

## CHARACTERISTICS NEEDED IN A GUARDIAN OR CONSERVATOR

The process of a guardian or conservator becoming an effective advocate takes time and commitment. We look for the following characteristics in guardians or conservators:

- compassion
- wisdom
- integrity
- dependability
- responsibility
- self-initiator
- desire to serve as a personal advocate

It is a significant matter to ask someone to accept both legal and moral responsibility for the well-being of a person unrelated and, probably, previously unknown to them. Nonetheless, the KGP does ask for this considerable personal commitment from the individuals who agree to become KGP volunteers.

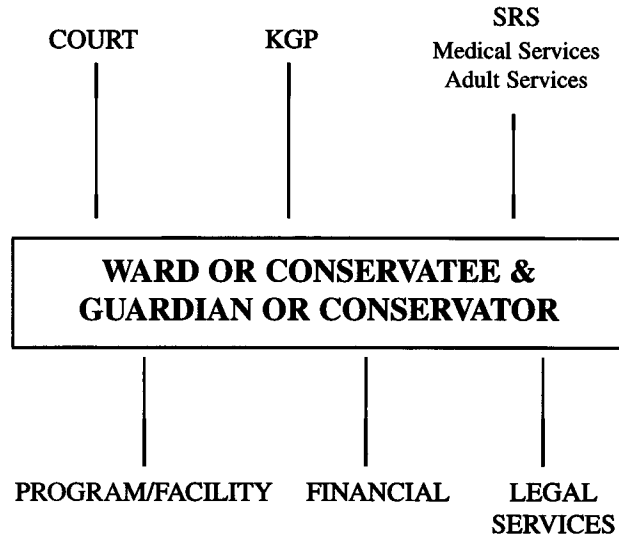
## JOB DESCRIPTION

Advocate for or take action *on behalf* of ward or conservatee:

- access services including: physical, psychological and emotional care and treatment
- monitor quality of supports and services
- provide necessary consents
- visit (2-4 times/month is preferred)
- manage the finances and estate of conservatee
- provide necessary paperwork such as: court reports and accountings, application and redetermination forms for services/benefits

## OVERVIEW

A volunteer will need to become familiar with the various services and supports affecting the life of the ward or conservatee.



For more information about how to become a volunteer with the KGP, please contact the Manhattan office at 1-800-672-0086.

The Kansas Guardianship Program was initiated in 1979 under the administration of Kansas Advocacy and Protective Services, Inc. The 1995 Kansas Legislature established the program as a separate public instrumentality pursuant to K.S.A. 74-9601 et. seq., as amended. The KGP is governed by a seven member board of directors, six of whom are appointed by the Governor and one by the Chief Justice. Funds are provided by the State of Kansas.

# KANSAS GUARDIANSHIP PROGRAM

The Kansas Guardianship Program is a partnership involving the State of Kansas and its citizen volunteers.

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Suite B  
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**Kansas Guardianship Program KGP**

The goal of the KGP is to provide that qualified, caring, willing and trained persons are available throughout the State to serve as court appointed guardians or conservators for those program eligible persons in need of this level of protection and advocacy, and those non-adjudicated persons who elect to have a voluntary conservator, and who do not have family members willing or able to assume such responsibilities.

## DEFINITIONS

(Pursuant to Kansas Statutes Annotated, Chapter 59, Article 30)

**Adult with an impairment in need of a guardian or a conservator, or both** - any adult person whose ability to receive and evaluate relevant information, or to effectively communicate decisions, or both, even with the use of assistive technologies or other supports, is impaired such that the person lacks the capacity to manage such person's estate, or to meet essential needs for physical health, safety or welfare, and who is in need of a guardian or a conservator, or both.

**Ward** - a person who is found unable, through a decision of the court, to manage the basic requirements for physical health or safety. A ward means a person who has a guardian.

**Conservatee** - a person who is found unable, through a decision of the court, to obtain, administer and dispose of real and personal property, intangible property, business property, benefits and income. A conservatee means a person who has a conservator.

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Every year many Kansans are declared legally unable to manage their lives and financial affairs. Some of the people have family members who are appointed by the courts to serve as guardians or conservators. There are, however, a significant number of adults who have been abandoned by families, or who have families unable or inappropriate to provide the necessary care involved in guardianship or conservatorship.

The KGP recruits volunteers willing to advocate for and protect the rights of these vulnerable, at-risk people. We maintain that, if a guardianship or conservatorship is imposed, the ward or conservatee should be assured the benefits of positive efforts by the guardian or conservator - efforts (relationships) that will assure the person of someone to act as an advocate and protector.

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## BASIC PROCEDURES INVOLVED

KGP recruits volunteers willing to accept appointment by and responsibility to the courts and to be accountable to KGP for training and reporting.

SRS (Adult Services) social workers know persons in our communities who may need the extensive advocacy and protection of guardians or conservators.

SRS social workers make formal requests to KGP for an approved volunteer who may be nominated to the court for appointment as guardian or conservator or voluntary conservator. KGP "matches" the volunteer with the possible ward or conservatee or voluntary conservatee.

District Courts (in charge of probate matters) receive the testimony about the alleged disability of the proposed ward or conservatee and make the adjudication; or, the court acts on the petition of a person who seeks a voluntary conservator. The District Court appoints the guardian or conservator or voluntary conservator.

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If a KGP volunteer is appointed by the Court as guardian or conservator or voluntary conservator, then the KGP:

- contracts with that person to provide a high level of advocacy and protection to the ward or conservatee or voluntary conservatee;
- requires monthly reports of activities undertaken on behalf of the ward or conservatee or voluntary conservatee;
- provides a small monthly stipend to the volunteer for services provided on behalf of the person(s) served, to offset out-of-pocket expenses;
- provides ongoing training of and support to the volunteer in order to enhance the services to and quality of life of persons with disabilities.