

Department: County Human Services

Program Contact: Kristin Riley

Program Offer Type: Operating

Program Offer Stage: Adopted

Related Programs:
Program Characteristics:

Program Description

ISSUE: Sometimes a court finds that an individual is profoundly mentally incapacitated and unable to care for themselves. A judge may appoint a public guardian to serve them. Individuals placed under guardianship are often living in poverty. They need intensive support and specialized housing arrangements. Without guardianship, these individuals are at severe risk of hospitalization, homelessness, victimization, institutionalization, and premature death. The demand for public guardianship continues to increase as more people need this level of care.

PROGRAM GOAL: The Public Guardian and Conservator (PGC) program supports quality of life for highly vulnerable adults with mental incapability, behavioral health needs, developmental disabilities, dementia, or brain injury. PGC seeks to balance the need for protection with the right to autonomy. Safety and protection are the most important goals. There is also a focus on advocacy for the protected person's own goals, preferences and quality of life.

PROGRAM ACTIVITY: Guardians help individuals make decisions about where to live, medical and psychiatric care, end-of-life planning, and financial management. Even with high caseloads, guardians offer 24/7 services for emergencies. They work alongside Adult Protective Services, law enforcement, families, hospitals, and others to support the protected person's needs. They also help connect individuals to resources that are culturally and linguistically appropriate.

A judge may appoint a conservator to manage the finances of a protected person. Conservatorship is a more intense form of financial management and protection and is different from legal guardianship. A conservator does not have the authority to make health care, placement or end-of-life decisions. In some situations, the court may appoint both a guardian and a conservator.

Both guardianship and conservatorship are considered interventions of last resort. PGC provides consultation to the public and service providers to find less restrictive alternatives whenever possible.

PROGRAM OUTPUTS:

- Provide guardianship or conservatorship for people who cannot care for themselves.
- Divert people to alternative services rather than guardianship or conservatorship.

Performance Measures

| Measure Type | Performance Measure | FY24 Actual | FY25 Budgeted | FY25 Estimate | FY26 Target |
|--------------|---|-------------|---------------|---------------|-------------|
| Output | Number of County residents with a Public Guardian/Conservator | 136 | 155 | 146 | 150 |
| Output | Number of contacts diverted to a less costly and less restrictive resource ¹ | N/A | N/A | 289 | 300 |

Performance Measures Descriptions

¹New measure: This number includes intakes that result in a status of "diversion." These individuals completed the intake process and were diverted to another alternative to guardianship.

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 | Adopted General Fund | Adopted Other Funds |
|------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| Program Expenses | 2025 | 2025 | 2026 | 2026 |
| Personnel | \$1,609,877 | \$0 | \$1,700,692 | \$0 |
| Contractual Services | \$29,877 | \$0 | \$30,684 | \$0 |
| Materials & Supplies | \$39,147 | \$0 | \$39,147 | \$0 |
| Internal Services | \$281,432 | \$0 | \$177,381 | \$0 |
| Total GF/non-GF | \$1,960,333 | \$0 | \$1,947,904 | \$0 |
| Program Total: | \$1,960,333 | | \$1,947,904 | |
| Program FTE | 11.00 | 0.00 | 11.00 | 0.00 |

| Program Revenues | | | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------|------------|-----------------|------------|
| Fees, Permits & Charges | \$55,000 | \$0 | \$53,836 | \$0 |
| Total Revenue | \$55,000 | \$0 | \$53,836 | \$0 |

Explanation of Revenues

\$53,836 - Fees paid by clients for conservatorship and guardianship services. These fees are only collected from clients who are above the Medicaid allowable resource limit.

Significant Program Changes

Last Year this program was: FY 2025: 25026 ADVSD Public Guardian/Conservator