

Department: County Human Services **Program Contact:** Mark Sanford
Program Offer Type: Existing Operating Program **Program Offer Stage:** As Requested
Related Programs:
Program Characteristics: In Target

Executive Summary

Under court authority, the Aging, Disability & Veterans Services Division (ADVSD) Public Guardian and Conservator Program (PGC) supports older adults, people with disabilities, and Veterans. The PGC protects and enhances the quality of life for mentally incapacitated and impoverished adults who are victims of abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation by improving their safety and well-being. The program also seeks to provide culturally specific and appropriate services for BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and/or People of Color) communities. Finally, PGC diverts at-risk and underserved individuals to less restrictive and costly alternatives to publicly funded guardianship.

Program Summary

ISSUE: Without PGC making vital decisions under court authority, extremely vulnerable adults would experience continued victimization, frequent emergency department and hospital admissions, homelessness, unnecessary protective services and law enforcement intervention, involuntary civil commitments, and increased risk of premature death. The demand for PGC services is increasing due to the aging population and the rising incidence of abuse and neglect among older adults and people with disabilities. The COVID-19 pandemic has also driven up referrals as hospitals face pressure to free up capacity.

PROGRAM GOAL: The goal of PGC is to provide legal protection and access to services and benefits while promoting the health and welfare of those served by minimizing unnecessary emergency department or hospital visits and arranging for needed medical, mental health, and residential care. PGC is an essential part of the DCHS strategy to reduce financial fraud, abuse, and neglect when legal authority is required to improve health and safety.

PROGRAM ACTIVITY: Public guardians serve as the court-appointed representative for adults with mental incapability, severe and persistent behavioral health needs, Alzheimer's, and other dementias or brain injury. PGC participants are also functionally incapacitated, requiring intensive supports and specialized housing arrangements to balance the need for protection with the right to autonomy. PGC centers racial equity by tailoring services based on culturally-specific client needs and working to reduce health disparities. Person-centered care plans address immediate risks, ensure adequate care arrangements, and stabilize medical and psychiatric conditions. Public guardians are available 24/7 to make medical, psychiatric, financial, and life decisions for participants. The average caseload for PGC is 35 participants—higher than the recommended standard of 25 used by the State. PGC also provides community consultation to identify alternatives to the restrictions of guardianship. PGC educates community partners and works with Adult Protective Services, families, law enforcement, hospitals, multi-disciplinary teams, and the court to intervene early to resolve fraud, abuse, and neglect of vulnerable adults.

Performance Measures

Measure Type	Primary Measure	FY20 Actual	FY21 Budgeted	FY21 Estimate	FY22 Offer
Output	Number of County residents with a Public Guardian/Conservator	189	185	185	185
Outcome	Percent of new high-risk PGC participants with a reduction in hospital visits within a year ¹	100%	95%	95%	95%
Outcome	Percent of PGC participants with properly managed assets to ensure ongoing eligibility and fraud protection	100%	100%	100%	100%
Outcome	Percent of PGC contacts diverted to a less costly and less restrictive resource	54%	30%	40%	40%

Performance Measures Descriptions

¹Because this measure requires a 12-month service window, data for individuals newly appointed with a Guardian during FY 2020 is not yet available. The figure reported for FY 2020 Actual represents all high-risk PGC participants with a petition date during FY 2019.

Legal / Contractual Obligation

The decision to provide PGC service is established and guided by ORS Ch. 125 and County Ordinance, Ch. 23.501. If the County chooses to reduce the service, it remains obligated to current participants that are open with the court but can stop taking new participants if the Board of County Commissioners makes a finding that the service is no longer needed.

Revenue/Expense Detail

	Adopted General Fund	Adopted Other Funds	Requested General Fund	Requested Other Funds
Program Expenses	2021	2021	2022	2022
Personnel	\$1,359,950	\$0	\$1,407,083	\$0
Contractual Services	\$26,384	\$0	\$26,384	\$0
Materials & Supplies	\$30,420	\$0	\$30,420	\$0
Internal Services	\$286,533	\$0	\$290,487	\$0
Total GF/non-GF	\$1,703,287	\$0	\$1,754,374	\$0
Program Total:	\$1,703,287		\$1,754,374	
Program FTE	11.00	0.00	11.00	0.00

Program Revenues				
Total Revenue	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Explanation of Revenues

Significant Program Changes

Last Year this program was: FY 2021: 25026 ADVSD Public Guardian/Conservator