

Lead Agency: County Human Services

Program Contact: Mark Sanford

Program Offer Type: Existing Operating

Related Programs:

Program Characteristics:

Executive Summary

The Public Guardian/Conservator program, under court authority, makes vital decisions for approximately 170 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 education and consultation to families and community partners on matters involving vulnerable adults with diminished mental abilities. If unable to assist directly, last year staff diverted an additional 140 clients into less restrictive, less costly alternatives, or family and private guardianships/conservatorships.

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, law enforcement and area hospitals to intervene early to resolve fraud, abuse and neglect of extremely vulnerable adults. This includes participation on Department of County Human Services multi-disciplinary teams and critical case review committees to assure that alternatives are considered, focusing public funds on at-risk citizens without other resources.

The program serves as the court-appointed guardian and/or conservator for mentally incapable adults who are characterized by the following: 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. Public Guardians are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to make medical, psychiatric, financial and life decisions for program clients.

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 (FY10-11)	Current Year Purchased (FY11-12)	Current Year Estimate (FY11-12)	Next Year Offer (FY12-13)
Output	Referrals appropriately diverted to less costly resources ¹	142	175	164	175
Outcome	Urgent client needs addressed within five days after court appointment ²	90.0%	90.0%	90.0%	90.0%

Performance Measure - Description

¹Successful diversions are cost-effective across multiple county services.

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

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	2012	2012	2013	2013
Personnel	\$947,660	\$0	\$968,245	\$0
Contracts	\$30,358	\$0	\$15,900	\$0
Materials & Supplies	\$22,679	\$0	\$33,409	\$0
Internal Services	\$135,023	\$0	\$143,023	\$0
Total GF/non-GF:	\$1,135,720	\$0	\$1,160,577	\$0
Program Total:	\$1,135,720		\$1,160,577	
Program FTE	10.00	0.00	10.00	0.00
Program Revenues				
Fees, Permits & Charges	\$0	\$0	\$50,000	\$0
Total Revenue:	\$0	\$0	\$50,000	\$0

Explanation of Revenues

\$50,000 - Public Guardian fees: Based on FY12 budget.
\$1,110,577 - County General Fund

Significant Program Changes

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