



Guardian Monitoring Program Workgroup Meeting

Tuesday, March 8, 2022

Zoom Meeting

8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.

Meeting Minutes

Members Present

Sujatha Jagadeesh Branch
Jacalyn Brudvik
Arielle Finney
Ana (Forston) Kemmerer
Julie Higuera
David Lord
Audrey Pitigliano
Judge Nancy Retsinas
Daniel Smerken
Tracie Thompson

Staff

Ms. Amber Collins
Ms. Heather Lucas

Members Not Present

Jane Severin

Guests – No guests invited/admitted

1. Meeting Called to Order

Ms. Amber Collins called the March 8, 2022 Guardian Monitoring Program (GMP) Workgroup meeting to order at 8:02 a.m.

2. Welcome

Ms. Collins welcomed all present and spoke about the meeting agenda. She stated she would address agenda items out of order.

3. Recap & Updates: Training/Education Update

Ms. Collins stated that she spoke with her manager and Ms. Heather Lucas regarding their thoughts on hiring a training/education staff person for the GMP. She determined that it's best to utilize Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) staff member Ms. Kay King at this time. Ms. Collins stated that the GMP will work with Ms. King to develop frequent lay guardian trainings.

4. Case Example: Clallam County; Discussion: Protective Arrangements, Supporter (Supported Decision Making Arrangement), and Less Restrictive Arrangements

Ms. Collins explained to the Workgroup that a guardianship case in Clallam County recently came to the attention of AOC staff: A petition to terminate a guardianship in favor of a supported decision-making agreement was filed in Clallam County. Ms. Collins stated that if a person subject to guardianship was able to thrive on their own, it makes sense to end the guardianship. She added that the GMP monitors guardianship cases, but since this case is now no longer a guardianship case, she asked the Workgroup how would the GMP manage it.

Mr. Daniel Smerken responded that he thinks it's important not to overreach what the Legislature intended regarding GMP operation. He stated that the GMP has funding to monitor guardianship cases, but not protective arrangements. He added that there are a lot of things in the [UGA](#) that aren't guardianships. Mr. Smerken stated that the GMP will have a lot to work on, so his thoughts are to focus only on guardianships.

Judge Nancy Retsinas reiterated that the GMP monitors adult guardianships and conservatorships, and minor conservatorships, and nothing else.

5. Set New Dates for GMP Workgroup Meetings in 2Q2022 (April through June)

Ms. Collins notified the Workgroup that scheduled GMP Workgroup meetings are wrapping up, and asked the Workgroup if the current format of meeting twice a month works. Workgroup members replied via the chat feature in Zoom that the current format works.

Ms. Collins stated that Ms. Lucas would reach out to Workgroup members regarding members' availability and would develop the schedule for meetings from April through June. She added that she wants to make sure all participants are able to meet.

6. Discussion: Defining GMP Regions

Ms. Collins stated that during county meetings, a question that GMP staff gets a lot is about how to define GMP's regions. She stated she's looking at DDA and DSHS to help determine GMP regions. Ms. Collins asked the Workgroup if we should look at another agency's regional maps. She reiterated regions will define where volunteers are pulled and where they'll work.

Mr. David Lord asked how the [Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program](#) (LTCO) defines regions. Mr. Smerken stated that the LTCO works with the Area Agency on Aging via a contract. He stated some counties, like Thurston, Mason, and Lewis Counties, are merged.

Ms. Collins stated that she intends to provide set regions at the first meeting in April. Mr. Smerken stated that he was speaking with a legislative officer from a metro area about the GMP yesterday. He stated that metro areas have better resources financially, and that he thinks there's a different level of need in different areas. He added that Spokane and Snohomish Counties may not need assistance because of established programs. Mr. Smerken stated that splitting by region isn't as helpful as going where the need is.

Ms. Audrey Pitigliano stated she agrees, and suggested basing regions on caseloads to determine how big a region is. She added that the region will determine the number of volunteers.

Ms. Collins stated she understands following the need, but feels it's more consistent to set regions geographically, and address the counties in the regions who need service. Judge

Retsinas clarified that Ms. Collins wants to set the framework, then determine the regions, then determine the need per each region. Ms. Collins confirmed her thoughts.

Ms. Collins commented on a Zoom chat comment from Ms. Ana (Forston) Kemmerer, in which Ms. Kemmerer suggested basing regions on the GMP pilot program. Ms. Kemmerer stated that since the GMP is already focusing on five to seven regions, it makes sense to her to use that as the framework.

Ms. Collins stated she will consider all suggestions and finalize the regions, then provide the final regions to the Workgroup in April.

7. Discussion: Subcommittee for Seniors, BIPOC, and Individuals with Disabilities (not part of agenda)

Ms. Collins informed the Workgroup that she moved forward with Mr. Lord's suggestions regarding forming a GMP subcommittee for seniors, BIPOC, and individuals with disabilities. She stated Ms. Lucas compiled a report from Workgroup and county meeting minutes and thought it was clear this subcommittee needed to exist.

Ms. Collins stated she reached out to Workgroup members Ms. Sujatha Jagadeesh Branch and Mr. Lord to act as point persons. She informed the Workgroup that if anyone has organizations, groups, or contacts in mind regarding staffing this new subcommittee, to please share them with her. Ms. Collins stated the subcommittee may meet once a month or every other month. She added that she is big on transparency, and wants to hear from professional stakeholders and members of the public, but reiterated that the subcommittee won't be a platform for complaining: it will be solution-based and structured so people can provide concerns and solutions.

Ms. Collins reiterated again that if any Workgroup member has someone in mind to join the subcommittee to please email her.

9. Wrap Up/Adjourn

The next Guardian Monitoring Program Workgroup meeting will take place via Zoom Conference on Wednesday, March 23, 2022, at 8:00 a.m. With no other business to discuss, the March 8, 2022 meeting was adjourned at 8:18 a.m.