- volunteer retention rates;
- number or percent of files with current information;
- number or percent of reports and accounts timely filed;
- number of problems identified by volunteers;
- number of cases in which the volunteer provided assistance to the guardian/conservator; and
- number of cases in which court takes corrective action as a result of volunteer reports.

The following chart illustrates some useful tools in evaluating a program and includes links to further information and specific forms.

Evaluation Tool	Purpose	Timing	Link to Information and Form
Training evaluation	Solicits comments about the effectiveness of various sections of the training; measures how well-prepared the volunteers feel as they begin their work; identifies sections to add or drop from training.	After each training section	<u>Appendix D, Training Evaluation</u>
Volunteer survey	Measures satisfaction of volunteers; indicates any problems with operation of the program or with the coordinator; identifies unmet needs; allows volunteers to respond confidentially and with time for reflection.	Annually for community volunteers; at end of semester for student volunteers	<u>Appendix E, Volunteer Survey</u> <u>Appendix F, DC Visitor Feedback Survey</u>
Staff survey	In large court where more than one staff person is affected by the program,	Annually	

	provides staff with opportunity to comment on any problems or suggest improvements.		
Volunteer time sheets	<p>Measures number of hours that volunteers contribute; tells how often they work, how long, and how much time is contributed in each volunteer role; monitors changes in average number of hours contributed per volunteer; tells which volunteers are contributing the most time to the program.</p> <p>Multiply volunteer hours either by staff pay rate or updated “value of volunteer time” by independent sector.</p>	Monthly or quarterly	<p><u>Appendix G, Volunteer Time Sheets</u></p> <p>Independent Sector “Value of Volunteer Time” at: http://www.independentsector.org/volunteer_time</p>
Court staff time log	Records how much time is needed from various staff to operate the program; identifies duties performed by staff; allows court to determine how much time is devoted to monitoring cases and how much to managing volunteers; assists in documenting cost of program.	Can be sampled: two weeks every six months	<u>Appendix H, Court Staff Time Log</u>
Master Case Log	Provides concise summary of program operations. Functions as master log of cases handled by program, including those researched and those assigned to volunteers; tracks progress of cases;	Ongoing	<u>Appendix I, Master Case Log</u>

	provides information about number and outcomes of cases, as well as which volunteers are handling the most cases.		
Case report	Reports on level of care for incapacitated person, the needs of the incapacitated person and the guardian, the volunteer's recommendations, and any court action taken; can be used to track quality of care to individuals and responsiveness of court, and identify recurring problems; can track quality of volunteers' performance.	Used for each case	<u>Appendix J, Volunteer Report Form</u> <u>Appendix K, DC Student Visitor Report Form</u>
Auditor's cover sheet	Records volunteer's work on accountings reviews; rates level of problems on the accounting; can be used to track progress of cases, as well as to identify recurring problems with accountings; can also be used to check quality of volunteer Auditor work.	Used for each accounting reviewed	<u>Appendix L, Volunteer Auditor Cover Sheet</u>

5. Developing a Timetable

The table below estimates the time it will take to develop a program. Factors that might change the timeframe include the condition of court files, the need to secure funding, and the availability of volunteers. Be realistic in estimating time, as most of the players will have other duties and responsibilities.

Timetable	Months												
Tasks	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
Review guardianship monitoring handbook													
Talk to courts with existing programs													
Talk to court staff affected													
Consult with related community programs and professionals													
Convene small working group													
Develop work plan and timetable													
Plan staffing for program (if new funding is needed, add 3-6 additional months to timetable)													
Assess liability issues and determine how best to address													
Assess status of court records by pulling sample group of files (if clean-up is needed, recruit 2 to 4 volunteers to handle this task and add more time)													
Map out day-to-day operation of the program, addressing what court staff and procedures will be affected													
Decide on volunteer roles and develop job descriptions for volunteers													
Plan volunteer recruitment and training													

Timetable	Months											
Begin planning how to evaluate the program												
Recruit volunteers												
Interview and screen volunteers to determine whether there is a good match between the volunteers and program												
Ensure there are enough cases for the volunteers to start working												
Train volunteers												
Make arrangements for volunteers to begin assignments												
Supervise volunteers												
Offer quarterly or monthly meetings for volunteers to discuss their cases and ask questions												
Evaluate what the program has accomplished												
Report accomplishments to the court staff, volunteers, funders, and the community												

III. Program Management: Coordinating Volunteers and Cases

After laying the groundwork for an effective program, the coordinator can begin to focus on the ongoing management of volunteers and cases.

A. Managing Volunteers

The job of the program coordinator includes both volunteer management as a whole, and management of each case as it flows through the system. This section outlines the volunteer management functions—recruitment, screening, training, office organization, supervision, retention, recognition, and reimbursement.

Volunteers will need attention, written directions, and good communication to make things work. The time you put in as coordinator in managing the volunteers will leverage many hours of work on their part. In managing volunteers, aim to “walk in their shoes”—that is, to think about how systems will look from their perspective and understand the need for their work to be respected and valued.

1. Identifying and Recruiting Volunteers

How many volunteers will you need? That depends on the number of active cases and the roles the volunteers will perform. The program coordinator can estimate the time needed to perform each role and multiply by the number of cases. One source suggests the following calculation:

- Determine the total number of hours needed for each role.
- As a rule of thumb, consider that volunteers could be asked to donate 8 - 10 hours each month for 10 months of the year.
- Divide the total number of hours needed by 80 to 100 hours of volunteer time. For example, if the court has 100 active cases, and if the objective is to have a volunteer conduct a visit in each case annually, and if each visit requires about four hours, approximately five volunteers would be needed (100 cases times 4 hours per case divided by 80 hours of volunteer time for the year). See National Center for State Courts (2005), *Probate Court Volunteer Visitors Program: An Implementation Handbook Prepared for the Administrative Office of the Courts of Georgia* at: <http://contentdm.ncsconline.org/cgi-bin/showfile.exe?CISOROOT=/famct&CISOPTR=302> .

Recruitment will be very different if the court chooses to use a student volunteer model or a community volunteer model. Each is profiled below.

Student Model—Working with Universities

The student model uses students enrolled in local universities who are pursuing an advanced degree in social work, law, occupational therapy, gerontology, or other relevant fields as volunteers for the program.

“Recruitment” in this model means working with selected universities with which the court has developed a relationship. Initiating these academic partnerships is key to the program’s success. Using a student model relieves the program coordinator of ongoing recruitment functions, as the school identifies the interested students and sends them to the court. The coordinator still must interview the students to ensure they are committed and appropriate for the program. The student model is based on the school year. There are no volunteers during the summer months and volunteers have limited availability during finals, spring break, and other holidays. See more on the student model at [Volunteer Supervision](#).

The **Charleston County Probate Court** in South Carolina is working with the Charleston School of Law to train and use law students as volunteer visitors. The court contacted the school’s director of pro bono and devised the best methods of reaching the students—through a luncheon at which students could learn about the program (as one of many ways of satisfying their pro bono requirement), and through the school’s elder law course.

In Delaware, the director of the **Guardianship Monitoring Program for the Court of Chancery** is tasked with recruiting, supervising, and monitoring persons who wish to serve as court-appointed volunteers. The Court of Chancery has worked with several local colleges and universities, as well as the local law school. The state also utilizes a volunteer recruiting Web site, in which the Court of Chancery has an active posting. Since its inception in 2009, approximately 30 volunteers and interns have worked for the court and over 100 visits have been made to wards statewide.

Community Volunteer Model

The community volunteer model recruits individuals from a wide variety of backgrounds including law, social work, health care, occupational therapy, gerontology, accounting, and more. Retired individuals are one source of volunteers, but often people who are still working seek opportunities for public service. Additional volunteers – especially in times of economic downturn – may be people who are unemployed and looking for jobs. Emphasize in recruitment materials that volunteer service can be a great advantage in finding jobs. Find volunteers by contacting:

- Local AARP chapters; aging and disability advocacy organizations. Some AARP state offices have e-mail “blasts” that reach large numbers of retirees;
- The local commission on aging and commission on persons with disabilities; senior centers; “learning in retirement” senior education institutes;

- County or city volunteer offices; volunteer organizations;
- Civic clubs; faith-based groups; and
- Bar associations.

Written job descriptions (see [Developing Volunteer Job Descriptions](#)) should form the basis for all recruitment efforts. Knowing what skills are needed will dictate the methods for recruitment. For example, if volunteer auditors are especially needed, recruitment efforts should focus on people with experience in accounting.

Methods of recruitment should vary and include:

- Public service announcements: Use newspapers, radio, and TV. Consider large and small circulation newspapers, especially those with a special readership like older adults, minority communities, and professional organizations. (See sample press release at [Appendix M, Sample PSA](#) and sample radio PSA at [Appendix N, Sample Radio PSA](#).)
- Letters or e-mails: Send letters or e-mail messages to members of organizations or associations. (See sample recruitment letter at [Appendix O, Sample Recruitment Letter](#).)
- Volunteer groups and resources: Reach out to local AARP chapters, Voluntary Action Centers, and Retired Senior Volunteer Programs for help with recruitment. In the early AARP programs, some AARP offices sent out appeals to all members within certain zip codes.
- Flyers or pamphlets: Consider making and distributing flyers and pamphlets promoting the program and asking for volunteers. Sometimes emphasizing that it is a “court program” has a particular attraction.
- Speak to community groups: Make presentations to audiences across the community, including AARP members, Alzheimer’s Association chapters, the local commission on aging, and people active in disability advocacy and service groups.
- Contact your state or local CASA (Court-Appointed Special Advocates) program in which volunteers advocate for abused and neglected children. CASA programs often have excellent and highly successful recruitment techniques that serve as good models. The coordinator may be able to develop a partnership for recruiting.

Despite the challenges of recruiting minority volunteers, the coordinator should make every effort, especially in areas where many guardians and incapacitated persons are from diverse cultural, ethnic, or non-English speaking groups. To recruit minority volunteers, seek help from community leaders and work within their organizational structure. Building ties with the community will not only aid in recruiting volunteers, it will

build community trust about the court and its efforts to ensure the well-being of vulnerable people in its care.

In the ***Maricopa County Superior Court in Arizona***, for FY 2010-2011 the volunteer pool consisted of 13 retired persons who performed 257 visits with an average of two hours and 10 minutes per visit. Most of these have been long-term volunteers who discovered the court's Guardianship Review Program by word of mouth and newspaper notices. The program has hired a new volunteer coordinator, who will begin to recruit students from nursing and criminal justice programs through colleges and universities, as well as community volunteers.

2. Screening Volunteers

The greatest challenge is not just finding people willing to serve, but also selecting the right individuals from the recruits. Not everyone who shows interest in the program need be accepted.

Initial Application

One key is self-selection of volunteers. Tell them as early and as thoroughly as possible about what the program does and what is expected. Candidates who ask about serving as a volunteer should receive an e-mail with attachments that detail the program's operation and the volunteer roles.

An application form is very useful in getting information about the applicant's paid and volunteer experience, educational level, and reason for interest. See example at [Appendix P, Volunteer Application](#). Some will have significant life experiences that trigger their interest in the well-being of people under guardianship. The application should provide enough information to weed out wholly unsuitable candidates. For instance, people who have difficulty writing a coherent application will likely have problems filling out court report forms.

One-on-One Selection Interview

A thorough interview demonstrates how seriously the program takes its volunteers. Applicants will then place a higher value on their selection and bring a heightened commitment. A comprehensive interview also allows the program to identify inappropriate candidates and tactfully encourage them to select other volunteer options.

The interview should be a two-way dialogue, with the program coordinator providing information about the program and the volunteer job, and the candidate giving enough information that the coordinator can assess whether there is a good match. See sample interview questions at [Appendix Q, Volunteer Screening Form](#). The coordinator should look for:

- the candidate's motivation for doing this work;
- how the job fits in with other work, home, and volunteer responsibilities;

- stability and connection to the community; and
- personality characteristics pertinent to the job, including maturity.

Of all these things, motivation for the work is the key, since that is what will keep the volunteer on the job. For example, if the individual wants to make new friends, being a court visitor may not be a good match, since no long-term relationships are encouraged. People may not feel comfortable or serve the program's purpose if they:

- are committed to advocacy of an issue or cause célèbre. A guardianship monitoring program is generally more service-oriented.
- have time on their hands, but no clear idea of what they want to do.
- have not fully recovered from a major crisis—death of a spouse, serious illness, or family violence.
- primarily want to meet people and make new friends.
- are between jobs or who just moved into town.

Background Checks

Most volunteer applications include a request for character references. Courts may conduct credit checks for volunteers who will be reviewing accountings. Some courts conduct a criminal records check of volunteer applicants who pass the initial screening. If so, the application should provide notice of the check to the potential volunteer, and should indicate whether the volunteer will pay for the check. A planning task for the coordinator is to find out where and how the background checks can be secured and how much they cost. Community social service agencies should be able to help.

Signing of Required Statements

Once the volunteers have passed these screening steps, some courts may require them to sign statements, including the following, which could be signed as part of the training session (see *Trainer's Handbook*):

- assurances that the volunteer will abide by the court's ethical and confidentiality standards;
- proof of automobile insurance if the volunteer will be driving as part of his or her duties; and
- any waiver of liability the court regularly requires of its volunteers, and any additional statements such as agreement to abide by the court's workplace policies.

3. Training Volunteers

Training provides yet another opportunity for selection. The initial training allows the program coordinator to observe the class of volunteers and gauge their capacity to do the job. Some volunteers may drop out during the training when they are more fully exposed to the task at hand. Consider ending the training with a proficiency examination to ensure the volunteers have learned and understand the basics of the job.

The *Trainer's Handbook* includes training tips, a model curriculum for a two-day volunteer court visitors training session, a model curriculum for a one-day court auditor training session, and information on training for records researchers. Large programs that envision continual recruitment may plan to repeat the basic training at regular intervals, such as annually. The *Volunteer's Handbook* offers a useful set of resources for the volunteers to consult, and also includes key forms.

However, the initial training is not enough. Once the volunteer visitors have had a taste of actual case work, they will need to interact, have case consultations, and have opportunities to ask questions. Consider a regular schedule of volunteer meetings or refresher "in-service" trainings. Sessions of two hours every month or quarter could include an outside speaker, a case review, and an opportunity to review procedures and ask questions. Such sessions offer opportunities to bring in the judge and key speakers on local resources, such as adult protective services, in-home care, the long-term care ombudsman program, mental health agencies, public transportation, and more.

For student programs, ongoing sessions may need to be more frequent to meet university requirements. In the D.C. Superior Court program, the social work students met bi-weekly as a peer group with the coordinator, discussed cases, and were given assignments to study and report to the group on key topics, such as Medicare, Medicaid, HIV in the older population, cultural competency, and elder abuse.

4. Placing Volunteers

Ideally, when the initial training is completed, all volunteers who have committed to the project should be suited to the work. In fact, however, some volunteers' unsuitability will not become evident until they have begun to function on the job. Treat volunteers with special tact when they have made a time commitment to training, but cannot perform sufficiently for the program. The coordinator could recommend another volunteer opportunity either in another part of the court program or in the community.

Another concern is placing volunteers in the various jobs available. It is not always possible to place volunteers in the position they would like. For example, the court may need more volunteer visitors than auditors. It is best to be candid with applicants as early as possible, rather than training a whole group of people and finding that all of them want to be records researchers. Program coordinators should designate a number for each position available (allowing for some drop-outs) and then train people according to those positions.

At the time of placement, many programs use a volunteer agreement to express in writing the mutual expectations between the court and the volunteer. See the

“Volunteer Contract” at [Appendix A, Volunteer Contract](#). An agreement puts the volunteers on notice that they must stay within the limits of their role and avoid situations of conflict, as well as respect the privacy of people involved in guardianship cases. It also informs them about liability protection and the support they can expect from court staff. The agreement should be signed by the volunteer and a representative of the court and a copy given to the volunteer.

5. Organizing the Office

The program should have space for volunteers to work. One or more desks or other space designated for volunteer use—near the program coordinator, if possible—is ideal. A designated space makes the volunteers feel they belong and allows them to store their work and supplies. While much of the communication with volunteers will be by e-mail, they should have their own mailbox so the program coordinator can leave them hard copies of files or reports, as well as access to a computer and telephone.

6. Scheduling Volunteers

A good system of scheduling will prevent a lot of headaches for both staff and volunteers. Records researchers and court auditors should work regular pre-determined hours weekly or bi-weekly, so staff know when they will be in the office. Court visitors who are students or who have jobs will need to determine regular volunteer hours that fit in with their class or work schedule, although some flexibility is needed for making visits. In addition, unless the program coordinator is full-time, he or she also will need a regular schedule to field questions from volunteers.

Retired volunteer court visitors can afford more flexibility and may want to come and go with less regularity. They can come in, check their court e-mail, check for new cases assigned, read over case files, and make visitor appointments when convenient for them—but must arrange to have regular contact with the program coordinator. A sample volunteer schedule from the D.C. Superior Court’s social work student program is at [Appendix R, DC Student Schedule Form](#).

All volunteers should keep track of the time they have contributed. A form for tracking volunteer time on a monthly basis is at [Appendix S, Volunteer Time Sheet](#). Tracking time will identify those volunteers who are especially active and deserve recognition—as well as those who have become inactive and should be contacted to see if they want to continue. Finally, students will need to track their time to report to the university. For example, in the D.C. Superior Court program, to gain academic credit toward their degree, social work students had to spend between 14 and 16 hours per week on their guardianship assignment as their “field placement.”

Moreover, the total number of volunteer hours is important to report to the chief judge, the state court administrative office, country commissioners, or other funders. The value of volunteer time can be calculated by multiplying the number of hours contributed by the rate needed for a paid staff person to perform the same service. Alternatively, use the estimated dollar value of volunteer time (updated regularly) at Independent Sector, http://www.independentsector.org/volunteer_time.

7. Supervising Volunteers

The most important element of good supervision is to ensure that all volunteers have easy access to the program coordinator—in person, by e-mail, and by phone. Volunteers need to recognize the importance of consulting regularly with the coordinator. They should clearly understand that there are no foolish questions—and that the coordinator expects them to ask for help whenever they have the slightest doubts about what to do. Supervision will differ for students and non-student volunteers.

Supervision of Student Volunteers

Each participating university will have supervision requirements for its field placements. A field or clinical placement instructor may meet with the program coordinator to set out the requirements and expectations. These could include:

- weekly individual supervision meetings. If the students are in social work programs, the coordinator generally needs to be a licensed social worker to provide the necessary supervision;
- learning contracts—a detailed plan for the student's learning;
- mid-semester and end-of-semester evaluations;
- comments on the case reports submitted;
- a record of the hours spent in the placement; and
- participation in a regular group meeting that includes the coordinator and other volunteers.

Some universities conduct field placement visits, as well. In some cases, the coordinator will be involved in the student's grade for the semester. If there are problems with a student volunteer, the coordinator can consult with the field placement instructor.

In Washington, D.C., the program coordinator for the ***D.C. Superior Court's Guardianship Assistance Program*** supervised seven students from four universities during the 2009 - 2010 academic year. The program coordinator was responsible for working with the clinical placement instruction at each university. This included twice yearly visits, the completion of forms, and, depending on the university, assigning each student a pass/fail or letter grade. On average, the program coordinator spent an hour each week with each of the seven students, in addition to an hourly group supervision meeting every other week. During the 2009-2010 academic year, student volunteers conducted a total of 87 visits and, on average, spent between 5 - 6 hours per case.

The three ***Probate Courts for Dallas County, Texas***, use one licensed master social worker to conduct, coordinate, and supervisor visits. The program recruits 8 - 15

MSW interns from two universities to complete 240 to 500 hours per semester, depending on the university. Visits average 4 hours of field credit and interns are reimbursed for their mileage. Attorneys complete three court visits to become eligible for future appointments as ad litem. Community volunteers total 2-4 visits per month. During the 2010-2011 academic year, approximately 1,500 visits were completed. There are about 4,300 active guardianship cases in Dallas County.

Supervision of Community Volunteers

For community volunteers, the coordinator is the sole source of supervision. The coordinator should set aside specific and regular times to discuss the overall performance of each volunteer. They will be eager for praise for good work and an honest assessment of how they can improve.

Sometimes volunteers may not be performing up to expectations. A low-key discussion about what they like and dislike about the job, any frustrations they have, and what they would like to do may be effective. Perhaps a volunteer visitor would be better as a records researcher or auditor, or vice versa. Perhaps there are other volunteer opportunities, either in the court or in the community—such as with the long-term care ombudsman program or home delivered meals—that would be a better match.

It is hard to terminate a volunteer who does not recognize his or her shortcomings and does not want to leave the program. Inform the volunteer of the problems in performance and offer the opportunity for correction. The coordinator must focus on the program's overall purpose—to assist and monitor guardians, rather than to keep volunteers. If the coordinator must dismiss the volunteer, it should be in writing, with documentation of the reasons retained with the program's records.

8. Retaining and Recognizing Volunteers

For student volunteers retention is fairly well guaranteed by the credit requirements of the university. However, for other volunteers, a certain amount of turnover is to be expected due to relocation, illness, family illness or care-giving duties, or just changing interests. Thus, it is well to train about 20 percent more volunteers than needed, so there is some cushion when people resign.

A common problem is when volunteers “fade away,” coming in less frequently, but never stating explicitly that they are leaving the program. Volunteers should not be allowed to linger in limbo for months on end. It is up to the coordinator to contact the volunteer and discuss intentions.

The best way to keep volunteers is to run a good program in which they feel appreciated for meeting an important societal need. A great compensation for volunteers is satisfaction from helping others and positive feedback from supervisors.

However, it is also important to recognize volunteers in other ways, including offering additional training, involvement in staff meetings, and other opportunities for leadership. Don't overlook the more traditional forms of recognition such as:

- recognition events—luncheons or parties to which all volunteers and staff are invited;
- informal get-togethers of volunteers;
- plaques, certificates, or pins;
- thank you letters from the judge or administrator—or a personal word from the judge;
- public recognition in the media;
- letters from guardians, agencies, or others concerning the work of individual volunteers; and
- snacks, coffee, cookies.

In the 2007 ABA Commission on Aging survey of existing volunteer monitoring programs, all 28 recognized their volunteers in some form—23 by verbal or written thank you notes, 14 by coffee and snacks, and 14 by events such as appreciation dinners.

One former coordinator invited all of her volunteers to her home every year for a special dinner. At another program, the judge “bent over backwards” to make the volunteers feel appreciated, and the volunteers delighted in having the judge notice their work.

9. Reimbursing Volunteers

Volunteers are likely to incur out-of-pocket expenses for mileage, parking, or other minor costs. Approaches to reimbursement for these expenses include:

- Setting up a small fund from your budget for volunteer reimbursement. A sample form for volunteers to claim reimbursement is at [Appendix T, Reimbursement Form](#).
- Asking an outside agency to support the reimbursement and promising recognition for doing so. One program asked county commissioners to pay for mileage and they agreed after going along on visits to better understand the program.
- Getting one or two parking spaces at the court reserved exclusively for use of volunteers through provision of parking stickers or similar process.
- Setting a flat, per-case reimbursement rate based on average cost. The D.C. Superior Court program set the volunteer reimbursement rate at a flat fee of \$10 per case, (provided once at the end of the year), after tracking and averaging costs the first year.

B. Managing Court Visitor Cases

The steps involved in handling a volunteer visitor case begin with the selection of a case file and continue until any action taken by the court is finished. The steps are outlined below.

1. Selecting Cases for Volunteer Visitors

If your court has a small guardianship caseload, you may be able to have volunteers make a visit to each incapacitated individual, perhaps starting with the oldest cases first, or any that indicate a need for attention. Some courts select a date, for example, three years ago, and work up to the present in review of the cases. For larger caseloads, files can be selected randomly from the court's database—or else select those that have not had visits for longest time. A few courts, such as the Maricopa County Superior Court, are beginning to use risk assessment tools in identifying cases for volunteers versus court staff investigators, and in designating the time period between visits.

Case Selection at Programs Across the Country

- “First, we try to see those that we missed the year before and then the rest. Our database can tell us who is due for a visit on a monthly basis.”
 - “We try to visit all of our wards within 150 miles at least once a year. We pull the files based on their last visit date and then try to make sure that all wards who are in the same facility are visited at the same time.”
 - “We monitored 4,683 guardianship/conservatorship cases last year. We cannot get all of these visits completed. We currently attempt to get volunteers to go out on the cases that have not been visited for the longest period of time.”
 - “We give the cases with the really bad problems to our staff investigators and have the volunteers do the more run-of-the-mill ones.”
-

Review of the database and files by volunteer records researchers or the coordinator will lay the groundwork for selection of files for visitors. The review can identify cases that are still open and cases in which the guardian has not timely filed reports or accountings. Additional review by the coordinator may uncover priority cases in which possible problems are flagged, investigators previously have found problems, or complaints have been made. For a list of red flags that could trigger a particular need for review, see *Guardianship and Conservatorship “Red Flags,”*

<http://contentdm.ncsconline.org/cgi-bin/showfile.exe?CISOROOT=/famct&CISOPTR=304> (includes lists by Vanderheiden, Maricopa County, Arizona, Public Fiduciary; Arizona Supreme Court Certification and Licensing Division; and Tarrant County, Texas, Probate Court #2). If the court has staff investigators, one approach is to assign the most egregious cases to the staff, allowing the volunteers to handle less challenging or problematic situations.

2. Assigning Cases to Volunteers

Matching Case to Volunteer

Begin by assigning each volunteer visitor a case. Matching of cases to volunteers could be random, but *geography* and *safety* also may play a role. Many volunteers, particularly in urban areas, prefer to be assigned cases close to their residence—and this cuts down on mileage. Visiting individuals in the same long-term care facility at the same time is very efficient. In some programs, volunteers can select the general type of case they would prefer to take—for instance, older people in nursing homes or younger individuals in group homes.

If your program aims to maximize volunteer time by “bunching” cases on one geographical route, consider using Mapquest or similar software for route planning—go to Mapquest, select “Route Planning, and import a spreadsheet with addresses. Then go to “reroute” to get a more geographically sensible route. Plan the amount of time for each visit and devise a schedule. The Maricopa County Superior Court in Arizona is beginning to use this method for scheduling volunteer visits.

In the AARP demonstration, during the initial training, the coordinator told the volunteers they would be asked to take cases from throughout the area of the court’s jurisdiction, but that they had the option to request another case if the distance was too great. The coordinator created an atmosphere in which the volunteers felt comfortable saying no to a particular case.

Another consideration in assigning cases is personal safety and the comfort level of the volunteers. Practical measures can address safety issues. Volunteers can work in pairs, at least for cases in certain locations. Some volunteers are more ready and able to handle such cases than others. However, the cardinal rule is that the volunteer can always say no. Inform the volunteers that they have the option of turning down a case or not going into a residence that appears to be dangerous. If the case is too risky for the volunteer, the court should use staff investigators for review.

Getting the Case to the Volunteer

E-mail the initial case assignment to the volunteer and also place the case documents in the volunteer’s cubby in the space at court allocated to the volunteer program. The volunteer should have the essential case information—docket number, date opened, date of last report and/or accounting; name, age and residence of incapacitated person, phone number; name and contact information for guardian; and reason for guardianship. The volunteer should have copies of or access to the key case documents:

- name, address, and phone of incapacitated person and guardian;
- petition for appointment;
- clinical statement;

- letters of guardianship and court order of appointment;
- Guardian reports; and
- a blank volunteer visitor report form.

Making the Assignment Official

Once the case is assigned and the volunteer has accepted it, the coordinator should:

- (1) Note the assignment on the *master log*, as at [Appendix I, Master Case Log](#).
- (2) Send the guardian a *letter*, as at [Appendix U Guardian Letter](#).
- (3) Have the court make an *order appointing the volunteer* as a court visitor, as at [Appendix V, Court Order Appointing Visitor](#). Also see the D.C. Superior Court's Guardianship Assistance Program court order at [Appendix W, DC Court Order Appointing Visitor](#).

3. Making the Visits

Reviewing the File

Before contacting the guardian, the volunteer should carefully review the file—either online or in hard copy, or perhaps some documents will be online while others will be hard copy in the physical file. Some courts' databases may have different security levels, so that volunteers have limited access to certain parts of the file, but not the full file.

Reading a guardianship file may at first seem like a foreign language. Court documents, abbreviations, and acronyms may be daunting. AARP has offered "Tips for Reviewing the File" at [Appendix W\(1\), Sample Tips for Volunteer Review of Case File](#), which is specific to one court, but could be revised and made specific for use by your volunteers. Make sure the volunteers know that the case file cannot be removed from the court or clerk's office or altered. Suggest they look for the following information from the file:

- name, address, and phone of the guardian;
- name, address, and phone of the incapacitated individual;
- age of the individual;
- reason for the guardianship; and
- year the guardianship was established.
- If possible, find a way make sure there is a notation in the file or some way for the volunteer to know if a guardian has reported a large expenditure for

care of the individual—for example, a home renovation to make the house more accessible or a car with special accessibility features. Have the volunteer check on these items during the visit or even photograph them.

Have the volunteer take extra copies of the court order appointing him or her as court visitor, in case the guardian or long-term care facility needs to keep a copy.

Contacting the Guardian

After the coordinator sends a letter to the guardian, the volunteer should wait about two weeks and then call the guardian to set up an appointment to: (1) interview the guardian; and (2) visit and interview the incapacitated person. If the guardian does not live with the person, the volunteer can either make a separate appointment to meet with the guardian or interview the guardian by phone.

In some programs, the volunteers carry with them packets of information for the guardian – including instructions on filing reports as well as brochures or lists of key community resources. Consider compiling such a packet in advance of the volunteer training, and reviewing the packet with volunteers during the training.

Visiting the Incapacitated Individual

The volunteer should ask the guardian for any suggestions about visiting or communicating with the incapacitated person. For example, what time of day is best to visit? Does the person have any special interests? Does the person have any communication challenges, and what are the best techniques for overcoming these?

The volunteer should meet with the individual privately, if possible. For more tips on the visit, see the *Volunteer's Handbook*. The volunteer should immediately report any serious problems to the coordinator. Some volunteers have reported calling the coordinator on their cell phone directly after the visit to describe an urgent situation. Coordinator availability to receive these calls is important. The coordinator may need to report the case to adult protective services or take other immediate action for protection.

If the person is in a nursing home or assisted living, the volunteer should also meet with key staff, such as the floor nurse or social worker, and should examine the medical chart or record, including any electronic records. If the volunteer identifies a problem with care at the facility, the volunteer or the coordinator should contact the state or local long-term care ombudsman program, see <http://www.ltombudsman.org/ombudsman> (select “Locate an Ombudsman”).

Based on the visit and all of the interviews, the volunteer court visitor will complete the visitor report form ([Appendix J, Volunteer Report Form](#)) and e-mail it to the coordinator. The coordinator should set a definite timeframe for submitting the report. See an example of a completed report at [Appendix X, Completed Volunteer Report Form](#). See the D.C. Court Visitor Report Form at [Appendix K, DC Student Visitor Report Form](#); and an example of a completed D.C. Court form at [Appendix Y, Completed DC Student Visitor Report Form](#). Also see “fillable” form from Maricopa County at [Appendix K\(1\)](#).

The coordinator may need to decide if the program will keep the volunteer's formal or informal case notes. For instance, in the D.C. Court Guardianship Assistance Program, the volunteer's written case notes are filed with the report. The notes are sometimes helpful if a hearing is held based on the visitor's report.

4. Reviewing the Visitor Reports; Taking Court Action

Timely review of the completed visitor report forms is essential to the effectiveness of the program. The volunteers will discover some situations to which the court needs to respond with alacrity. Also, visitors will become discouraged if their reports are not timely reviewed and their recommendations not considered for lengthy periods. It is important for the coordinator to go through the report with the volunteer, at least at first, to ensure it is complete, is the proper length and amount of detail, and that critical items are not left out or unnecessary and unhelpful items included.

The most important part of a coordinator's job is the review and follow-up of the report forms. The coordinator is the vital link in the chain of action that ties the volunteer recommendations to court action.

Begin reading a volunteer report form by reviewing the cover page, including the volunteer's rating of the incapacitated person's situation, whether the volunteer thinks follow-up is needed, and whether court action is recommended. In reading through the report, watch for "red flags" such as:

- the condition of the person has deteriorated badly over the past year;
- the person has been moved frequently;
- the person is not under the care of a regular physician;
- the person requests additional services or treatment; or
- the guardian lacks awareness of needed community resources.

When the volunteer recommends court action, the coordinator needs to evaluate the details of the case and decide whether the recommendation is appropriate. If so, the coordinator may forward the report and case file to additional court staff including the court clerk—or directly to the judge. Of course, the coordinator may also recommend action, even if the volunteer has not done so. In the D.C. Superior Court program, out of 90 student volunteer cases in 2009 – 2010, a total of 53 cases required no further action. However, there were 37 cases in which the volunteers recommended actions ranging from letters to revisits to court hearings and modifications in the order (DC Superior Court, *Guardianship Assistance Program: End-of-Year Report 2009-2010*). The Maricopa County Superior Court guardianship review program, using both volunteers and staff investigators, reports that roughly four to five percent of cases reviewed have problems requiring court intervention. Here is a list of some potential court responses:

- Letter or call requesting information or clarification from the guardian.

- Letter or call advising the guardian of resources or services.
- Follow-up visit by volunteer to discuss resources, services, or possible improvements with guardian.
- Letter requesting the guardian to submit for approval within a certain time a *plan* for making improvements in specified areas.
- Letter requesting the guardian to *take specific actions* within a designated time.
- Appointment of court investigator or guardian ad litem for further investigation.
- Appointment of co-guardian.
- Referral of the case to another agency, such as adult protective services or the long-term care ombudsman.
- Order for the guardian to appear at a hearing to determine what problems exist and what changes are needed (such as order to show cause).
- Order placing limitations on guardian's authority.
- If there is a serious emergency, the judge may immediately appoint a new temporary guardian, without a prior hearing.
- Removal of existing guardian; and appointment of new permanent guardian.
- Termination of guardianship—restoration to capacity.

When follow-up on a case is completed, the coordinator will note the actions taken on the report form and on the master log. The coordinator also should inform the volunteer of the actions taken. (If there is to be a hearing, the coordinator could let the volunteer know and offer the option of attending, to see the judge follow up on the volunteer's suggestions, or make other interventions.) Finally, the coordinator should indicate in the database when the next visit is scheduled.

At intervals, the coordinator should review completed case report forms to identify any distinct patterns and trends of problems, and report to the judge. Some courts may have databases and software that allows the report elements to be queried and the data aggregated.

C. Beyond Volunteers: Other Aspects of Guardian Assistance

While volunteers as the “eyes and ears of the court” may be the hallmark of a program, there are other approaches toward assisting guardians that ultimately will strengthen court oversight. For example, some courts assign staff to respond to technical assistance requests from guardians. For an example of a flyer alerting

guardians that court assistance is available, see [Appendix Z, D.C. Guardian Assistance Flyer](#).

For promising practices on court monitoring and guardian assistance, generally, see *Guarding the Guardians: Promising Practices for Court Monitoring*, http://assets.aarp.org/rgcenter/il/2007_21_guardians.pdf.

Another way the court can assist guardians is by sponsoring a conference or training program. For example, the D.C. Superior Court sponsors an annual conference for guardians. In 2009 - 2010, the Guardianship Assistance Program organized and hosted its second annual conference, held at a local law school. In planning for the conference, 50 guardians selected at random received a topics survey assessing their interests. The three top topics were Medicaid (including Medicaid waivers), mental illness, and bioethics as applied to health care decision-making (*Guardianship Assistance Program, 2009 – 2010 Report*). Local attorneys and agency representatives served as speakers, which also helped to cement community partnerships. The program invited all appointed guardians on open cases to attend the half-day conference.

In addition to educational opportunities, specific and accessible Web sites can make things easier for your guardians. The site can include all needed forms, directions on reporting and accounting, samples of correctly filled out reports and accounts, links to local community resources, and upcoming events of interest to guardians. It can also link to a state guardianship association—see list at: <http://www.guardianship.org/affiliates.htm>.

Finally, many states have developed guardian/conservator handbooks—see a list at http://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/uncategorized/2011/2011_aging_gship_st_hbks_2011.authcheckdam.pdf—and DVDs and videos for guardians—see list at http://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/uncategorized/2011/2011_aging_gship_video_resourc_8_10.authcheckdam.pdf.

Forms and Appendices

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[Appendix W – D.C. Court Order Appointing Visitor](#)

[Appendix W\(1\) – Sample Tips for Volunteer Review of Case File](#)

[Appendix X – Completed Volunteer Report Form](#)

[Appendix Y – Completed D.C. Student Visitor Report Form](#)

[Appendix Z – D.C. Guardian Assistance Flyer](#)

Appendix A – Volunteer Contract

VOLUNTEER CONTRACT

As partners in the Court Volunteer Guardianship Monitoring and Assistance Program, volunteers and the court have rights and responsibilities to make a successful program.

Volunteer

As a volunteer, I assume certain responsibilities and expect to be accountable for the work that I do. I recognize and agree to the following terms:

I will act in accordance with the purpose of the guardianship monitoring program: to ensure that persons under guardianship are receiving good care and that their funds are being expended properly.

I will stay within the limits of the court volunteer role as outlined in the job description. I will avoid any conflict of interest, or appearance of conflict of interest, including financial gain, in carrying out my volunteer duties. I will not become involved with the financial affairs in any of the cases to which I am assigned. I understand that such involvement may be grounds for dismissal.

I will treat information regarding incapacitated individuals and families gathered from the court records and my visits with utmost respect for the parties' privacy.

I will respect the schedules of court staff and other volunteers, and will call ahead to let them know when I am coming in to work or to pick up assignments. I will notify the court if I need to change my schedule or withdraw from the program.

I understand that the program protects me from personal liability for acts performed in carrying out regular and authorized volunteer duties. I understand that the insurance provided in the program does not cover operation of an automobile in performance of volunteer duties and that I must provide such coverage through my own policy.

Program Coordinator

On behalf of the court, I assume the responsibility to ensure that volunteers have the support needed to do their work. I recognize and agree to the following terms:

I will respect the volunteer's contribution of time and skills by providing meaningful work assignments and by giving serious attention to any problem cases identified by the volunteer.

I will provide initial and ongoing training to the court volunteer.

I will provide assistance and supervision to the volunteers by maintaining regular communication through in-person contact, periodic meetings, phone calls, e-mails and letters.

I will be available to answer questions and assist with resolution of specific cases.

I will respect the schedule of the volunteers and will be available during the times we have arranged. If I need to change the schedule I will contact the volunteers involved.

I will provide the materials necessary to do the job, including forms, supplies and space. I will encourage volunteers to offer suggestions for improving the program.

Volunteer

Date

Program Coordinator

Date

Appendix B – Program Coordinator Job Description

COURT VOLUNTEER PROGRAM COORDINATOR

JOB DESCRIPTION

The program coordinator has primary responsibility for establishing and maintaining the Volunteer Guardianship Monitoring and Assistance Program.

Duties and Responsibilities

- Recruit and screen new volunteers
- [Work with local/regional universities to arrange for student assignments]
- Conduct training of new volunteers
- Match volunteers to cases and provide forms to get started on a case
- Supervise and support volunteers—including answering questions about cases, acting as liaison with court staff, and engaging in regular communication with volunteers
- Review volunteer reports for completeness and need for action; route complex cases to judge or other court staff for review when necessary
- Track court response to volunteers' recommendations and keep volunteers informed
- Maintain volunteer records; track volunteer participation, including number of cases completed, and amount of time devoted to program
- Handle volunteer reimbursement
- Review case database and pull up cases needing follow-up
- Convene regular meetings of volunteers
- [Meet with student volunteers to provide required oversight for university credit]
- Conduct periodic evaluations of program
- Serve as liaison with community agencies

Qualifications

- Belief in value of the Volunteer Guardianship Monitoring and Assistance Program
- Ability to communicate effectively
- Capacity to work with and motivate volunteers
- Good administrative skills
- Familiarity with court procedures
- Accessibility—or ability to gain accessibility—to judge and other court staff

Appendix C - D.C. Coordinator Position Description

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COURTS POSITION DESCRIPTION

Position: Program Manager

Type of Appointment: Career Service

Division: Probate Division

Location: 515 5th Street NW

Tour of Duty: Full Time

DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES: Incumbent manages the Guardianship Assistance Program, which seeks to establish a partnership with social work master's degree programs of several local universities, in which candidates for master's degrees in social work are appointed as Court Visitors who monitor the well-being of wards under Court supervision. Program manager is responsible for the supervision of student Court Visitors who will: visit wards of the Court; review their status and care; meet with court-appointed guardians; identify any unmet needs of the wards; and report to the Court, as needed. Duties include: liaison between the Court and the participating schools and ensuring the student duties coincide with university field work requirements; assisting in selecting suitable students; training students; selecting wards; reviewing guardianship reports; conducting weekly conference with students; meeting with university field instructors to discuss the progress of the program; and participating in program evaluation and making recommendations regarding future program direction.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS: A master's degree in social work and possession of a current license to practice social work; plus three (3) years of experience in the social work field.

SUPPLEMENTAL RANKING FACTORS:

1. Experience in monitoring the welfare and well being of mentally and/or physically incapacitated persons.
2. Professional knowledge and practical experience in the social work field, in order to train MSW students in social work methodology, theory and practice.
3. Case management experience and ability to monitor and evaluated case work of others.
4. Ability to communicate effectively, orally and in writing, in order to successfully interact with university social work faculty, MSW students, Court employees, and the general public.

Appendix D – Training Evaluation

Court Volunteer Guardianship Monitoring & Assistance Program

Training Evaluation Form

Day One – Volunteer Visitor Training

For each of today's sessions, please indicate how successful it was in conveying information useful in preparing to be a volunteer court visitor, with 1 as "not successful" and 5 as "very successful":

Introduction and Purpose of Training	1	2	3	4	5
Welcome from Judge and Court Staff	1	2	3	4	5
What Is Guardianship	1	2	3	4	5
Guardianship Law and Practice	1	2	3	4	5
People Under Guardianship	1	2	3	4	5
Who Are the Guardians?	1	2	3	4	5
Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation	1	2	3	4	5

What was most helpful?

What was least helpful?

After this day-one training, how confident do you feel about your ability to do the job, with 1 as "very uncertain" and 5 as "very confident"?

1 2 3 4 5

Suggestions for additional information or improvement?

Court Volunteer Guardianship Monitoring & Assistance Program

Training Evaluation Form

Day Two – Volunteer Visitor Training

For each of today's sessions, please indicate how successful it was in conveying information useful in preparing to be a volunteer court visitor, with 1 as "not successful" and 5 as "very successful":

Program Philosophy	1	2	3	4	5
Ethics, Confidentiality, Liability	1	2	3	4	5
Orientation to Court Procedures	1	2	3	4	5
First Steps in Handling Case	1	2	3	4	5
Making a Visit	1	2	3	4	5
Writing the Volunteer Report	1	2	3	4	5
What Happens to Your Report?	1	2	3	4	5
Communication Skills	1	2	3	4	5
Community Resources	1	2	3	4	5
What Is Job Really Like?	1	2	3	4	5

What was most helpful?

What was least helpful?

After this day-two training, how confident do you feel about your ability to do the job, with 1 as "very uncertain" and 5 as "very confident"?

1 2 3 4 5

Suggestions for additional information or improvement?

Court Volunteer Guardianship Monitoring & Assistance Program

Training Evaluation Form

Volunteer Auditor Training

For each of today's sessions, please indicate how successful it was in conveying information useful in preparing to be a volunteer court Visitor, with 1 as "not successful" and 5 as "very successful":

Introduction; Overview	1	2	3	4	5
Roles and Duties of Conservator	1	2	3	4	5
Orientation to Court Procedures	1	2	3	4	5
Demystifying the Accounting and File	1	2	3	4	5
Common Problems in Conservator					
Accounting	1	2	3	4	5
Steps in Your Review	1	2	3	4	5
What Happens to Your Review?	1	2	3	4	5
What Is Job Really Like?	1	2	3	4	5
What was most helpful?					

What was least helpful?

After this auditor training, how confident do you feel about your ability to do the job, with 1 as "very uncertain" and 5 as "very confident"?

1 2 3 4 5

Suggestions for additional information or improvement?

Appendix E – Volunteer Survey

GUARDIANSHIP MONITORING AND ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

SAMPLE VOLUNTEER SURVEY

Name of Court _____

Date: _____

1. Volunteer Position: Court Visitor ____ Court Auditor ____ Records Researcher _____

2. Do you consider yourself an active volunteer in the program? Yes ____ No ____

3. On average, how many volunteer hours do you work in the program per month?

4 or less ____ 5-10 ____ 11-19 ____ 20 or more ____

4. If you are active with program, what factors have been important in staying involved?

5. If no longer active with the program, what are the reasons you left?

6. What has been the most satisfying part of being a court volunteer?

7. What has been the most difficult part of being a court volunteer?

8. Please rate your assessment of the communication you have had with the court.

Superior ____

Above average ____

About enough ____

Could use more ____

Inadequate ____

9. Do you have suggestions for improving the court's communication with volunteers?

10. If applicable, please indicate whether the amount of driving to make court visits has been difficult: _____

No problem			About as expected		Significant problem
1	2	3	4	5	6

Comments/suggestions about driving:

11. Do you feel that your talents related to this program have been well used?

Yes _____

No _____

Not sure _____

How could we make better use of them?

12. Do you have any other suggestions for improvement in the program?

Please return the survey to the program coordinator at [e-mail]. Thanks for your perspectives on these questions. Results from the volunteer survey will be tabulated anonymously and shared with the staff and judges to improve the program. The program coordinator would be glad to discuss your comments with you.

Name (Optional) _____ E-mail _____

Appendix F - D.C. Visitor Feedback Survey

Student Visitor Feedback Survey

1. Survey Information

This 10 question survey is an opportunity to provide written feedback on your experience. I am very interested in your observations on the quality of this field placement site and improvements I can make for future students.

Note: Responses are anonymous so please share honestly.

Your input is greatly appreciated and I thank you for your time!

2. Ratings and Comments

1. Individual supervision was held

- ☐ Often enough
- ☐ Not often enough
- ☐ Too often

2. My field instructor made it comfortable to communicate with her.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

3. My field instructor made time to meet with me for individual supervision.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

4. Group supervision was held

- ☐ Often enough
- ☐ Not often enough
- ☐ Too often

5. The amount of individual case assignments I received were

- ☐ Just right
- ☐ Too many
- ☐ Not enough

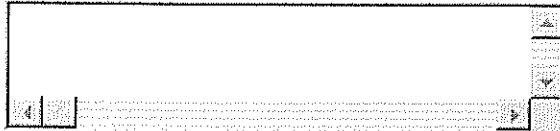
6. Group supervision enhanced my learning.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

7. I would recommend this field placement for other students.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

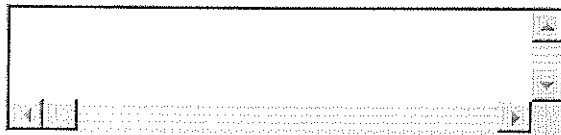
8. I found this field placement to be most helpful with my learning of . . .



9. I found this field placement to be least helpful with my learning of . . .



10. I suggest the following for improving this field placement for future social work students . . .



Appendix G – Volunteer Time Sheets

Court Volunteer Guardianship Monitoring & Assistance Program

Monthly Volunteer Time Sheet

Name			
Month & Year			
Date	Visitor Hours	Auditor Hours	Researcher Hours
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			
12			
13			
13			
14			
15			
16			
17			

18			
19			
20			
21			
22			
23			
24			
25			
26			
27			
28			
29			
30			
31			

Appendix H – Court Staff Time Log

Court Volunteer Guardianship Monitoring & Assistance Program

Court Staff Time Log (Two Week Sample)

[illegible]

[illegible]

Appendix J - Volunteer Report Form

GEN
FORM
2/92

Name of volunteer _____

REPORTING FORM
COURT VISITOR PROGRAM
SUMMARY REPORT TO COURT

In the matter of _____ Case No. _____
First Name Last Name

In this section, record your overall assessment of the ward's care by checking on of the options in the chart. If you indicate that further action is needed, please specify in the comments section what that action should be.

Ward's overall care is:	No further action recommended	Further action needed
Superior		
Satisfactory		
Marginal		
Unacceptable		

Definitions of care levels:

- Superior: Care is better than adequate; beyond meeting the basic needs of the ward, extra assistance is provided. May be exemplary in one or more ways.
- Satisfactory: Care is adequate to meet the housing, health, socialization, and if applicable, habilitation needs of the ward.
- Marginal: Overall care is less than adequate but not dangerous to the ward.
- Unacceptable: Inadequate care is causing or about to cause a serious negative effect on the ward's health or welfare; remedial action is necessary.

VOLUNTEER RECOMMENDS THE FOLLOWING ACTION BY THE COURT:

1. _____ No further action needed
2. _____ Ward should be visited again in ____/____/____
3. _____ Letter or call requesting information from guardian
4. _____ Letter or call advising guardian of resources
5. _____ Letter requesting plan for improvements from guardian
6. _____ Letter requesting guardian to take action w/in a specific time
7. _____ Appoint volunteer or GAL for further investigation
8. _____ Referral to another agency (APS, DDS)
9. _____ Order for guardian to appear at hearing
10. _____ Emergency appointment of new guardian
11. _____ Removal of guardian - new guardian appointed
12. _____ Termination of guardianship/restoration
13. _____ Other

Specific comments by volunteer:

For Court Use Only:

1. _____ No action needed.
2. _____ Action needed; agree with volunteer recommendation.
3. _____ Action needed; different from volunteer recommendation.
4. _____ Action recommended; no action taken.

Notes on court action taken:

Name: _____

**GUARDIANSHIP MONITORING PROGRAM
PROBATE COURT
REPORT OF VISITS**

I. FILE REVIEW

Instructions: This information should be completed during your review of the file at the court house. If any of the financial information is not available from the file, disregard those questions; they should not be asked of the guardian or ward. Some questions from the Visit with Ward section (page 2) may also be answered from information found in the file (e.g., age).

1. Year guardianship established: 19_____

1A. Guardianship of: 1_____ Person only 2_____ Property only 3_____ Both 4_____ Other_____

1B. Reason given for guardianship: 2. Annual Income: 3. Size of Estate (Real + personal property):

- 1_____ mental retardation (and other developmental disabilities)
- 2_____ dementia (including Alzheimer's disease and related disorders)
- 3_____ chronic mental illness
- 4_____ chronic alcohol or drug use
- 5_____ head injury/stroke
- 6_____ other_____
- 7_____ can't determine

- 1_____ under \$3,000
- 2_____ \$3,000-5,999
- 3_____ \$6,000-11,999
- 4_____ \$12,000-24,999
- 5_____ \$25,000-49,999
- 6_____ \$50,000-99,999
- 7_____ \$100,000+
- 8_____ can't determine

- 1_____ under \$15,000
- 2_____ \$15,000-24,999
- 3_____ \$25,000-49,999
- 4_____ \$50,000-99,999
- 5_____ \$100,000 +
- 6_____ can't determine

4. If any kind of periodic report is required, is it current?

	Required?		Current?	
Report of:	Yes	No	Yes	No
Person				
Property				
Date of last report filed:				

5. Any problems evident from the file review (e.g., family conflict, disparity between financial status and level of care of ward)?:

II. INFORMATION FROM GUARDIAN (Date of Contact: ____/____/____)

Instructions: In this section, you will gather information about the relationship between the guardian and the ward. The questions will give you specific answers; your observations will be recorded at the end of this section.

GUARDIAN'S NAME: _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Phone _____

6. Guardian of: 1____ Person 2____ Property 3____ Both

7. Guardian's relationship to ward:

1____ spouse 2____ parent of ward 3____ child of ward 4____ other relative
5____ friend 6____ private attorney 7____ public guardian or agency 8____ other

8. Does the ward live with the guardian? Yes ☐ No ☐ If not, how many times does the guardian or his/her designee visit ward on average each *month*? _____. On average, how long is the visit (in minutes)? _____

9. What does the guardian do for the ward? Check all that apply:

<input type="checkbox"/> Manage financial affairs	<input type="checkbox"/> Provide necessities
<input type="checkbox"/> Housekeeping	<input type="checkbox"/> Take on outings
<input type="checkbox"/> Provide transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Bathe
<input type="checkbox"/> Feed	<input type="checkbox"/> Provide continuous care

List any others: _____

10. What is the guardian's view of the ward's overall situation, including any significant changes in physical health, intellectual functioning, emotional health and living situation that have occurred over the past year:

11. Does the guardian feel that the guardianship should continue? 1____ yes 2____ no

Why? _____

12. Any changes needed in the guardianship? _____

13. Has eligibility for such programs as Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, SSI or Food Stamps ever been checked?
Yes ____ No ____

14. Does the guardian need assistance, whether from the court or from a community agency? Please specify:

15. Guardian's current assessment of ward's: (Check a rating box for each category)

	Excell 1	Sats 2	Fair 3	Poor 4	Don't Know 5
Physical health					
Emotional health					
Intellectual functioning					
Living situation					

16. Any special approach volunteer should take in visiting ward?

17. *Visitor:* Please record any observations about the relationship between the guardian and the ward that you feel would be useful for the court to know.

III. VISIT WITH WARD (Date of visit: ____/____/____)

Instructions: The Visitor should always make an effort to visit with the ward face-to-face and privately. Other sources of information about the ward include the guardian, caregivers, facility staff, relatives, and friends. Remember, you may need to talk to more than one person to get a full picture of the ward's situation. The questions will give you specific information; you will also record your observations/impressions at the end of the section.

18. To whom did you speak to get the information for this section and how much time does he/she spend with the ward per week? (check all that apply):

	Source:	Time Spent with Ward per week (in minutes)
	Ward	////////////////////
	Guardian	
	Caregiver	
	Facility Staff	
	Relative	
	Friend	
	Other	

Information about ward:

19. Age: _____

20. Race/Ethnic

21. Marital Status:

22. Sex: 1___ F
2___ M

1___ Hispanic 4___ American Indian
2___ Caucasian 5___ Asian/Pacific
3___ Black 6___ Unknown

1___ Married 4___ Separated
2___ Single 5___ Divorced
3___ Widow/er 6___ Unknown

A. Living Situation

23. Ward resides in:

1___ own home 5___ group home (board & care,
2___ guardian's home personal care, certified
3___ relative's home residential facility)
4___ nursing home 6___ hospital/state hospital
7___ other _____

Name of Facility _____ Phone _____ (if applicable)

Address _____ City _____ Zip _____

24. Ward has been in present residence since _____ 25. If moved in past year, state number of
times _____ and reasons: _____

26. What services are provided by the guardian or the facility? Examples (check all that apply and list any not mentioned here):

1___ administer medications 5___ 24-hour supervision 9___ nursing care
2___ help with bathing 6___ help with dressing 10___ help with grooming
3___ help in using the bathroom 7___ help with feeding 11___ recreational activities
4___ physical therapy 8___ day care program 12 others: _____

27. *Visitor:* Please record your observations of any problems in the living environment and rate its quality (take into account such things as condition of residence and furnishings, safety, handicapped accessibility, and staffing level):

☐ Excellent ☐ Satisfactory ☐ Fair ☐ Poor

Comments: _____

B. Daily Activities

28. Aside from meals and personal care, how does the ward spend the day?

29. How often does the ward go away from the residence? _____

30. For what purposes? _____

31. Are the ward's recreational, socialization and rehabilitation needs being met? Yes _____ No _____
Any unmet needs?

C. Physical Health/Emotional Health

32. Does the ward have any conditions which impede communication? Yes _____ No _____

33. If so, please specify:

- 1 ___ hearing impairment
- 2 ___ speech impairment
- 3 ___ unwilling to speak
- 4 ___ foreign language speaking only

- 5 ___ mentally ill
- 6 ___ mental retardation
- 7 ___ comatose
- 8 ___ other _____

34. How is the ward's *physical* health?:

☐ excellent ☐ satisfactory ☐ fair ☐ poor

35. Ward ☐ is ☐ is not under regular care by a primary physician:

Doctor's name _____

36. How many times has this doctor seen ward on an outpatient basis in the past year? _____

Last visit: ____/____/____ How many times has the ward been hospitalized in the past year? _____

37. Medications prescribed: none _____ 1-4 _____ 5-9 _____ 10 or more _____

38. Any problems with medications (e.g., ward needs assistance or refuses to take medications, medications prescribed by multiple doctors)?

39. If there has been any major improvement or decline in the ward's *physical* health in the last year, please describe:

40. Please describe any significant medical diagnoses or conditions affecting the ward's health which the court should know about (Do not restate reason for guardianship unless there has been a change.):

41. Within the past year, has the ward experienced any traumatic events or major disruptions or changes (e.g., death of spouse, admission to nursing home, abuse, major illness)? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, please describe: _____

42. Is ward under regular care of a mental health professional (psychiatrist, psychologist, social worker, counselor)? Yes _____ No _____ Please specify: _____

43. Does the ward take any medications specifically for treatment of *mental illness*? Yes _____ No _____

Any problems with these medications? _____

44. Has there been any major improvement or decline in the ward's *emotional* health in the last year? Yes _____ No _____ If yes, please describe: _____

45. Is the ward in need of additional treatment or services not now provided for physical or emotional health conditions? Please specify:

D. Intellectual Functioning

46. Is the ward able to make decisions? Yes _____ No _____ If yes, in what areas?

47. Has this capacity changed during the past year? Yes _____ No _____

48. If yes, has it improved _____ or declined _____? If improved, is the guardianship the least restrictive alternative for care of the ward?

E. Guardianship

Visitor: Ask these questions of the ward directly, whenever possible. If for some reason you cannot speak with the ward, answer these questions yourself using the information you have gathered and the observations you have made.

49. Who answered questions? Ward _____ Visitor _____

If visitor, what prevented you from speaking with the ward?

Questions for ward:	Yes	No	Can't Judge
50. Is ward satisfied with living situation?			
51. Is ward satisfied with care?			
52. Is ward satisfied with caregiver?			
53. Does ward feel that the guardianship is still needed?			
54. Is the ward satisfied with the guardian?			

55. If the ward answers "No" to any of these questions, please elaborate:

56. Are any changes requested by ward? _____

57. Volunteer's assessment of ward's: *(Check a rating box for each category)*

	Excell 1	Sats 2	Fair 3	Poor 4	Don't Know 5
Physical health					
Emotional health					
Intellectual functioning					
Living situation					
Relationship w/guardian					

Time spent on this case: _____ hours.

Travel and out-of-pocket expenses for this case: _____ miles \$ _____

PLEASE GO TO THE SUMMARY PAGE (FORM I) TO MAKE YOUR RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE COURT

Appendix K - D.C. Student Visitor Report Form

SUPERIOR COURT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
PROBATE DIVISION

In Re:

Adult Ward

INT

IDD

STUDENT VISITOR REPORT

I, _____ (name), submit the following report concerning the assessment which I have conducted as the court-appointed student visitor.

Visitor: Please record your overall assessment of the ward's care by checking one of the following options.

Ward's overall care is:

☐

Excellent:

Care is better than adequate; beyond meeting the basic needs of the ward; extra assistance is provided. May be exemplary in one or more ways.

☐

Satisfactory:

Care is adequate to meet the housing, health, socialization, and if applicable, rehabilitation needs of the ward.

☐

Marginal:

Care is less than adequate but not dangerous to the ward.

☐

Unacceptable:

Care is inadequate, causing or about to cause a serious negative effect on the ward's health or welfare. Remedial action is necessary.

Visitor: If you indicate that further action is needed, please specify on this page what that action should be.

Do you recommend any further action? ☐ **Yes** ☐ **No** If yes, please select an option below

Recommendations:

☐

Ward should be visited again in: _____ (please specify period of time)

☐

Letter or call *advising guardian of resources*

☐

Letter or call requesting guardian to take *action within specific time*

☐

Appointment of successor guardian

☐

Appointment of co-guardian

☐

Guardian wishes to resign

☐

Termination of guardianship because ward has regained capacity

☐

Other: _____

Visitor: please explain your recommendation and include any observations of strengths and/or concerns

Summary of findings:

I. FILE REVIEW

Visitor: This information should be completed during your review of the docket and/or court case jacket.

Guardian's Name _____

Address _____ **Email** _____

Phone _____ **Relationship to ward, if any** _____

Date of last filed Semi Annual Guardianship Report? _____

Ward's Name _____ **Age** _____

Address _____

Nature of incapacity:

- ☐ Intellectual disability (including MR and Autism) (specify: _____)
- ☐ Dementia (including Alzheimer's disease and related disorders)
- ☐ Chronic mental illness (specify: _____)
- ☐ Chronic alcohol or drug use
- ☐ Head injury
- ☐ Stroke
- ☐ Other (specify: _____)
- ☐ Cannot be determined

Any problems evident from the file review (e.g. family conflict, level of care of ward, etc.)?

II. INFORMATION FROM GUARDIAN, WARD AND CAREGIVER INTERVIEWS

Visitor: During your interviews, please review the ward's medical/psychological chart; gather information about the relationship between the guardian and the ward; and visit with the ward face-to-face and privately. Remember, you may have to talk to numerous people involved in the care of the ward in order to get the full picture of the ward's situation.

To whom did you speak with to get this information and how much time does he/she personally spend with the ward? (fill in all that apply)

Source	Name	Time spent with ward	Date of interview
Guardian			
Conservator			
Social Worker			
Family Member			
Facility Staff			
Facility Staff			
Other			

What services are provided by the guardian or the facility? Examples: (check all that apply)

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Administer medications | <input type="checkbox"/> 24 hour supervision | <input type="checkbox"/> Nursing care |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Help with bathing | <input type="checkbox"/> Help with dressing | <input type="checkbox"/> Help with grooming |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Help with using bathroom | <input type="checkbox"/> Help with feeding | <input type="checkbox"/> Recreational activities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Physical therapy | <input type="checkbox"/> Day care program | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Visitation

Does ward live with the guardian? _____ If no, answer below:
Date of guardian's most recent visit: _____
On average, how long is each visit? _____
Number of visits by guardian in last 12 months: _____
Does the guardian participate in care planning meetings? _____
According to ward, date of guardian's most recent visit: _____
According to ward, # of guardian's visits in last 12 months: _____
Is guardian reachable by phone? _____

Comments: Please record any observations about the relationship between the guardian and the ward.

Medical/ Mental Health

What is the ward's specific medical/psychiatric diagnosis?

Name of primary care physician: _____

Date of last visit with primary care physician: _____

List ward's medications: _____

Any problem(s) with medications (e.g., ward needs assistance or refuses to take medications, etc.)? _____

In the last year, has ward received any of the following services:

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dental | <input type="checkbox"/> Speech Therapy | <input type="checkbox"/> Physical Therapy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Occupational Therapy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other <u>No</u> | |

If yes, please describe: _____

In the last year, has ward suffered any falls, injuries or been hospitalized? _____

If yes, please describe: _____

In the last year, has ward experienced any traumatic events, major disruptions or changes (e.g., death of spouse, admission to nursing home, abuse, major illness, weight gain/loss, etc)? _____

If yes, please describe: _____

Is the ward in need of additional services or treatment not currently provided for medical health conditions?

Is the ward in need of additional services or treatment not currently provided for mental health conditions?

Physical/Housing Conditions

Ward resides in:

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Own Home | <input type="checkbox"/> Guardian's Home | <input type="checkbox"/> Relative/Friend's Home |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Group Home | <input type="checkbox"/> Hospital | <input type="checkbox"/> Foster/Host Home |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nursing Home | <input type="checkbox"/> Assisted Living | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Name of facility: _____

Length of time at current residence: _____

If ward resides with guardian or relative, list name(s) and relationship of other occupants in home: _____

Is ward appropriately dressed? Clothing clean? Hair clean and appropriate? _____

Is ward continent of bladder and/or bowels? _____

Is ward bedridden? _____ Does ward have bedsores? _____ If so, are they being treated? _____

Can ward walk independently? _____ If not, what does ward use: ☐ wheelchair ☐ walker ☐ cane

Intellectual/ Educational Functioning

Does the ward have any conditions which impede verbal communication? _____ If yes, please specify:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hearing Impairment | <input type="checkbox"/> Mental Illness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Speech Impairment | <input type="checkbox"/> Developmental Delayed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Unwilling to Speak | <input type="checkbox"/> Comatose |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Speaks Foreign Language | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |

Is the ward oriented to person, place and/or time? _____

Is ward attending any type of life skills/educational/vocational classes? _____

Is the ward in need of additional services or treatment not currently provided for intellectual/educational functioning?

Daily Activities/Social Functioning

Aside from meals and personal care, how does the ward spend the day?

How often does the ward leave the residence and for what purpose?

Does the ward receive any agency based services? _____
If yes, specify type of service, frequency, name of agency, provider's name, etc:

Does the ward receive any visitors? _____
If yes, please describe name(s) and relationship to ward of individuals other than guardian:

Is the ward in need of additional services or treatment not currently provided for daily activities/social functioning?

Guardianship

Visitor: Ask these questions of the ward directly, whenever possible. If for some reason you cannot speak with the ward, answer these questions yourself using the information you have gathered and the observations you have made.

Who answered the questions? ☐ Ward ☐ Student Visitor ☐ Guardian
If visitor, what prevented speaking with the ward?

Is ward satisfied with living situation? Care received? Caregiver?

Does the ward feel that guardianship is still needed?

VERIFICATION

I _____ being first duly sworn, on oath, depose and say that I have read the foregoing pleadings by me subscribed and that the facts therein stated are true to the best of my knowledge, information and belief.

Signature of Student Visitor

515 5th Street NW

Address of Student Visitor

Washington, DC 20001

City, State, Zip Code

Telephone Number of Student Visitor

E-mail Address of Student Visitor

Subscribed and sworn to before me this _____ day _____, _____

Notary Public/Deputy Clerk

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that on the _____ day of _____, 20_____, a copy of the foregoing Student Visitor Report was served by first class mail, postage prepaid, upon the following parties to the above captioned case and persons granted permission to participate pursuant to SCR-PD 303 and persons who requested notice pursuant to SCR-PD 304.

Signature of Student Visitor

Appendix K(1) - Fillable Visitor Report Form

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF ARIZONA
IN AND FOR MARICOPA COUNTY

IN THE MATTER OF THE GUARDIANSHIP
AND/OR ESTATE OF:

First Name M Last Name

An Incapacitated or Protected Person

)
)
)
)
)
)

GUARDIANSHIP SITE VISIT REPORT
(Guardianship Review Program)

PB Case Number

Annual Guardian Report Due Date:

Date Volunteer Report Submitted:

Volunteer Name:

Volunteer Name

Activities Performed

Date(s) Interviewed (ward, minor, adoptee)

Contact Date	Contact Name and Address	Contact Type	Relationship	Phone Number
	First Name Last Name	Field Interview	Ward	

Date(s) interviewed Proposed Fiduciary(ies):

Contact Date	Contact Name and Address	Contact Type	Relationship	Phone Number

Date(s) Contacted Attorney(ies):

Contact Date	Contact Name and Address	Contact Type	Relationship	Phone Number

Date(s) contacted other person(s) during investigation:

Contact Date	Contact Name and Address	Contact Type	Relationship	Phone Number

Total Time on Case: _____

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

Overall Assessment:	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Don't Know
Physical Health	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Emotional Health	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Intellectual Functioning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Living Situation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Relationship with Guardian	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- ☐ It appears that the ward continues to require the assistance provided by the court-appointed guardian and/or conservator.
- ☐ It appears that the guardian and/or conservator is attempting to ensure the present and future welfare of the ward.
- ☐ It appears that that this matter may have issues which require further review.

Observations

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ward Alert | <input type="checkbox"/> Appropriate Social Behavior | <input type="checkbox"/> Ambulatory – Independent |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ward Responsive | <input type="checkbox"/> Appropriate Dress | <input type="checkbox"/> Ambulatory with Assistance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ward Confused | <input type="checkbox"/> Appropriate Hygiene | Type of Assistance: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Meaningful Communication | <input type="checkbox"/> Friendly / Cooperative | <input type="checkbox"/> Wheelchair Self-Propel |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Orientated in Three Spheres | <input type="checkbox"/> Continent of Bladder | <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Ambulatory |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Understands Proceedings | <input type="checkbox"/> Continent of Bowel | <input type="checkbox"/> Least Restrictive |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Total Care | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: | |
-
- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| ADLs: <input type="checkbox"/> Independent | <input type="checkbox"/> Supervision | <input type="checkbox"/> Prompts/Reminders |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Minimal Assistance | <input type="checkbox"/> Moderate Assistance | <input type="checkbox"/> Maximum Assistance |

Type of placement? Group Home Does placement seem appropriate? Yes

Services provided by the guardian or the facility:

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Administer medication | <input type="checkbox"/> Help dressing / grooming | <input type="checkbox"/> Nursing care |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Help in the bathroom | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | <input type="checkbox"/> Recreational activities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Physical therapy | <input type="checkbox"/> Help with feeding | <input type="checkbox"/> Education or training |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 24 hour supervision | <input type="checkbox"/> Day care program | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | | |

INFORMATION FROM THE GUARDIAN:

1. Is this information received from the guardian? ☐ Yes ☐ No
If no, name and relationship to ward:
2. Does the ward live with the Guardian? ☐ Yes ☐ No If not, how many times a year does the guardian or the guardian's representative visit the ward? ☐ 1-2 ☐ 2-4 ☐ 4-10 ☐ 11-15 ☐ 16-20 ☐ 21+
3. Did the ward experience any major changes in health or behavior during the last year? ☐ Yes ☐ No
If yes, what changes?
4. Does the guardian feel that the guardianship should continue? ☐ Yes ☐ No
If not, why?
5. Is the guardian aware of the need to file the Annual Guardian Report and Annual Accountings, if appropriate, according to their due date? ☐ Yes ☐ No Was an Annual Guardian provided to the Visitor? ☐ Yes ☐ No
6. Does the guardian need assistance or information, either from the court or from a community agency, such as in matters of health services or eligibility for benefits? ☐ Yes ☐ No
If yes, please specify:

INFORMATION FROM THE WARD:

7. Is this information received from the ward? ☐ Yes ☐ No
If no, name and relationship to ward:
8. Date of placement at residence:
9. Has the ward made a change of residence in the past year? ☐ Yes ☐ No
If yes, what was the reason?
10. Does the ward have spending money for personal needs? ☐ Yes ☐ No
Comments:
11. How often does the ward go away from the residence?
☐ Never ☐ Seldom ☐ Once in a while ☐ Weekly ☐ Daily
12. Why does the ward leave the residence?
☐ Doctor ☐ School ☐ Day Program ☐ Work ☐ Recreational activities
☐ Dentist ☐ Movies ☐ Park ☐ Church ☐ Visit Family / Friends

- ☐ Therapist ☐ Shopping
☐ Other:

13. Aside from meals and personal care, how does the ward spend the day?

- ☐ Watching TV ☐ Video games ☐ Crafts ☐ Attends activities ☐ Attends day program / day care
☐ Attends school ☐ Does chores ☐ Work ☐ Listening to radio ☐ Therapy / Exercise
☐ Sleeping ☐ Reading
☐ Other:

14. Are the ward's recreational, socialization needs being met? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If not, please specify:

15. Does the ward have any conditions, which impede communication? ☐ Yes ☐ No If so, please specify:

- ☐ Hearing impairment ☐ Speech impairment ☐ Mental confusion, etc ☐ Mental retardation
☐ Comatose
☐ Other:

16. Date of last dental visit:

Specify any major dental problems:

17. Has the ward's physician changed in the past year? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please provide name of new physician:

18. Approximate number of medical visits per year:

- ☐ Rarely ☐ Once / year ☐ Twice / year ☐ Once / month ☐ More often

19. Is the ward in need of any medical attention? ☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, please specify:

20. How many times has the ward been hospitalized in the past year?

21. Does the ward have any dietary problems? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please specify:

22. How many (the number of) medications is the ward taking?

Daily:

Weekly:

Monthly:

Comments regarding medication:

23. Does the guardian and/or care provider appear familiar with the ward's medications and dosage requirements?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No If No, please specify:

24. Does the ward have any problems with medications? ☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, what are the problems?

☐ Often forgets medication ☐ Refuses medications ☐ Prescribed by multiple doctors

☐ Medications must be crushed ☐ Problems swallowing medications

☐ Other:

25. Within the past year, has the ward experienced any traumatic events or major changes? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If so, please specify:

☐ Moved to new residence ☐ Death of family member ☐ Medical / Mental changes

☐ Other:

26. Is the ward under the care of a mental health professional? ☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, please specify:

☐ Psychiatrist ☐ Psychologist ☐ Social worker ☐ Counselor

☐ Other:

27. Is the ward in need of treatment or services not now provided? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please specify:

28. Is the ward able to make responsible decisions regarding health and other vital matters? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, in what areas?

29. Questions for the Ward:	Yes	No	Can't Judge
Is the ward satisfied with living conditions?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is the ward satisfied with overall care?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is the ward satisfied with the caregiver?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the ward feel that the guardianship is still needed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is the ward satisfied with the guardian?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

30. If the ward answered "No" to any of these questions, please elaborate:

Additional Comments:

Appendix L – Volunteer Auditor Cover Sheet

VOLUNTEER AUDITOR ACCOUNTING REVIEW COVER SHEET

1. Conservator [Guardian of Property] _____
2. Date of Appointment _____
3. Dates OK _____ Not OK _____
4. Commission OK _____ Not OK _____
5. Inventory filed Yes _____ Date _____ No _____
6. Bond amount OK _____ Not OK _____
7. Any returns without dispositions _____ Dates _____
8. Court cost _____
9. Overall rating
 - a. Accept as submitted _____
 - b. Minor action needed _____
 - c. Major deficiencies needing correction _____
10. Specific problems:

Problem (number p. 2)	Rating of problem (A,B,C)	Description of Problem; Remarks

Volunteer Auditor _____ Date _____

11. Action by court:

Date checked _____ By whom _____ Action approved _____

12. Final approval _____ Date _____

AUDITOR COVER SHEET

PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED

Rating A, B, C

1. ____ The balance forward does not agree with the ending balance on your last return. The ending balance on the last return was \$ ____
2. ____ The period covered should begin and end on the anniversary of your appointment, _____. To get back on schedule (this accounting) (or next accounting) cover the period from ____ to _____. Show only money received and disbursed between these two dates. You may petition to change the reporting dates. A standard form is available at _____.
3. ____ The balance on hand does not equal total receipts minus total disbursements. The figures are out of balance.
4. ____ Disbursements must be paid only with estate funds. If money to pay debts of the estate is advanced by a third party, the source and amount of the advancement must be shown as a receipt.
5. ____ The accounting lists the value of real or personal property that is neither a cash receipt nor a cash disbursement. You may disclose this information parenthetically in the body of the accounting, but the value cannot be shown as a receipt or a disbursement.
6. ____ A notarized acknowledgement of receipt is required.
7. ____ The commission appears to be excessive. The formula for determining commission is _____.
8. ____ Not all of the receipts and/or disbursements show from whom received or to whom paid, and/or the reason for the receipt or disbursement, and/or the amount of money received or disbursed.
9. ____ The signature must be witnessed by a notary public or a clerk of the probate court.
10. ____ It is not clear whether the investments are authorized under state law. Accounting must certify that the investments are authorized and provide supporting authority for such investment.
11. ____ Information is needed on the name of the bank in which the funds are located and the account number.

Prepared by: _____

Date _____

Case Number _____

Letter sent out _____

Response received _____

File date _____

Appendix M – Sample Public Service Announcement

SAMPLE PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT (PRINT)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: [Insert contact information]

[_____] PROBATE COURT ESTABLISHES GUARDIANSHIP MONITORING AND ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

[_____] Probate Court has established a program in which volunteers will monitor the care received by vulnerable elderly and disabled persons who are under legal guardianship.

[Insert paragraph on the impetus for the program]

The [_____] Probate Court program is recruiting volunteers to be volunteer Court Visitors and Court Auditors. Volunteer Court Visitors will be trained to act as the eyes and ears of the court to help detect or prevent abuse, neglect and exploitation of the wards; and to provide assistance to guardians. The volunteers will visit the guardians and wards and, using a standard form, notify the court of any problems or any necessary changes. Volunteer Court Auditors will be trained to review the financial reports of conservators and report any discrepancies to the court.

[_____] Probate Court is seeking volunteers for these exciting volunteer opportunities. Initial training, supervision and on-going training will be provided.

For more information or to volunteer as a Court Visitor or Court Auditor, contact the Guardianship Monitoring Program, [insert contact information here].

Appendix N – Sample Radio Public Service Announcement

SAMPLE PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT (RADIO)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:

GUARDIANSHIP MONITORING AND ASSISTANCE PROGRAM:

COURT SEEKS VOLUNTEERS

45 Seconds:

Remember all the things your parents and grandparents did for you when you were a child? They were there when you needed them. Now you have the chance to give something in return.

There are many elderly and disabled adults in [_____] who have been placed under legal guardianship because they need help in making decisions about their daily lives. The [_____] Probate Court is starting a guardianship monitoring and assistance program to make sure that these people are getting good care. Volunteers are needed to visit them and report back to the court. Volunteers are also needed to act as auditors of the financial returns of conservators. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact [_____] , Coordinator, at [insert phone number].

30 Seconds:

The [_____] Probate Court has started a new program to make sure that elderly and disabled people under legal guardianship are getting good care. Volunteers are needed to be the eyes and ears of the court, visiting these individuals and reporting back to the court about their condition. Volunteers are also needed to serve as auditors of the financial reports of conservators. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact [_____] ,Coordinator, at [insert phone number].

Appendix O – Sample Recruitment Letter

SAMPLE RECRUITMENT LETTER AND PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Dear Friend:

We are writing to tell you about an exciting effort of the [_____] Probate Court. The project involves using volunteers to check on the care which persons under guardianship receive.

Every year the [_____] Probate Court appoints guardians for persons who, due to serious physical or mental disabilities, need help in making decisions about their daily lives. While most guardians undertake their duties conscientiously, in some cases they do not live up to the court's expectations and fail to arrange for the care these people need or fail to administer their funds responsibly. Until the establishment of this cooperative program, there was no consistent way to determine if the guardian was providing good care or if guardianship was still necessary.

The [_____] Probate Court wants to be sure that every person under guardianship receives good care. That's where you may be able to help. The court needs concerned volunteers who can give about 8-10 hours per month to be Court Auditors or Court Visitors.

Court Auditors are people who work with court staff to insure that the annual reports from the conservators are in order. Court Visitors serve as the court's eyes and ears, by visiting persons under guardianship to see whether they appear to be receiving appropriate care. Both Court Auditors and Court Visitors report their findings to the court for appropriate action. As a volunteer, you will receive initial training and ongoing support from the court.

We invite you to consider serving as a Court Auditor or Court Visitor. Enclosed is a more detailed explanation of this effort and an application. If you would like more information, please call [_____] Coordinator, at [insert phone number].

We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

VOLUNTEER GUARDIANSHIP MONITORS

A Model Program of the [_____] Probate Court

Background: The Probate Court appoints guardians for people who need help in making decisions about their daily lives. The guardian is responsible to protect the person under guardianship (called a ward): to manage any funds the person may have, and to arrange for care that will adequately provide for the ward's physical, mental, emotional, and social well-being. The purpose of the Volunteer Guardianship Monitoring and Assistance Program is to give the court a way to obtain current information about wards and to verify that each is receiving good care. This information will assist the court to make recommendations or orders for improvement, if necessary.

Court Auditor	Court Visitor
<p>The court auditor works with court staff to review and analyze the annual reports submitted by guardians. The court auditors will work on difficult cases. The review of the annual return may reveal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Money from a child's estate is being used to support the entire family;▪ \$10,000 was recorded as having been spent on a wheelchair ramp, but no receipts are available from the construction company that allegedly did the work. <p>The court auditor will report any findings to the court staff who will follow up appropriately.</p> <p>Qualifications: Extensive background in accounting, bookkeeping. Investigative nature. Willingness to work with details. A desire to see that persons with serious mental or physical disabilities receive good care.</p>	<p>The court visitor goes to the ward's residence, observes conditions, and talks with the ward about his or her needs. The court visitor will also speak to the guardian and any other caregivers. The visit may uncover specific needs, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The ward mentions that it has been well over a year since the last medical examination.• The guardian is an elderly parent who is now too frail to care for her mentally retarded child. <p>The court visitor uses a standard reporting form to record observations and make any recommendations for court action.</p> <p>Qualifications: Good listening and communication skills, friendliness and common sense; willingness to use standard case reporting form. A desire to see that persons with serious mental or physical disabilities receive good care.</p>

Training and Support:

Covers the guardianship process, wards' rights, communicating with wards (who may have communication difficulties), what to look for on visits, and pertinent community resources. Auditors also receive training on court auditing requirements. Volunteers are supervised by Probate Court staff. Follow-up training and quarterly meetings are also provided for the volunteers.

Time and Place:

A volunteer should be able to give about 8 to 10 hours per month. Court auditors will work in the Probate Office at the court. Court visitors will pick up their assigned cases at the court. Court visitors should expect to do a significant amount of driving in the course of their work, since cases will be from throughout the region. However, volunteers have the option of requesting another case if they feel the distances will be too great, or if other factors in the case make it too difficult to complete.

Next Step:

If you wish to volunteer, please fill out the attached application indicating which position you would like. More information is available by calling [____], Coordinator, at [insert phone number].

Appendix P – Volunteer Application

SAMPLE VOLUNTEER APPLICATION FORM

GUARDIANSHIP MONITORING AND ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Name of Court _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, and Zip: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Position desired:

☐ Visitor

☐ Researcher

☐ Auditor

☐ Other:

What interests you about the position you have designated?:

In what kinds of volunteer activities have you been active or are you currently active?

What kinds of life experiences have you had which related to this volunteer position?
(For example, care of an elderly relative or friend; work in recordkeeping, etc.)

Are you currently:

☐ Retired

☐ Unemployed

☐ Employed full-time

☐ Employed part-time

Primary occupation/profession:

Please describe your employment history:

Name of employer(s), position held, and dates of employment

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Please check the highest educational level completed:

- ☐ High school
- ☐ College
- ☐ Graduate school

Please list any education or course that is specifically related to this volunteer position:

Please list two references (non-relatives) who could comment on your ability to do this job:

Name, relationship to you, and phone number

1. _____
2. _____

Do you have any physical or medical limitations which may affect your volunteer work?

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes, but they will not affect this work
- ☐ Yes, and they will affect volunteer activity in this way:

For transportation, do you:

- ☐ Use your own car. If yes, name of insurance carrier and provide the policy number:

☐ Rely on others

☐ Use public transportation

Court volunteers are asked and expected to make a one year commitment to this volunteer position. Barring unexpected emergencies, are you willing and able to commit to the full one year term of this project?

☐ Yes, I am willing to commit for one year

☐ No, I cannot to commit for one year

Due to the sensitive nature of these positions, the court may do a background check on qualified applicants. Do you agree to a background check?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Is there any other information you would like to include in this application?

Signature

Date

Appendix Q – Volunteer Screening Form

SAMPLE VOLUNTEER SCREENING FORM

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State and Zip: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Interview date: _____

1. Interview date: How did you learn about this volunteer position?
2. Explain the position to the prospective volunteer.
3. What interests you about this position?
4. Have you had any life experiences which relate to being a court visitor?
5. Are you presently involved in any guardianship, conservatorship, or other probate matter in this court? If yes, please describe:
6. Have you ever worked with people who have difficulty with communication?
7. How do you think these experiences might affect your work in the program?
8. Describe your volunteer and employment experience.
9. What is the most challenging situation you've faced? How did you resolve it?
10. Explain to the prospective volunteer:
 - 10.1. The program requires a time commitment of 8 to 10 hours per month for one year. Is this realistic for this person?
 - 10.2. Need for written reports—comfortable with that?
 - 10.3. Need to drive long distances in some cases. Need proof of current auto insurance.
 - 10.4. Indicate training schedule—are you available during those times?
11. Do you have any questions about becoming a volunteer?

Appendix R – D.C. Student Schedule Form

Student Schedules					
Student	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Student A		x	x		
Student B		x	x		
Student C		x		x	
Student D	x	x			
Student E			x	x	
Student F	x	x	x		
Student G				x	x

	<div>Tuesday Group Supervision</div>		<div>Thursday Group Supervision</div>	
Cubicle Assignments	Student Name	Student Name	Student Name	Student Name
	Student Name	Student Name	Student Name	

Appendix S – Volunteer Time Sheet

Court Volunteer Guardianship Monitoring & Assistance Program

Monthly Volunteer Time Sheet

Name			
Month & Year			
Date	Visitor Hours	Auditor Hours	Researcher Hours
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			
12			
13			
13			
14			
15			
16			
17			

18			
19			
20			
21			
22			
23			
24			
25			
26			
27			
28			
29			
30			
31			

Appendix T – Reimbursement Form

SAMPLE VOLUNTEER REIMBURSEMENT FORM

Name of Court

REQUEST AND ORDER FOR PAYMENT OF EXPENSES OF VOLUNTEER

In the Matter of

An Incapacitated Person

Case Number: _____

Appointed as a Court Volunteer herein by Order dated _____, _____, the undersigned is entitled to reimbursement of the following out-of-pocket expenses pursuant to (site relevant code):

Travel expense for ____ miles at ____ per mile = \$ _____

Other expenses: _____ = _____

_____ = _____

TOTAL CLAIMED: \$ _____

Date of claim: _____

Signature of Court Volunteer

Name, address, phone, e-mail

ORDER OF THE COURT

Based upon the foregoing information, the court orders payment of \$ _____ to the person named above.

Date _____

Judge: _____

Appendix U – Guardian Letter

SAMPLE LETTER TO GUARDIAN CONCERNING VOLUNTEER COURT VISITORS

Name of judge

Name of clerk

NAME OF PROBATE COURT

Address

In the matter of:

An incapacitated person

Case no. _____

To: Name of Guardian

Address

Date

Dear Guardian:

The Probate Court is beginning a new program to visit persons under guardianship, as authorized by [state statute, if applicable]. We are training a group of volunteers, called Court Visitors. A Court Visitor will soon be contacting you to arrange a visit with the incapacitated person in this case, with you as guardian, and with anyone else involved in the person's care. The Court Visitor will report back to me about the current situation of the person under guardianship.

The volunteer Court Visitor will call you to schedule a meeting at a mutually convenient time with you and with the incapacitated person. During the visit, the volunteer will ask questions about the present living and care arrangements. Your cooperation will help the volunteer to give me an accurate picture of what is happening in the case.

Thank you for your help in improving the guardianship system in [jurisdiction].

Sincerely,

Name of judge

Name of court

Appendix V – Court Order Appointing Visitor

SAMPLE COURT ORDER APPOINTING VOLUNTEER VISITOR

Name of Court

In the Matter of:

Name of Incapacitated Person

Case Number

ORDER APPOINTING VISITOR

[State] statute permits the Court to appoint a visitor to investigate an adult guardianship and report findings. The Court requires further information concerning this guardianship, and

WHEREFORE, IT IS ORDERED:

1. That Name of Court Visitor hereby is appointed as “Court Visitor” in this case, and shall investigate the current circumstances of the person for whom this guardianship exists. The appointment shall continue until further Court Order.
2. That this Court Visitor shall report to this Court any relevant information about the guardianship of which the Court should be informed.
3. That all persons connected in any way with this guardianship shall cooperate with and assist the Court Visitor in this information-gathering function.

DONE IN OPEN COURT this ____ day of _____, ____.

BY THE COURT:

Name of Judge

Name of Court

SUPERIOR COURT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
PROBATE DIVISION

_____ INT _____

In re:

An Adult

ORDER APPOINTING STUDENT VISITOR

It is by the Court this _____ day of _____,
20_____,

ORDERED, that _____ of _____ is hereby
(Name of student) (Name of university)

appointed student visitor for this ward. The student visitor is participating in the Guardianship Assistance Program and is hereby authorized to visit with the ward in his or her present place of abode; evaluate the ward's current status; consult with the guardian, family members, caregivers, and other persons having significant information about the ward's current situation; and determine if the ward has unmet needs that should be brought to the attention of the Court.

The student visitor shall have access to any medical, psychological, or sociological evaluation records of the ward. The student visitor shall be paid \$10.00 from the Guardianship fund for mileage and transportation fees. The student visitor shall serve copies of the report on all parties listed below.

This order expires on _____,
20_____.

JUDGE

cc:

Appendix W(1) - Sample Tips for Volunteer Review Of Guardianship Case File

1. The Brown Case itself will tell you if there is also a conservatorship file for this ward. Since conservators make an annual financial report to the court, this file may have more current information in it. If there is such a case, somewhere on the white block on the jacket will be printed:

see 90PR123 CONS

that is your signal to pull the conservatorship file also.

The Brown Case also may tell you the date of birth of the ward. It will say DOB: 10/19/47.

2. The Register of Action is a long, legal size card in the file. This lists activity in the case in date order. The last entry on this case indicates the last activity. Also, if the ward has died and the court was notified, it would be stated here (hopefully).

The Register of Action also gives the date of birth of the ward and may also state if a conservator file also exists.

*** If there is a sticker at the end of the Register of Actions that says "This case in on line," etc., it means that this case has been put on the computer and any information the court received after the date on the sticker has been listed on the Computer Register of Action. Please ask the coordinator to get a printout of this information for you.

3. How to determine a Deceased Ward from the file:
 - a. Look at the last entry on register of action.
 - b. Check for a Death Certificate or a copy of one in the file.
 - c. If there is a conservatorship file, it may indicate the ward is deceased, even though the information is not cross-referenced in the guardianship file.
 - d. If the Brown Case file says "TERM" or "SETTLED," read carefully because chances are the ward is deceased.
 - e. If you are suspicious, have the coordinator pull up the case if it is on the computer because said information may have been entered there. (The court has only been entering some cases on computer since the spring of 1989, so many of these cases are not on it yet.)
4. The following forms will help you (same exhibit numbers as are used on the sample file from the first day of training).
 - a. "Letters of guardianship" tells you who the guardian is.
 - b. "Petition for appointment of the guardian" tells you date of birth of ward, nature of incapacity.
 - c. "Order appointing guardian" tells you the responsibility of the guardian.
 - d. "Certificate of Mailing" tells you names and maybe last known addresses of relatives, or other interested parties who, if you contact, may know where the ward and guardian are currently living.

Appendix X - Completed Volunteer Report Form

GEN
FORM

Name of volunteer Jane Smith

SAMPLE COMPLETED REPORTING FORM

COURT VISITOR PROGRAM SUMMARY REPORT TO COURT

In the matter of John Ward Case No. 123456
First Name Last Name

In this section, record your overall assessment of the ward's care by checking one of the options in the chart. If you indicate that further action is needed, please specify in the comments section what that action should be.

Ward's overall care is:	No further action recommended	Further action needed
Superior		
Satisfactory		✓
Marginal		
Unacceptable	////////////////////	

Definitions of care levels:

- Superior: Care is better than adequate; beyond meeting the basic needs of the ward, extra assistance is provided. May be exemplary in one or more ways.
- Satisfactory: Care is adequate to meet the housing, health, socialization, and if applicable, habilitation needs of the ward.
- Marginal: Overall care is less than adequate but not dangerous to the ward.
- Unacceptable: Inadequate care is causing or about to cause a serious negative effect on the ward's health or welfare; remedial action is necessary.

VOLUNTEER RECOMMENDS THE FOLLOWING ACTION BY THE COURT:

1. ☐ No further action needed
2. ☐ Ward should be visited again on ____/____/____
3. ☐ Letter or call requesting information from guardian
4. ☐ Letter or call advising guardian of resources
5. ☒ Letter requesting plan for improvements from guardian
6. ☐ Letter requesting guardian to take action w/in a specific time
7. ☐ Appoint volunteer or GAL for further investigation
8. ☐ Referral to another agency (APS, DDS)
9. ☐ Order for guardian to appear at hearing
10. ☐ Emergency appointment of new guardian
11. ☐ Removal of guardian - new guardian appointed
12. ☐ Termination of guardianship/restoration
13. ☐ Other

Specific comments by volunteer:

Ward needs a new hearing
aid - other one is missing.
Contact guardian and ask her
to have her father fitted for
a new aid. Hearing loss is
causing him to be isolated and
somewhat depressed.

For Court Use Only:

1. ☐ No action needed.
2. ☒ Action needed; agree with volunteer recommendation.
3. ☐ Action needed; different from volunteer recommendation.
4. ☐ Action recommended; no action taken.

Notes on court action taken:

Letter sent to guardian
on 5-15-92

Name: Program Coordinator

GUARDIANSHIP MONITORING PROGRAM
PROBATE COURT
REPORT OF VISITS

I. FILE REVIEW

Instructions: This information should be completed during your review of the file at the court house. If any of the financial information is not available from the file, disregard those questions; they should not be asked of the guardian or ward. Some questions from the Visit with Ward section (page 2) may also be answered from information found in the file (e.g., age).

1. Year guardianship established: 19 90

1A. Guardianship of: 1 Person only 2 Property only 3 ✓ Both 4 Other

1B. Reason given for guardianship: 2. Annual Income: 3. Size of Estate (Real + personal property):

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| 1 <u> </u> mental retardation (and other developmental disabilities)
2 <u>✓</u> dementia (including Alzheimer's disease and related disorders)
3 <u> </u> chronic mental illness
4 <u> </u> chronic alcohol or drug use
5 <u> </u> head injury/stroke
6 <u> </u> other <u> </u>
7 <u> </u> can't determine | 1 <u> </u> under \$3,000
2 <u> </u> \$3,000-5,999
3 <u> </u> \$6,000-11,999
4 <u>✓</u> \$12,000-24,999
5 <u> </u> \$25,000-49,999
6 <u> </u> \$50,000-99,999
7 <u> </u> \$100,000+
8 <u> </u> can't determine | 1 <u> </u> under \$15,000
2 <u>✓</u> \$15,000-24,999
3 <u> </u> \$25,000-49,999
4 <u> </u> \$50,000-99,999
5 <u> </u> \$100,000 +
6 <u> </u> can't determine |
|---|---|--|

4. If any kind of periodic report is required, is it current?

	Required?		Current?	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Report of:				
Person	✓		✓	
Property	✓		✓	
Date of last report filed: <u>April 1991</u>				

5. Any problems evident from the file review (e.g., family conflict, disparity between financial status and level of care of ward)?:

None

II. INFORMATION FROM GUARDIAN (Date of Contact: 4 / 28 / 92)

Instructions: In this section, you will gather information about the relationship between the guardian and the ward. The questions will give you specific answers; your observations will be recorded at the end of this section.

GUARDIAN'S NAME: Suzie Guardian

Address 123 Maple St. City Anywhere State VSA Phone 123-4567

6. Guardian of: 1 ☐ Person 2 ☐ Property 3 ☒ Both

7. Guardian's relationship to ward:

1 ☐ spouse 2 ☐ parent of ward 3 ☒ child of ward 4 ☐ other relative
5 ☐ friend 6 ☐ private attorney 7 ☐ public guardian or agency 8 ☐ other

8. Does the ward live with the guardian? Yes ☐ No ☒ If not, how many times does the guardian or his/her designee visit ward on average each month? 4x a year. On average, how long is the visit (in minutes)? 1 hour

9. What does the guardian do for the ward? Check all that apply:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Manage financial affairs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Provide necessities
<input type="checkbox"/> Housekeeping	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Take on outings
<input type="checkbox"/> Provide transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Bathe
<input type="checkbox"/> Feed	<input type="checkbox"/> Provide continuous care

List any others:

Makes sure he has everything he needs.

10. What is the guardian's view of the ward's overall situation, including any significant changes in physical health, intellectual functioning, emotional health and living situation that have occurred over the past year:

Pretty much the same since last year.

11. Does the guardian feel that the guardianship should continue? 1 ☒ yes 2 ☐ no

Why? Can't take care of himself. Needs supervision to prevent wandering.

12. Any changes needed in the guardianship? No

13. Has eligibility for such programs as Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, SSI or Food Stamps ever been checked? Yes ☐ No ☒

14. Does the guardian need assistance, whether from the court or from a community agency? Please specify:

Nothing specific.

15. Guardian's current assessment of ward's: (Check a rating box for each category)

	Excell 1	Sats 2	Fair 3	Poor 4	Don't Know 5
Physical health		✓			
Emotional health		✓			
Intellectual functioning				✓	
Living situation		✓			

16. Any special approach volunteer should take in visiting ward?

No. May be more alert around lunch time.

17. **Visitor:** Please record any observations about the relationship between the guardian and the ward that you feel would be useful for the court to know.

*Guardian visits 4x a year. Seems to leave the care of her father to
The nursing home.*

III. VISIT WITH WARD (Date of visit: 4 / 29 / 92)

Instructions: The Visitor should always make an effort to visit with the ward face-to-face and privately. Other sources of information about the ward include the guardian, caregivers, facility staff, relatives, and friends. Remember, you may need to talk to more than one person to get a full picture of the ward's situation. The questions will give you specific information; you will also record your observations/impressions at the end of the section.

18. To whom did you speak to get the information for this section and how much time does he/she spend with the ward per week? (check all that apply):

✓	Source:	Time Spent with Ward per week
✓	Ward	////////////////////
	Guardian	
	Caregiver	
✓	Facility Staff	<i>2 hours each day</i>
	Relative	
	Friend	
	Other	

Information about ward:

19. Age: 50

20. Race/Ethnic

21. Marital Status:

22. Sex:

1 ☐ F
2 ☒ M

1 ☐ Hispanic 4 ☐ American Indian
2 ☒ Caucasian 5 ☐ Asian/Pacific
3 ☐ Black 6 ☐ Unknown

1 ☐ Married 4 ☐ Separated
2 ☐ Single 5 ☐ Divorced
3 ☒ Widow/er 6 ☐ Unknown

A. Living Situation

23. Ward resides in:

1 ☐ own home 5 ☐ group home (board & care,
2 ☐ guardian's home personal care, certified
3 ☐ relative's home residential facility)
4 ☒ nursing home 6 ☐ hospital/state hospital
7 ☐ other _____

Name of Facility Pine Tree Manor Phone 765-4321 (if applicable)

Address 321 Elm St. City Anywhere Zip 12345

24. Ward has been in present residence since 1990 25. If moved in past year, state number of

times 0 and reasons: _____

26. What services are provided by the guardian or the facility? Examples (check all that apply and list any not mentioned here):

1 ☒ administer medications 5 ☒ 24-hour supervision 9 ☒ nursing care
2 ☒ help with bathing 6 ☒ help with dressing 10 ☒ help with grooming
3 ☐ help in using the bathroom 7 ☐ help with feeding 11 ☒ recreational activities
4 ☐ physical therapy 8 ☐ day care program 12 others:

27. Visitor: Please record your observations of any problems in the living environment and rate its quality (take into account such things as condition of residence and furnishings, safety, handicapped accessibility, and staffing level):

☐ Excellent ☒ Satisfactory ☐ Fair ☐ Poor

Comments: Home seemed dark. I had to wait a while at front desk
before somebody noticed me.

B. Daily Activities

28. Aside from meals and personal care, how does the ward spend the day?

Stays in room. Walks Through halls.

29. How often does the ward go away from the residence? 1-2 times a year

30. For what purposes? Family outings

31. Are the ward's recreational, socialization and rehabilitation needs being met? Yes No ✓
Any unmet needs?

Ward says hearing aid is stolen. Can't hear TV or participate in other activities

C. Physical Health/Emotional Health

32. Does the ward have any conditions which impede communication? Yes ✓ No

33. If so, please specify:

1 ✓ hearing impairment

2 speech impairment

3 unwilling to speak

4 foreign language speaking only

5 mentally ill

6 mental retardation

7 comatose

8 other

34. How is the ward's *physical* health?:

 excellent ✓ satisfactory fair poor

35. Ward ✓ is is not under regular care by a primary physician:

Doctor's name Melissa Jones, MD

36. How many times has this doctor seen ward on an outpatient basis in the past year? 2 times

Last visit: 2 / 02 / 92 How many times has the ward been hospitalized in the past year? none

37. Medications prescribed: none 1-4 ✓ 5-9 10 or more

38. Any problems with medications (e.g., ward needs assistance or refuses to take medications, medications prescribed by multiple doctors)?

Sometimes he refuses to take medicines.

39. If there has been any major improvement or decline in the ward's *physical* health in the last year, please describe:

About the same.

40. Please describe any significant medical diagnoses or conditions affecting the ward's health which the court should know about (Do not restate reason for guardianship unless there has been a change.):

41. Within the past year, has the ward experienced any traumatic events or major disruptions or changes (e.g., death of spouse, admission to nursing home, abuse, major illness)? Yes _____ No ✓

If yes, please describe: _____

42. Is ward under regular care of a mental health professional (psychiatrist, psychologist, social worker, counselor)? Yes _____ No ✓ Please specify: _____

43. Does the ward take any medications specifically for treatment of *mental illness*? Yes _____ No ✓

Any problems with these medications? _____

44. Has there been any major improvement or decline in the ward's *emotional* health in the last year?

Yes _____ No ✓ If yes, please describe: Not major. Seems more reclusive than before.

45. Is the ward in need of additional treatment or services not now provided for physical or emotional health conditions? Please specify:

Ward needs new hearing aid.

D. Intellectual Functioning

46. Is the ward able to make decisions? Yes ✓ No _____ If yes, in what areas?

Can decide about small daily things like what to eat, wear, etc.

47. Has this capacity changed during the past year? Yes _____ No ✓

48. If yes, has it improved _____ or declined _____? If improved, is the guardianship the least restrictive alternative for care of the ward?

E. Guardianship

Visitor: Ask these questions of the ward directly, whenever possible. If for some reason you cannot speak with the ward, answer these questions yourself using the information you have gathered and the observations you have made.

49. Who answered questions? Ward _____ Visitor ✓

If visitor, what prevented you from speaking with the ward?

I asked these questions of the ward, but he did not appear to understand.

During the early part of our conversation, he indicated satisfaction w/ nursing home + staff.

Questions for ward:	Yes	No	Can't Judge
50. Is ward satisfied with living situation?	✓		
51. Is ward satisfied with care?	✓		
52. Is ward satisfied with caregiver?	✓		
53. Does ward feel that the guardianship is still needed?			✓
54. Is the ward satisfied with the guardian?			✓

55. If the ward answers "No" to any of these questions, please elaborate:

56. Are any changes requested by ward? Needs new hearing aid.

57. Volunteer's assessment of ward's: (Check a rating box for each category)

	Excell 1	Sats 2	Fair 3	Poor 4	Don't Know 5
Physical health		✓			
Emotional health			✓		
Intellectual functioning				✓	
Living situation		✓			
Relationship w/guardian			✓		

Time spent on this case: 6.5 hours.

Travel and out-of-pocket expenses for this case: 10 miles = \$ 2.50

PLEASE GO TO THE SUMMARY PAGE (FORM I) TO MAKE YOUR
RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE COURT

Appendix Y - Completed D.C. Student Visitor Report Form

SUPERIOR COURT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
PROBATE DIVISION

In Re:

[REDACTED]

Adult Ward

INT

IDD

STUDENT VISITOR REPORT

I, Jeneve Silverberg (name), submit the following report concerning the assessment which I have conducted as the court-appointed student visitor.

Visitor: Please record your overall assessment of the ward's care by checking one of the following options.

- Ward's overall care is:
- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent: | Care is better than adequate; beyond meeting the basic needs of the ward; extra assistance is provided. May be exemplary in one or more ways. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory: | Care is adequate to meet the housing, health, socialization, and if applicable, rehabilitation needs of the ward. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Marginal: | Care is less than adequate but not dangerous to the ward. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Unacceptable: | Care is inadequate, causing or about to cause a serious negative effect on the ward's health or welfare. Remedial action is necessary. |

Visitor: If you indicate that further action is needed, please specify on this page what that action should be.

Do you recommend any further action? ☒ Yes ☐ No If yes, please select an option below

- Recommendations:
- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Ward should be visited again in: _____ (please specify period of time) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Letter or call <i>advising guardian of resources</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Letter or call requesting guardian to take <i>action within specific time</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Appointment of successor guardian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Appointment of co-guardian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Guardian wishes to resign |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Termination of guardianship because ward has regained capacity |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Other: <u>Appointment of successor conservator</u> |

Visitor: please explain your recommendation and include any observations of strengths and/or concerns

Summary of findings:

The ward is a 44 year-old African American man with schizoaffective disorder. All family members and staff members interviewed report the ward has greatly improved over the last year, and is now more capable of fully participating in his rehabilitation. The ward is extremely dissatisfied with his guardian and his care and has requested that his sister become his guardian. In the past year, the ward has suffered physical and verbal abuse in his group home and four hospitalizations due to suicide threats, lung problems, and psychiatric treatment. The house manager of the group home confirmed that he was under the care of an abusive caregiver until August

2009. The ward reports that current staff does not feed him enough and will punish him by giving him smaller portions at meal times if he complains. The ward is not currently enrolled in any rehabilitative program, and has no regular activities to occupy his day. The client reports he is growing increasingly depressed because he stays in the house all day. This student spoke with the ward's VA social worker, RT, regarding possible rehabilitation services available to the ward including vocational rehabilitation and intensive case management. The ward exhibited interest in participating in these services and this student informed the guardian and the ward's sister of the availability of these services. The intensive case management service would also provide for family meetings and education around the ward's illness management.

The guardian and conservator, HP, is the ward's brother. The guardian and ward have a very strained relationship that makes it extremely challenging for them to effectively work together. The guardian reports feeling extremely frustrated with the ward. The guardian uses his power over the ward's money to punish or reward the ward for obeying requests. For example, the guardian refuses to give the ward spending money unless he attends the day program four days a week. The ward reports he is not comfortable leaving the house without money and can't participate in any recreation activities because his brother won't give him access to spending money. The guardian reported that the ward panhandles to get spending money because the guardian refuses to give him any money. The ward stated multiple times during the interview that he would like his sister to take over as guardian and conservator. However, HP reported that because the siblings work together already, nothing would change if ward's sister were to become guardian.

A marginal rating is provided due to the lack of rehabilitation and socialization needs being met at this time. It is the recommendation of this student that a disinterested party manage the ward's finances such as a member of the fiduciary panel or a representative payee through the VA administration. This is to avoid family members using their power as conservator to manipulate the ward.

I. FILE REVIEW

Visitor: This information should be completed during your review of the docket and/or court case jacket.

Guardian's Name

Address

Email

Phone

Relationship to ward, if any

Brother

Date of last filed Semi Annual Guardianship Report? 8/26/09

Ward's Name

Age 44

Address

Nature of incapacity:

- ☐ Intellectual disability (including MR and Autism) (specify: _____)
- ☐ Dementia (including Alzheimer's disease and related disorders)
- ☒ Chronic mental illness (specify: Schizoaffective Disorder)
- ☐ Chronic alcohol or drug use
- ☐ Head injury
- ☐ Stroke
- ☐ Other (specify: _____)
- ☐ Cannot be determined

Any problems evident from the file review (e.g. family conflict, level of care of ward, etc.)?

This case was assigned for review due a complaint received from the ward's child's mother that the guardian/conservator was mishandling funds by "keeping the ward's money", "not buying clothes", and refusing to purchase cigarettes.

II. INFORMATION FROM GUARDIAN, WARD AND CAREGIVER INTERVIEWS

Visitor: During your interviews, please review the ward's medical/psychological chart; gather information about the relationship between the guardian and the ward; and visit with the ward face-to-face and privately. Remember, you may have to talk to numerous people involved in the care of the ward in order to get the full picture of the ward's situation.

To whom did you speak with to get this information and how much time does he/she personally spend with the ward? (fill in all that apply)

Source	Name	Time spent with ward	Date of interview
Guardian/ Conservator	HP Jr.	At least one visit a month	1-12-10
Social Worker	RT, Veteran's Administration	At least one contact a month	1-29-10
Family Member	MP, Ward's Brother	Daily phone conversations	1-9-10
Facility Staff	KH, House Manager	Sees ward daily	1-12-10
Facility Staff	GJ, Caregiver	24/7 Facility Staff	1-12-10
Other	MG, Mother of Ward's Son	Daily phone conversations	1-10-10
Family Member	PL, Ward's Sister	Daily phone conversations	2-4-10

What services are provided by the guardian or the facility? Examples: (check all that apply)

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Administer medications | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 24 hour supervision | <input type="checkbox"/> Nursing care |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Help with bathing | <input type="checkbox"/> Help with dressing | <input type="checkbox"/> Help with grooming |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Help with using bathroom | <input type="checkbox"/> Help with feeding | <input type="checkbox"/> Recreational activities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Physical therapy | <input type="checkbox"/> Day care program | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Visitation

Does ward live with the guardian? No. If no, answer below:

Date of guardian's most recent visit: 1/12/10

On average, how long is each visit? At least 15 minutes

Number of visits by guardian in last 12 months: The guardian visits at least monthly.

Does the guardian participate in care planning meetings? The facility does not hold care planning meetings.

According to ward, date of guardian's most recent visit: 1/12/10

According to ward, # of guardian's visits in last 12 months: The guardian visits at least monthly.

Is guardian reachable by phone? Yes.

Comments: Please record any observations about the relationship between the guardian and the ward.

The guardian is the ward's older brother who has been the court appointed guardian and conservator since February 2006. The guardian and the ward have an extremely strained relationship and are unable to effectively work together at this time. The guardian cares deeply about the ward and wants him to recover from his mental illness, but has resorted to manipulative tactics due to his great frustration with the ward. This frustration is primarily because of the ward's refusal to regularly attend a day program and because of past noncompliance incidents. The guardian reports he uses his power over the ward's finances to manipulate the ward into attending a day program, because he does not know what else to do to get the ward to attend. The guardian admits that it is difficult for him to see the ward as

mentally ill, and feels the ward is just being stubborn or disobedient when he doesn't do as the guardian requests. The guardian considers stepping down every February, when his guardianship report is due, but continues as guardian because he believes it is his familial responsibility to care for his brother.

The ward stated that in the past year his brother has stopped liking him and says hateful things to him such as "I control you", "I own you" and "You will be in a place like this for the rest of your life". The ward reports that he was not attending the day program because he did not understand what people were saying at the program and was getting confused when taking public transportation to get to the program. (Per the VA social worker, an application for Metro Access is pending which would provide door-to-door transportation eliminating this as a barrier.) In addition, the guardian does not provide the ward with a spending allowance because he believes the ward would use the money to purchase alcohol. Though the guardian has his suspicions, the ward's psychiatric evaluation at the VA hospital found no evidence of a drinking problem. The ward reported that the only times he drinks is when the guardian gives him alcohol when they go fishing. The guardian also refuses to purchase cigarettes for the ward even though the ward requests them, because the ward has a smoking related health problem. The ward feels isolated in the home because he feels uncomfortable leaving the house without money, and has no money to spend on recreation or food. The ward's other brother, MP, believes the ward gets everything else he needs, and that the guardian recently took him to purchase new clothes.

Medical/ Mental Health

What is the ward's specific medical/psychiatric diagnosis?

At intake with the VA, the ward was diagnosed with schizoaffective disorder, but at discharge his diagnosis was changed to major depressive disorder with mood, cognitive, and psychotic features. His current diagnosis is schizoaffective disorder, high cholesterol, and nicotine dependence.

Name of primary care physician: Dr. W

Date of last visit with primary care physician: 12/18/09

List ward's medications:

multivitamin, omeprazole (gastric reflux), citalopram (antidepressant), simvastatin (for high cholesterol), celirizine (antihistamine), amitriptyline (antidepressant), aripiprazole (antipsychotic, antidepressant)

Any problem(s) with medications (e.g., ward needs assistance or refuses to take medications, etc.)?

House staff reports the ward does not have any problems with his medications at this time. The ward reports visiting monthly with Dr. J, a psychiatrist at the VA. The ward's medications were adjusted in February 2009 and as a result the ward reports being able to think more clearly and is less "zombie" like. Also, Dr. W reports that the ward refused to take medication to lower his cholesterol in 2009 but is currently taking the medication.

In the last year, has ward received any of the following services:

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dental | <input type="checkbox"/> Speech Therapy | <input type="checkbox"/> Physical Therapy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Occupational Therapy | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | |

If yes, please describe:

Ward is not currently seeing a therapist, but reports he was seeing a therapist at the VA until December 2009.

In the last year, has ward suffered any falls, injuries or been hospitalized? Yes.

If yes, please describe:

The ward had been hospitalized at least four times in the last year. Group home records report the ward was hospitalized 2/19/09 through 2/24/09 due to suicidal threats. VA records show the ward was hospitalized 5/26/09- 5/29/09 and 6/23/09- 6/27/09 for psychiatric treatment. The guardian reports the ward was hospitalized for 10 days in August 2009 for lung problems determined to be related to smoking cigarettes.

In the last year, has ward experienced any traumatic events, major disruptions or changes
(e.g., death of spouse, admission to nursing home, abuse, major illness, weight gain/loss, etc)?

Yes.

If yes, please describe:

Prior the ward's hospitalization in August 2009, the ward was residing in a different home also managed by H House. The ward was expelled from this residence because he was constantly smoking in the home which caused a fire hazard. Later, the ward was admitted to a new group home because the house manager found out the staff at the former home were verbally abusive to the clients, and would tell residents "If you tell on us, no one will believe you because you are crazy". The ward reports that the staff members were physically and verbally abusive. He stated the staff would hit him and deny him food if he complained about the care. Ms. H reports that the ward has improved greatly since being moved from the abusive residence. Over the last year, all parties interviewed agree that the ward's mental health has greatly improved. The ward states that his mind is clearer than it was a year ago and he feels ready to take an active role in his rehabilitation. The ward attributes this improvement to medication adjustments made at the hospital in February 2009.

Is the ward in need of additional services or treatment not currently provided for medical health conditions?

Yes. Group home staff has concerns about the ward's health because the ward consumes approximately 7.5 gallons of water every 36 hours. Staff feels he should be evaluated for a possible underlying medical condition that may cause this excessive water consumption. The ward reports he does not need treatment for medical health conditions. This student informed the ward's social worker of the excessive water consumption, and the social worker stated she would inform his primary care physician of the issue.

Is the ward in need of additional services or treatment not currently provided for mental health conditions?

Yes. The ward is in need of a regular psychiatric rehabilitation program, either through a day program or a residential rehabilitation program. The ward reports he will not attend the day treatment program at the VA Hospital, but is interested in a vocational rehabilitation program at the VA. The guardian reports that he has begun the application process but is not enrolled in the program as of yet. The ward stated he would also be interested in an intensive case management program offered through the VA that includes a minimum of three home visits a month. His VA social worker stated she would be willing to work with the ward and the guardian to apply to any of these programs in which he is interested.

Physical/Housing Conditions

Ward resides in:

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Own Home | <input type="checkbox"/> Guardian's Home | <input type="checkbox"/> Relative/Friend's Home |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Group Home | <input type="checkbox"/> Hospital | <input type="checkbox"/> Foster/Host Home |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nursing Home | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Assisted Living | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Name of facility:



Length of time at current residence: August 2009

If ward resides with guardian or relative, list name(s) and relationship of other occupants in home:

N/A

Is ward appropriately dressed? Clothing clean? Hair clean and appropriate? Yes.

Is ward continent of bladder and/or bowels? Yes.

Is ward bedridden? No. Does ward have bedsores? No. If so, are they being treated? N/A

Can ward walk independently? Yes. If not, what does ward use: ☐ wheelchair ☐ walker ☐ cane

Intellectual/ Educational Functioning

Does the ward have any conditions which impede verbal communication? No. If yes, please specify:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hearing Impairment | <input type="checkbox"/> Mental Illness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Speech Impairment | <input type="checkbox"/> Developmental Delayed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Unwilling to Speak | <input type="checkbox"/> Comatose |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Speaks Foreign Language | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |

Is the ward oriented to person, place and/or time? Yes.

Is ward attending any type of life skills/educational/vocational classes? No.

Is the ward in need of additional services or treatment not currently provided for intellectual/educational functioning?

Yes. The ward stated he was very interested in obtaining employment and job training through a VA vocational rehabilitation program.

Daily Activities/Social Functioning

Aside from meals and personal care, how does the ward spend the day?

The ward spends most of his time doing yard work the facility staff asks him to do and occasionally helping the older residents at the home. The ward does not enjoy doing these chores and reports that he is asked to do more than the other participants because he is younger and more physically capable. The caregiver reports that they have a house movie night on Fridays, but the ward does not participate when they watch a war related movie. The ward reports he is extremely bored staying home all day and feels increasingly depressed staying in the house. The lack of regular activity is extremely upsetting to the ward. The guardian does not give the ward access to any spending money and as a result the ward is not able to participate in recreational events he enjoys such as going bowling, going out to eat, or going to the movie theater.

How often does the ward leave the residence and for what purpose?

The ward reports he does not leave the house because he has no money to spend on recreation. Occasionally the ward will visit family members who live locally, including his siblings and his aunt. The ward reports these visits are very infrequent. In November, the ward's son came to visit from Germany and they spend several days together in Washington DC. The ward visited his aunt for Christmas.

Does the ward receive any agency based services? Yes.

If yes, specify type of service, frequency, name of agency, provider's name, etc:

The ward receives social work services and medical care at the VA Hospital in Washington DC. He participated in the day program at the VA Hospital until August 2009, and reports he is currently applying for a vocational program at the VA. His social worker is RT, and his PCP is Dr. W.

Does the ward receive any visitors? No.

If yes, please describe name(s) and relationship to ward of individuals other than guardian:

The ward remains in close phone contact with several of his siblings and his son's mother, and will visit family members on occasion. However, he has no visitors come to visit at his group home except for the guardian.

Is the ward in need of additional services or treatment not currently provided for daily activities/social functioning?

Yes. The ward is in desperate need of structured daily activity and social interaction. The ward reports he is the only resident in the assisted living home who is not a geriatric client, and he had no opportunity to interact with other people in the community. The home does not provide any structured activities. The ward reports he feels unable to make any progress in his rehabilitation because he is not involved in any program. The ward emphasized many times during the interview that he feels he is becoming increasingly depressed because he has nothing to do during the day.

Guardianship

Visitor: Ask these questions of the ward directly, whenever possible. If for some reason you cannot speak with the ward, answer these questions yourself using the information you have gathered and the observations you have made.

Who answered the questions? ☒ **Ward** ☐ **Student Visitor** ☐ **Guardian**
If visitor, what prevented speaking with the ward?

Is ward satisfied with living situation? Care received? Caregiver?

The ward is not satisfied with his living situation. The ward reports that the group home does not give him enough food at meal times, and only gave him one hot dog for lunch on the day of the interview. The ward is extremely unhappy with the care he has received from his guardian, and stated many times over the phone and during the home visit that he wants a new guardian. However, he does not want a guardian or conservator outside of the family because one of his siblings told him an outside guardian would charge him \$1,000 a month. He reported being unaware that his brother currently charges him for guardianship services.

Does the ward feel that guardianship is still needed?

The ward stated that he feels guardianship is still needed because he still needs help, but he does not want his brother to remain guardian.

VERIFICATION

I Jeneve Silverberg being first duly sworn, on oath, depose and say that I have read the foregoing pleadings by me subscribed and that the facts therein stated are true to the best of my knowledge, information and belief.

Signature of Student Visitor

515 5th Street NW

Address of Student Visitor

Washington, DC 20001

City, State, Zip Code

202-879-9452

Telephone Number of Student Visitor

Jeneve.Silverberg@DCSC.gov

E-mail Address of Student Visitor

Subscribed and sworn to before me this _____ day _____, _____

Notary Public/Deputy Clerk

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that on the _____ day of _____, 20_____, a copy of the foregoing Student Visitor Report was served by first class mail, postage prepaid, upon the following parties to the above captioned case and persons granted permission to participate pursuant to SCR-PD 303 and persons who requested notice pursuant to SCR-PD 304.

CC:



Signature of Student Visitor

Appendix Z – DC Guardian Assistance Flyer

Guardianship Assistance Program

As a guardian, you have many responsibilities. The Probate Division offers information and referrals to family members serving as court-appointed guardians.

Please contact the Guardianship Assistance Program if you need further information regarding guardianship issues, such as:

- Review of guardianship duties
- Completing the guardianship plan
- Completing the semi-annual guardianship report
- Nursing home transfer, placement, or service issues
- In-home care, meal programs, and transportation options
- Health care decisions making/substituted judgment standards
- Ward dies, disappears or cannot be located
- Advocacy/Ombudsman referral
- Burial and funeral planning
- Day program providers
- Mental Health services
- Job training programs
- Caregiver support
- Benefit options

Contact

Nana Perry, LICSW
Program Manager, Guardianship Assistance Program
Probate Division, District of Columbia Superior Court
515 5th Street, NW, Third Floor
Washington, DC 20001
Phone: 202-879-9407
E-mail: nana.perry@dcsc.gov
Website: www.dccourts.gov