

Lead Agency: County Human Services

Program Contact: Mark Sanford

Program Offer Type: Existing Operating

Related Programs:

Program Characteristics: In Target

Executive Summary

The Public Guardian/Conservator program, under court authority, makes vital decisions for 162 mentally incapacitated, functionally dependent and impoverished adults who are current or recent victims of physical abuse, neglect and financial exploitation. Legal authority delegated to deputies by the court enables intervention when no other approach resolves abuse and neglect. In addition, the program provides community education and consultation on matters involving vulnerable adults with diminished mental abilities. If unable to assist directly, staff divert approximately 200 clients into less costly services, or family and private guardianships/conservatorships. Of those 200 diversions, about 125 required significant involvement by deputies to reach stabilization; the remainder were stabilized through less intensive services.

Program Description

The Public Guardian/Conservator program is an essential part of the county response system for abuse and neglect when legal authority is required to provide for the safety and well-being of incapable adults. Program staff work with adult protective services and law enforcement to educate community partners and families, and to intervene early to resolve fraud, abuse and neglect of extremely vulnerable adults. This includes participation on Department of County Human Services multidisciplinary teams and critical case review committees to assure that alternatives are considered, focusing public funds on at-risk citizens without other resources. Public Guardians are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to make medical, psychiatric, financial and life decisions for program clients.

The program serves as the court-appointed guardian and/or conservator for mentally incapable adults who are characterized by two or more of the following conditions: treatment-resistant mental illness, IQ below 70, Alzheimer's/other dementia, brain injury, complex medical and behavioral issues, no access to medical care, inadequate care and housing, and financial exploitation. Program clients are also functionally incapacitated, requiring intensive supports and specialized housing arrangements to balance the need for protection with the right to autonomy.

Guardianship and conservatorship ensure a maximum of about 160 county residents (based on program funding constraints) access to safe and appropriate housing, medical care, psychiatric treatment, long term care, income and benefits. Without this option, clients experience continuing victimization, frequent emergency room and hospital psychiatric admissions, homelessness, unnecessary protective services and law enforcement intervention, involuntary commitments, and increased risk of premature death.

Performance Measures

Measure Type	Primary Measure	Previous Year Actual (FY09-10)	Current Year Purchased (FY10-11)	Current Year Estimate (FY10-11)	Next Year Offer (FY11-12)
Output	Referrals appropriately diverted to less costly resources ¹	125	200	200	0
Outcome	Urgent client needs addressed within five days after court appointment ²	88.0%	90.0%	90.0%	90.0%
Output	Referrals diverted to less costly resources through intensive management ³	0	0	150	175

Performance Measure - Description

¹ This measure is being discontinued in favor of the new output which includes only diversions requiring significant intervention by staff.

² Urgent safety issues are addressed immediately upon court appointment. Ongoing stabilization requires subsequent intense management over months or years.

³ This performance measure is new and better demonstrates the impact and cost-effectiveness of intensive interventions.

Legal/Contractual Obligation

The decision to provide the service is in County Ordinance, Ch. 23.501. Under ORS Ch. 125, if the county chooses to reduce the service, it remains obligated to current clients, but can halt further intake if the Board of County Commissioners makes a finding that the program is no longer needed.

Revenue/Expense Detail

	Proposed General Fund	Proposed Other Funds	Proposed General Fund	Proposed Other Funds
Program Expenses	2011	2011	2012	2012
Personnel	\$925,439	\$0	\$947,660	\$0
Contracts	\$50,000	\$0	\$27,440	\$0
Materials & Supplies	\$19,117	\$0	\$22,679	\$0
Internal Services	\$120,083	\$0	\$135,023	\$0
Total GF/non-GF:	\$1,114,639	\$0	\$1,132,802	\$0
Program Total:	\$1,114,639		\$1,132,802	
Program FTE	10.00	0.00	10.00	0.00
Program Revenues				
Fees, Permits & Charges	\$90,000	\$0	\$90,000	\$0
Total Revenue:	\$90,000	\$0	\$90,000	\$0

Explanation of Revenues

\$90,000 - Fees: Based on FY11 budget
\$1,042,802 - County General Fund

Significant Program Changes

Last year this program was: #25026, ADS Public Guardian/Conservator