

Jefferson County Public Administrator

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**Office of the
Public Administrator**



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What is the role of the Public Administrator?

The Public Administrator, as directed by Probate Court, serves those Jefferson County residents who are unable to manage themselves and/or their financial matters. The Public Administrator generally serves primarily in two capacities:

- As Guardian, the Public Administrator is legally responsible for decisions regarding living arrangements; medical treatment; education or rehabilitation plans;
- As Conservator, the Public Administrator is legally responsible for handling a Ward's assets and financial affairs

How are Guardianship and Conservatorship determined?

Guardianship and Conservatorship are granted by the Probate Court. The Probate Judge makes the appointment based upon medical evidence, testimony of people in contact with the potential Ward, and a court-appointed attorney who has met with the potential Ward.

Who may petition for Guardianship/Conservatorship?

Anyone can petition the Court to become Guardian/Conservator for a potential Ward. Occasionally, Agencies, such as the Family Support Division; Department of Mental Health; Skilled Care and Residential Care Facilities; and the Division of Health and Senior Services also petition the Court for the appointment of a Guardian/Conservator.

How long does it take?

Generally, the process of petitioning for the Public Administrator to be a Guardianship/Conservatorship takes approximately two months. The steps can include:

- Submission of the Case Filing Information sheet and other required pleadings
- Submission of physician's interrogatories
- Interview by Public Administrator or a Deputy
- Work with attorney to file documentation
- Payment of filing fee (currently \$235.00)
- Notification of hearing date
- Interview by Court-appointed attorney
- Actual hearing and order by the Court

How many people work with the Public Administrator?

At the present time, two Deputy Public Administrators and four office employees work with the Public Administrator. Together, they are responsible for managing the affairs of all Wards, visiting Wards, and submitting Court required annual documentation on the status of the Protectees.

Does the Public Administrator make money based on a Ward's assets?

It makes no difference if a potential Ward is wealthy or indigent because neither the Public Administrator nor the staff earns fees as part of their salaries. Any fees charged to Wards are earned by the County of Jefferson and the office attorneys, and those fees are reviewed and approved by the Probate Court.