



GUARDIANSHIP MONITORING PROGRAM OF THE OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC GUARDIAN

Volunteer Visitor Handbook

Letter from the Guardianship Monitoring Program

Dear Volunteers:

The Office of the Public Guardian and the Court of Chancery would like to thank you for your interest and participation in the Volunteer Visitor Program. Our goal is to protect the innocent people who rely on the Court for their continued care and well being. Your work in this program will directly impact the elderly, incapacitated, and disabled in more ways than can be expressed. We hope you will grow and learn through this process and the knowledge you gain through your interactions with our wards enriches both your personal and academic experiences.

In case you have questions regarding your role as a volunteer, we are providing you this Volunteer Visitor Handbook. Refer to it as often as you need to clarify any of your questions and assist you throughout your work. As always, we make ourselves available to you for additional assistance throughout this program.

It is our hope that you will come to fully understand how your work directly affects the persons with whom you will protect.

Sincerely,

Sherri J. Hageman, M.S.
Guardianship Advocacy Director

How do I receive training for the Volunteer Visitor Program?

The Volunteer Services Coordinator will hold an in-person training session prior to volunteers receiving their case assignments. The training session will provide the volunteers with all the information they will need to complete their assignments. Every volunteer is required to attend the training session or they will not be allowed to continue with the program. The training session will also provide the volunteer with all required documents necessary for their participation in the program.

What is required of me to be a volunteer?

You will first have to pass a background check and meet eligibility requirements before being accepted into the program. You must then obtain a certified Delegation Letter before being assigned your first case. You are required to read and sign the Statement of Informed Consent and the Acknowledgement of Policies and Procedures (See Exhibit A) regarding the confidentiality of the cases you will be assigned. You are also required to contact the court appointed guardian and meet with the individual with whom you are assigned and submit your report in a timely fashion. Every report must be written professionally and in a scholarly manner because they will become a part of the official Court record. Moreover, you are required to act in a professional manner when you have contact with the parties in your case, the Guardianship Monitoring Program, or the Court.

Who is my contact at the Office of the Public Guardian for any questions I may have?

Your contact will be **Theresa Marsico** who is the Volunteer Services Coordinator. Her email is Theresa.marsico@state.de.us and direct phone number is (302) 223-1794. She can be reached Monday through Thursday 9:00a.m. - 4:00p.m. She will make every effort to contact you as soon as she is available. You, or the court appointed guardian, may contact her with any questions regarding this program.

How do I get cases assigned to me?

After your training session, the Guardianship Monitoring Program will have your contact information. Depending upon where you live, your availability and the amount of hours you will be dedicating to the program, you will be given case assignments. You will be contacted by e-mail and/or by phone regarding your assignments. You may get several different assignments based upon the above information. Once you complete all your assignments, you may be given more if you desire to continue volunteering.

What do I do when I receive my assignments?

Once you receive your assignments, you will need to contact the guardian(s) and set up an appropriate time for you to meet with the disabled person(s). You will be given the name of both the guardian and the ward along with their contact information. If you encounter an uncooperative guardian, you should contact the Volunteer Services Coordinator for assistance.

When am I required to work on assignments?

You may set up times to meet with the disabled person at the convenience of yourself, the guardian and the ward. You may meet them during the day or in the evening and on weekends. Your meeting times are flexible.

What are the visitation policies?

A volunteer may **not** visit a ward that lives in the community (not in a group home or care facility) without having an approved partner present. The Guardianship Monitoring Program must be aware of who will be accompanying you and approve them for service before you make your visit. A volunteer's partner must meet the same requirements as anyone who volunteers for the Guardianship Monitoring Program.

What do I do if the guardian or disabled person is uncooperative?

If you encounter an uncooperative guardian or ward, you should leave the site immediately. You are not required to put yourself in harms way or to stay in a situation which makes you uncomfortable. You should immediately report the situation to the Volunteer Services Coordinator for review. You may still log time spent for the incident.

What format should my report be in?

You will be given a digital template of the Volunteer Report (See Exhibit B). You will complete one of these reports each time you make a site visit. Please fill out the entire form completely. The more descriptive you are the better service you will be doing to the ward and to the Court.

What do I do when I am finished with my report?

You should e-mail your report to the Volunteer Services Coordinator whenever it is complete. If there are any questions regarding your report, you will be contacted. You should also keep a copy of your report in case it is needed again in the future.

What do I do when I have finished all of my assignments?

Once you complete all of your initial assignments, you should contact the Guardianship Advocacy Director more cases. Your assistance and dedication to the Guardianship Monitoring Program, the Office of the Public Guardian and the Court of Chancery is invaluable and we hope to retain your volunteer services far into the future.

Helpful Contact Information:

Guardianship Advocacy Director
Sherri J. Hageman, M.S.
302-255-1901 (NCC land line)
Sherri.Hageman@state.de.us

Volunteer Services Coordinator
Theresa Marsico
302-223-1794 (office)
Theresa.marsico@state.de.us

www.courts.delaware.gov/publicguardian

EXHIBIT A

EXHIBIT B