

## Guardianship and Conservatorship Program Regulations

### 404 Contact with the Individual Subject to Guardianship and/or Conservatorship

404.1 Guardians or their designees shall have meaningful contact with their clients as needed, generally no less than monthly, unless otherwise authorized by court approval of the guardian's plan or court order. Meaningful contact with the individual under guardianship is to promote the health and well-being of the individual, and, if authorized by the court, the financial affairs of the person, and to stay informed of the individual's status and needs and make decisions that support, encourage, and assist the individual's capabilities and wishes. Meaningful contact may be in-person contact, or via an alternative means of visitation such as: live video conferencing; telephone calls; interviews with third party experts such as medical providers; or interviews with care providers. CPGCs shall continue to document the alternative means of visitation and outreach, along with documentation of the circumstances. If contact is not made monthly, the reasons for less frequent contact shall be documented and included in the periodic reporting to the court. Living in a staffed residential facility or at home with a paid caregiver is not sufficient justification for reducing the frequency of contact.

404.1.1 The guardian should, when appropriate, assess the individual's physical appearance and condition (taking into account the individual's privacy and dignity) and assess the appropriateness of the individual's current living situation and the continuation of existing services, taking into consideration all aspects of social, psychological, educational, direct services, health and personal care needs, as well as the need for any additional services.

404.1.2 The guardian shall maintain regular communication with the individual, service providers, caregivers, and others attending to the individual.

404.1.3 The guardian shall participate in care or planning decisions concerning the residential, educational, vocational, or rehabilitation program of the individual.

404.1.4 The guardian shall request that each residential care professional service provider develop an appropriate service plan for the individual and take appropriate action to ensure that the service plans are being implemented.

404.2 Conservators or their designees shall maintain meaningful contact with their clients generally no less than quarterly absent court order, but in any event, at a frequency as appropriate and as necessary to verify the individual's condition and status and the appropriateness of financial arrangements. Meaningful contact with the individual under conservatorship is to stay informed of the individual's status and needs and make decisions that support, encourage, and assist the individual's capabilities and wishes. Meaningful contact may be in-person contact, or via an alternative means of visitation such as: live video conferencing; telephone calls; interviews with third party experts such as medical providers; or interviews with care providers. CPGCs shall continue to document the alternative means of visitation and outreach, along with documentation of the circumstances.

404.3 A certified professional guardian, as a sole practitioner or agency, must ensure that the initial in-person visit and then one visit every three months is made by a certified professional guardian, unless otherwise approved by the court. A certified professional conservator, as a sole practitioner or agency, must ensure that the initial in-person visit and then one visit every six months is made by a certified professional conservator unless otherwise approved by the court. For other meaningful visits, a certified professional guardian or conservator, as a sole practitioner or agency, may delegate the responsibility for visits with a client to: (a) a non-guardian/conservator employee of the certified professional guardian or conservator, sole practitioner or agency, (b) an independent contractor or (c) any individual who has been specifically approved by the court. In all cases, before the delegation, a certified professional guardian or conservator with final decision making authority on the case must document the suitability of the delegation, having considered: (a) the needs of the client, and (b) the education, training and experience of the delegate. Delegation of a power to an agent must be consistent with the guardian and conservator's fiduciary duties and guardian and conservator's plan(s) and other requirements of delegation under RCW 11.130.125 and Regulation 414<sup>1</sup>.

[RCW 11.130.125](#)

<sup>1</sup>Regulation 414 addresses delegation requirements specified in the Uniform Guardianship, Conservatorship, and Other Protective Arrangements Act at RCW 11.130.125.

404.4. Each certified professional guardian and conservator or certified professional guardian and conservator agency shall exercise reasonable care, skill, and caution in ensuring a background check is conducted on their own employees, other agents, and any employees of those agents, to the extent the guardian or conservator has delegated a power to such employee or other agent.

[RCW 11.130.125 \(2\) \(e\)](#)

When determining the scope of a background check, the guardian or conservator should consider the abilities and vulnerabilities of the protected person and the specific task(s) that the employee or agent are being delegated.

A background check must include a criminal history check utilizing public or proprietary databases <sup>2</sup>that are available to the public.

<sup>2</sup> Examples of public or proprietary databases include, but are not limited to, the Washington State Patrol's "Washington Access to Criminal History" (WATCH), Superior Court databases (Odyssey, LINX, ECR Online), Department of Social and Health Services Public Disclosure Office, and the Federal Bureau of Investigations Identity History Summary Check (IdHSC).

Additionally, a background check should include a check of public or proprietary databases that report substantiated findings of abuse, neglect, or exploitation of a vulnerable adult.

When engaging licensed agencies that are required by law or regulation to obtain background checks on their employees, the guardian and conservator may rely on the declaration of the agency that they comply with State background check requirements.