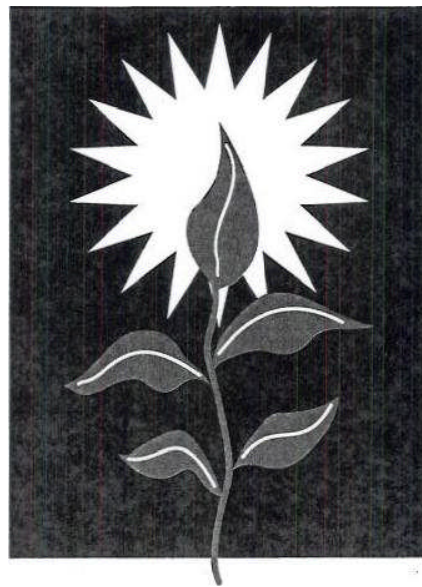

HELPING YOUR LOVED ONE

*a family guide to conservatorship
and involuntary treatment*



**Los Angeles County
Department of Mental Health
Office of the Public Guardian**

2013
Fifth Edition

M E S S A G E

from the court

The judicial process can be an intimidating experience with its formal proceedings and unknown rules of law. This experience is compounded by the feelings of confusion, anger and despair in having to seek help for a loved one that is suffering from a mental disorder.

It has been and continues to be the goal of the court and its personnel to make the conservatorship process as "people friendly" as possible. We are here to help you with the many problems and questions that arise in these proceedings. All you need to do is ask and we will do our utmost to give you the correct answer and direction you seek.

There may be times when the court is compelled to render a judgment that you disagree with. Remember, that while the aim is to provide a system of help for the conservatee, it can only be affected within the framework of the laws provided for the Lanterman, Petris, and Short (LPS) Act.

David Ziskrout, Commissioner (Retired)
Mental Health Court
Department 95A

M E S S A G E

from the director

Serious mental illness can devastate not only the lives of consumers but that of their families as well. No one knows this better than you - the family members and others whose loved one is in need of involuntary treatment and conservatorship.

For treatment to succeed, the active support of loving family members is critical. Believing this, I have made the involvement of family members in treatment planning a key element in the development of comprehensive community care. In addition, I have established two special positions dedicated to family concerns: The Family Advocate who will act as a voice for family members and the Family Conservator Liaison whose focus is to help family members with questions on conservatorship. You can also obtain emotional support and helpful information from the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (NAMI), a group dedicated to helping family members. (These resources are all listed in this booklet.)

Building on the strengths of consumers, families and community resources, you have my commitment to provide world-class mental health services to your loved one and the professional help you need to carry out your duties as conservator.

Thank you for serving as conservator.

Marvin J. Southard, D.S.W.

Director, Department of Mental Health Services and Public Guardian
County of Angeles

INTRODUCTION

for you, the conservator

This booklet was prepared for you - the family members or other individuals serving as conservators for a loved one. The intent is to explain the conservatorship process, inform you of your duties as conservator and provide you with information useful in carrying out those duties.

There are different types of conservatorships but in this booklet, we are mainly concerned only with one - LPS conservatorship, sometimes called mental health conservatorship. LPS conservatorship is a legal means used to provide for the care and treatment of persons who cannot properly care for themselves as a result of a mental disorder. The goal is to help the individual achieve control of the illness and increase the ability to care for himself or herself.

With your love and support and the help of mental health professionals, conservatorship can help seriously ill individuals achieve that goal.

Family members also need support. I urge you to take advantage of the resources listed in this booklet and to contact the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (NAMI). NAMI provides you with a place to receive understanding and support from other families and to obtain helpful information.

You have our sincere appreciation for your willingness to serve as a conservator.

Connie D. Draxler
Deputy Director
Office of the Public Guardian

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The law is the last result of
human wisdom acting upon
human experience for the
benefit of the public.

-Samuel Johnson, 1786

CHAPTER 1

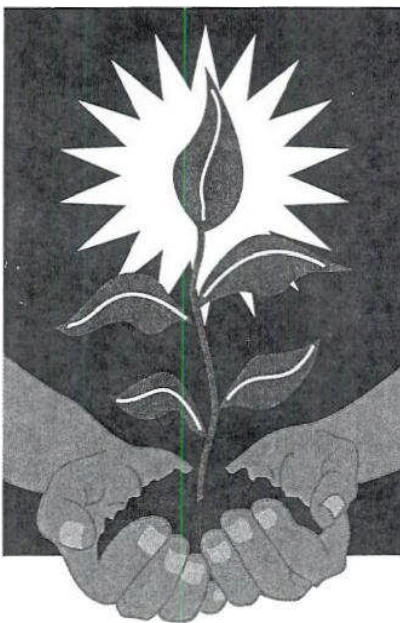
conservatorship

What is conservatorship?

"Conservatorship" is the term used in California for the more familiar word "guardianship" when applied to adults. Conservatorship is a legal proceeding in which the court decides if someone should be appointed as the legally responsible party for someone who is unable to properly care for himself or herself. The responsible party is the conservator and the client or patient is the conservatee.

Are there different kinds of conservatorships?

Yes. The kind discussed in this booklet is called LPS conservatorship or mental health conservatorship. (LPS simply stands for the last names of the legislators who authored the LPS Act - Lanterman, Petris and Short.) The key element that distinguishes LPS conservatorship from other kinds



Conservatorship ensures individualized treatment, supervision, and placement for your loved one.

concerns involuntary mental health treatment. The LPS conservator is authorized to approve mental health treatment even against the wishes of the patient.

What is the purpose of conservatorship?

The purpose of conservatorship, according to the LPS Act, "is to provide individualized treatment, supervision and placement" for the conservatee - the person in need of conservatorship. In basic terms, this means that the conservator must ensure that the basic needs (food, clothing, and shelter), treatment needs and financial needs of the conservatee are met.

Does LPS conservatorship apply to children as well as adults?

Yes. LPS conservatorship applies to children, adults and older adults. The criteria for establishing LPS for children and adolescents under age 18 are slightly different than for adults. For all age groups, there must be a need for involuntary mental health treatment.

Can LPS conservatorship be established for someone facing criminal charges?

Yes. There are several ways to establish a conservatorship for a person charged with a crime. In general, the criminal defendant must still meet the criteria for LPS conservatorship.

How is conservatorship started?

Conservatorship starts with an evaluation of the individual by authorized mental health professionals, usually from a facility designated by the Department of Mental Health to do LPS evaluations. Typically, the facility is an acute psychiatric hospital and the evaluation is done while the individual is on a hold. The mental health professionals must have current knowledge of the individual's condition. They must find that the person has a mental disorder and that, as a result, he or she cannot provide for food, clothing or shelter. Once this determination is made, the mental

health professionals may submit an application for conservatorship to the Public Guardian.

Only the Public Guardian can petition when an individual is first being placed on an LPS conservatorship.

How does the conservatorship process work?

Upon receipt of an appropriate application for conservatorship, the Public Guardian petitions Department 95 of the Superior Court for a hearing on the matter. The court date is usually about 21 days later. In the three weeks prior to the hearing, a Deputy Public Conservator will interview the individual referred, review the medical chart, and talk to medical staff and family members. Based on the information gathered during the investigation, the Deputy Public Conservator will submit a written report to the court with a recommendation for or against establishing the conservatorship.

The court decision to establish a conservatorship or not is based on the unique factors in each individual case.

What happens in court?

At the court hearing, all interested parties, such as family members, are present. If the Public Guardian is recommending that a conservatorship be established, County Counsel will present the case and may call witnesses. The individual for whom the conservatorship is recommended, called the proposed conservatee by the court, will be there. He or she will be represented by an attorney, usually the Public Defender, who may oppose the recommendation for conservatorship. Based on the evidence, the court makes the decision. The court can deny the request or appoint a conservator. If a family member is appointed conservator, he or she will receive further information and instructions from the court.

C H A P T E R 2

duties as a conservator

What is expected of me as conservator?

As conservator, your primary duties are to ensure that:

- Your loved one receives appropriate care and treatment
- What finances are available to your loved one are properly managed
- You keep the court informed of certain matters as required

The outcomes you want for your loved one are the same ones the Department of Mental Health wants for all clients: A safe place to live; a meaningful way to use one's time; positive relationships with others; the ability to get the assistance needed; the ability to handle crises successfully; and good health.

How do I ensure that my loved one receives appropriate care and treatment?

By working closely with the mental health professionals, they will develop a treatment plan designed to treat the mental illness. They will make recommendations for the type of living arrangement best suited for your loved one. They will also help you identify other resources that may be necessary.

How do I ensure that the finances are available and in order?

Again, start with the mental health professionals. They usually have staff who can give some guidance in financial areas that affect mental health clients. You can also contact the Family Conservator Liaison at the Office of the Public Guardian and others listed in this booklet that may be able to help. (See Resources chapter for phone numbers.)

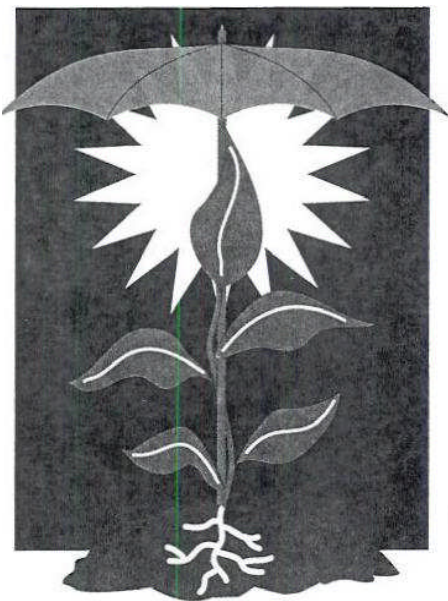
Usually, the conservatee is eligible to Social Security Supplemental Income (SSI) and Medi-Cal health insurance. There may be a need to apply for these and other benefits. As conservator, you are authorized to complete and sign benefits applications. You may also become the payee authorized to receive checks and other income and to use that income solely for the benefit of the conservatee.

Sometimes, the Family Conservator can manage the finances as a representative payee only and at other times, as conservator of the estate. If the finances are very complicated, you can ask the court for help. In some cases, the court will appoint an attorney to assist you. Even if you are not conservator of the estate, however, you are still expected to make sure that all benefits, such as SSI, are applied for and used to pay for necessary care and treatment.

What is meant by keeping the court informed of certain matters as required?

This means that you must inform the court of address changes for the conservatee and yourself. You must inform the court if the treating staff believes conservatorship is no longer necessary. You may be required to file an accounting or financial report with the court if you were appointed

conservator of the estate. You must ask court permission before invasive medical treatment, such as non-emergency surgery, is administered to the conservatee. Also, the court must approve any sale of conservatee's real or personal property.



As the conservator, you can make sure your loved one receives appropriate care.

**I have lots more questions. For example, what if I get too sick to be conservator?
Am I liable for my loved one's debts or actions? And others.**

While no booklet can answer every question, you'll find that the most commonly asked ones are in this book or can be answered by people listed in here.

CHAPTER 3

talking to the doctor

The doctor (physician) and other mental health professionals (nurses, social workers and others) comprise the "treatment team" of clinicians. They have a critical role. Not only do they provide direct treatment but only they can start conservatorship and their opinion is necessary to keep it going.

What should I expect in talking to the treatment team?

You should expect to hear from the treatment team what the treatment plan is and answers to questions you may have: What is the illness? What is the recommended treatment? Are medications prescribed? If yes, what are they for? What should I watch for? Does the treatment plan include rehabilitation services? What are the recommended living arrangements? Who do I talk to if the treatment plan does not seem to be working?

What are the types of treatment I may expect to see for my loved one?

In this booklet, treatment means psychiatric treatment including psychotropic medication, therapy, and other treatment modalities that address the conservatee's psychiatric problems. Treatment needs will vary greatly from one conservatee to another. The needs should be assessed and a "treatment plan" written shortly after the establishment of the conservatorship, as discussed earlier.

What about medications?

The doctor may prescribe one or more medications to treat your loved one's illness. There are various classes and types of medications used for dif-

ferent problems. Most medicines used to treat mental illness are called "psychotropic medications." They may be used in combinations with other medicines. The goal should be to treat the patient effectively with the fewest medications, though it may take time to find the right combination.

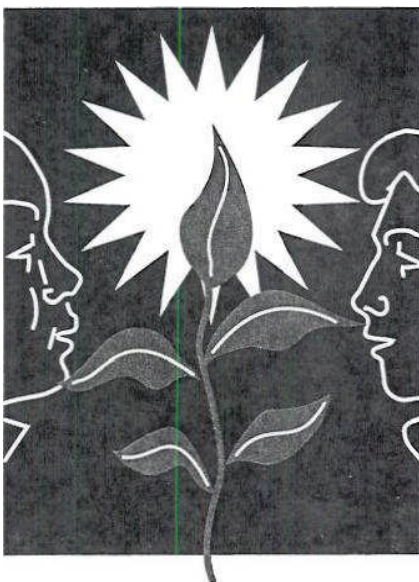
If medications are prescribed for your loved one, you should support him or her taking the medication as prescribed, even when he or she starts feeling better and may want to stop taking it. Write down the name (brand or generic) of each medication, the dosage, how it is administered (orally? injection? morning? with meals?) and for how long it is to be taken. It will serve you both well to be in communication with the physician. Be sure to inform the physician prescribing the psychotropic medication of all the medication your loved one is taking, including:

- All medication prescribed by other doctors (including eye drops)
- Over the counter medications
- Herbal medications (such as St. John's Wort) or alternative treatments
- Alcohol or illegal drugs
- When any medication dose is changed by other doctors
- Be sure to let the other doctors know of all medications the conservatee has been placed on
- Inform the physician of:
 - problems the conservatee may have in following doctor's orders
 - new symptoms that develop after the start or change of a medication
 - any known allergies or any previous medication side effects
 - if the conservatee is pregnant or has a physical health problem

As a conservator, you are not expected to be an expert on the different types of medication, but you will serve your loved one well to be an informed advocate. Read the literature supplied by the pharmacy. Ask questions. For example, ask the physician:

-
- Why a particular medication is taken
 - Which symptoms will likely improve and which won't?
 - What may occur if the condition is untreated?
 - What are the probable side effects?
 - If side effects are short term or long term
 - Are there alternative treatments that may help?
 - Has there been a full evaluation (including physical exam and lab tests) to exclude medical problems that may affect or even cause the symptoms?
 - Does the illness or the medication require a special diet or other restrictions, such as avoiding exposure to the sun?

By staying informed and in communication with the physician, you will be a more effective conservator and improve your loved one's chances of getting better.



By staying in communication with the physician, you will be a more effective conservator.

C H A P T E R 4

living arrangements

What is meant by establishing living arrangements?

This means making sure that your loved one is living in an appropriate place based on the recommendations of the mental health professionals.

Can't he or she just live with me in my home?

Yes. It depends, however, upon what the treatment team recommends, what your loved one wants and what the court has authorized.

What if the doctor recommends that my loved one live in a facility and I want him home?

As conservator, you should follow the treatment plan. Establish and maintain a dialogue with the doctor and other treating staff in order to understand - and even question - their recommendations. Schedule a meeting with the doctor to discuss any differences. You may also want to call some of the resources listed in this booklet.

What is meant by placement?

Placement means "placing" the conservatee into appropriate living arrangements or establishing appropriate living arrangements as discussed earlier.

The conservator bears the primary responsibility for the appropriate placement of the conservatee. Placement assistance is available from the Department of Mental Health and other resources as listed in this booklet.

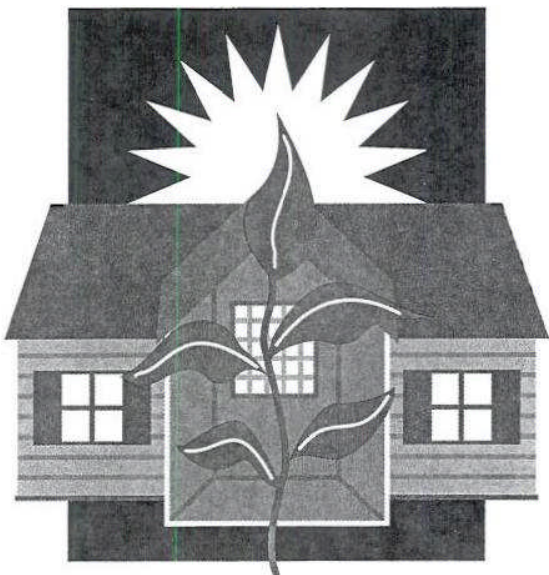
You, however, are responsible for making sure your loved one is living in an appropriate place.

What is meant by the least restrictive setting?

This is a fundamental principle applied to LPS conservatorship. It means that the conservatee - your loved one - should be living in a place recommended or approved by the doctor that provides the maximum personal freedom to come and go consistent with treatment needs. Thus, as the functioning and other factors of the conservatee improve, the conservator would be fulfilling the intent of the law by placing the conservatee in a less restrictive setting, if recommended by treating staff.

As a general guideline, six settings may be considered in the order below, beginning with the least to the most restrictive setting:

- Living with family/friends or independently
- Residential care facilities: Board & care, halfway houses, transitional living centers, and similar facilities
- Unlocked skilled nursing facilities and convalescent hospitals
- Locked skilled nursing facilities
- IMD: Institute for the mentally diseased (locked mental health treatment facility)
- Acute psychiatric hospitals or state hospitals



The treatment team determines appropriate living arrangements for the conservatee.

CHAPTER 5

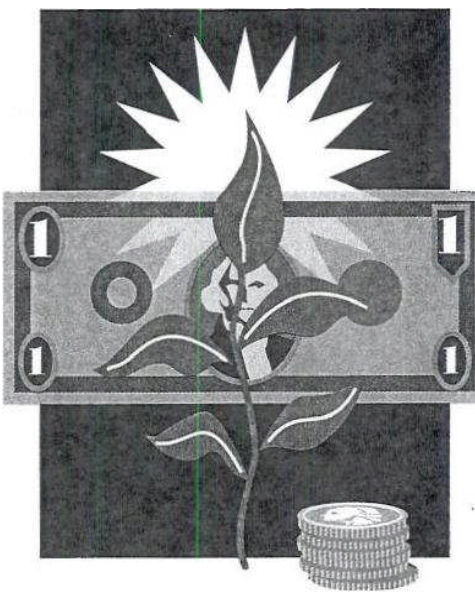
reporting to the court

What do I need to report to the court as conservator?

As conservator, you must report to the court the following:

- Address changes for **both you and your loved one**. You must do this in writing and include the old address, the new address, the court case number and the date of the address change. **The conservatorship may lapse inadvertently if you do not keep the court informed of your current address.**
- You must inform the court through the attorney representing your loved one, usually the Public Defender, when the treating team or doctor tells you conservatorship is no longer necessary.
- If you are appointed conservator of the estate, you must file regular accounts to explain how you have handled your loved one's finances.
- You must inform the court whenever your loved one has a medical situation requiring surgery or other serious treatment. This can be done after the fact when doctors provide treatment during a medical emergency, as determined by the physician.
- In non-emergency situations, you have to inform the court of the medical condition and what treatment is being recommended. In most situations, the court will appoint an attorney to represent you. The court will then issue an order to guide you.

-
- You must inform the court if you intend to sell, abandon or give away any personal property (such as car or furniture) or real property or other assets the conservatee may own or have an interest in. **You must get prior court approval.** If necessary, you can ask the court to appoint an attorney to help you in complicated situations.
 - Any other matter that the court orders you to report on.



If you are appointed conservator, you must explain how you have handled your loved one's finances.

CHAPTER 6

handling the finances

What is meant by handling the finances?

See Chapter 2 on your duties as conservator for a general description of this area of responsibility. Keep in mind that if the court appoints you as conservator for both the person and estate, you will be obligated to file a regular accounting of the finances with the court. See Chapter 9 for a description of the most common financial resources and how to access them. See Chapter 11 for a general description of duties as conservator of the estate.

If you are not appointed as conservator of the estate, it was probably due to the likelihood that you could handle the finances as a representative payee for the benefits of your loved one. Even if you do not need to file an accounting, the court still expects you to make sure that your loved one receives all of his or her benefits, such as Social Security and Medi-Cal and that the benefits are used to pay for necessary care and treatment.

CHAPTER 7

agencies you'll talk to, and their roles

What is the role of the hospital?

Those hospitals designated by the Department of Mental Health to involuntarily detain and treat persons usually start the conservatorship process. The hospitals provide care and treatment to the individual or arrange for discharge to an appropriate living arrangement during the processing of a conservatorship application.

What is the role of the Public Guardian?

The Director of the LA Department of Mental Health is also the Public Guardian (PG). The Office of the Public Guardian is the agency that investigates all LPS conservatorship referrals and makes recommendations to the court. In the absence of willing or able family members, the Public Guardian is also appointed as conservator when determined necessary by the court.



Hospitals designated to involuntarily detain and treat persons usually start the conservatorship process.

What is the Office of the County Counsel?

Attorneys from the County Counsel's office represent the County of Los Angeles in all legal proceedings, including representation of the Public Guardian in conservatorship matters. They help the Public Guardian to establish the conservatorship.

Who are the Public Defenders?

Attorneys from the Office of the Public Defender represent individuals who are subject to conservatorship and who can't afford an attorney. Their obligation is to that individual and not necessarily to the family. They protect the legal rights of an individual and oppose the conservatorship when the individual does not want it.

What is the role of the District Attorney?

Attorneys from the Office of the District Attorney represent the hospitals in some initial stages of involuntary treatment. They also are involved in other matters that come before the court, including some conservatorships where the individual also has some serious criminal charges pending.

What is the role of the court?

The role of the court is to ensure fairness and compliance with the laws in all proceedings involving involuntary treatment and conservatorship. The LPS laws try to balance the rights of the individuals to live where they want and to refuse medications against the interests of society at large and family members to protect and help persons who cannot care for themselves as a result of a mental disorder.

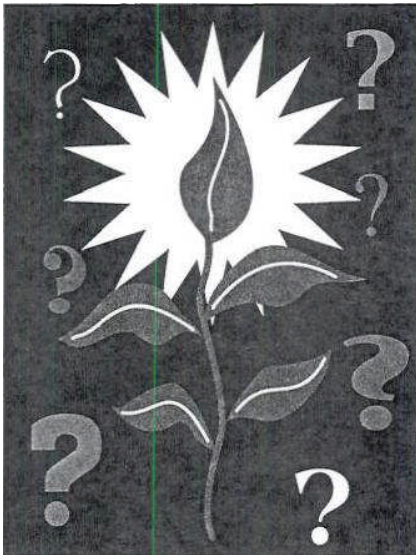
CHAPTER 8

frequently asked questions

As the professional public conservator for the County of Los Angeles, the Public Guardian has provided or participated in many training and information sessions for family conservators. The following questions, together with those in earlier sections of this booklet, are the most frequently asked questions by family or private conservators:

Should I be the conservator or should I ask the Public Guardian to be conservator?

This is ultimately a personal question that can only be answered by a family member or close friend contemplating becoming a conservator for a loved one. It is generally agreed that family members should be the conservator when they are able and willing to carry out the necessary duties



The Public Guardian provides training and information sessions for family conservators.

as described in this booklet. A family member who is already deeply involved in the life of a loved one with serious mental illness knows the difficulties of trying to help. As a conservator, that family member would have the legal authority to take some direct actions to resolve many problems. The conservator has the right to review medical records and discuss otherwise confidential information with treating staff, for example.

Is the family conservator obliged to personally care for his or her loved one?

No. Consult the professional person providing mental health treatment for the most appropriate living arrangements for the conservatee.

What is treatment?

In this guide, "treatment" means psychiatric treatment, including psychotropic medication, therapy, and other treatment modalities that address your loved one's psychiatric problems. Treatment needs will vary greatly from one patient to another. The needs should be assessed by care providers and a "treatment plan" written with the establishment of conservatorship.

What about treatment for a medical condition unrelated to my loved one's mental illness?

Usually, the Mental Health Court grants the conservator the authority to approve only psychiatric treatment. However, the court order is the guide in this matter. If it is specified in the court order, the conservator may require the conservatee to receive treatment for an existing or continuing medical condition. Except in "emergency situations", as determined by a physician, where the conservatee faces loss of life, serious bodily injury, or undue or extreme pain, no surgery may be performed upon the conservatee without the conservatee's prior consent or a court order specifically authorizing such surgery. The conservator may petition the court for such authority if the conservatee cannot give consent or refuses medical treatment for a specific medical condition.

Am I liable as conservator if my loved one causes someone harm or injury?

The law (Welfare & Institutions Code 5358.1) specifically states no: "Neither a conservator, temporary conservator, or public guardian appointed pursuant to this chapter...shall be held civilly or criminally liable for any action by a conservatee." However, this immunity may not be absolute!

The immunity is generally based on the assumption that the conservator has complied with the court order and has ensured the conservatee is following the recommended treatment plan.

For example, let's say that the court has revoked the driving privileges of your loved one. A few months later, your loved one is doing well in treatment. He asks if he can borrow your car. You know his license has been suspended but you decide to let him because he is doing so well. He gets into an accident and someone is hurt.

In this example, the conservator has disregarded the court order and has probably increased his risk of potential liability. Thus, it underscores the need for the conservator to obey the court order and to follow professional advice regarding treatment, placement and related recommendations.

In another example, the same loved one is ready for discharge from an acute hospital. The treating staff recommend placement in a board and care home and outpatient treatment. The placement is made and the outpatient treatment begins. Unknown to you, your loved one becomes friends with another resident who has a car. Your loved one borrows the car and gets into an accident. In this example, the conservator obeyed the court order and followed professional advice about treatment and placement. This car accident would probably not increase the potential liability of the conservator.

Can I authorize experimental drug treatment for my loved one if he or she wants to participate?

No. As conservator, you can authorize only generally accepted psychiatric treatment, including approved drugs. Experimental treatment of any kind requires prior specific court approval.

Do I have a right to review medical records?

Yes. As mentioned, as conservator you have the right to review medical records.

What is the distinction between the responsibilities of the conservator and those of agencies such as the Mental Health and Social Service Departments?

The conservator is directly accountable to the court for carrying out the duties as conservator, while these and other agencies are not. Thus, it is essential that the conservator keep in touch with agencies providing services to the conservatee, so that everybody is working together for the benefit of the your loved one. However, the conservator has been designated by the court as responsible for the person of the conservatee. Therefore, any treatment or social services provided to the conservatee are subject to approval by the conservator provided the authorization is according to terms of the court order which established the conservatorship.

What is meant by conservator of the person or of the estate?

If the conservatorship is granted, the court will always appoint you as conservator of the person of your loved one. This means having the authority and responsibility over personal care decisions such as treatment. If you are appointed as conservator of the person and estate, you may be required to post a bond and submit an annual accounting of the estate management.

The court, on its own, hands out written guidelines for conservators of the estate to follow. However, they recommend obtaining the services of an attorney to assist private conservators in preparing and presenting an accounting and inventory in court.

Is the conservator of the person legally liable for the conservatee's debts or property?

No. However, a conservator of the person may or may not also be conservator of the estate. A conservator of the estate is not expected to use his or her personal resources to pay the obligations and liabilities of the conservatee's estate. Be careful, however, when signing documents as conservator. Make sure you are not assuming personal liability to pay in case the estate of the conservatee cannot pay. There are also accounts (financial reports) which must be filed with the court by the conservator of the estate to assure that the conservatee's property is being safeguarded.

Who takes care of the conservatee's money and property if no conservator of the estate is appointed?

The report that the Office of the Public Guardian makes to the court prior to the conservatorship hearing is required to contain an assessment of the person's assets and income together with recommendations for the management of such income and property. If the court determines that a conservator of the estate is not needed, then, the conservatee is entitled to manage his or her income and property as he or she chooses. However, in most cases, the only significant asset is a modest monthly income such as Social Security or SSI. If the conservatee is likely to mismanage this money, arrangements can be to name a substitute payee to receive that income, and make the monthly payments for the conservatee's care and benefits. The conservator should contact the benefit-paying agency, such as Social Security, to discuss how to become payee.

How do I get financial help such as Social Security and Medi-Cal for my loved one ?

Information on where to go for financial assistance is located in Chapter 9 of this booklet which deals with procedures and resources.

What legal rights does the conservatee retain?

The court order identifies certain rights that the conservatee either retains or loses while conservatorship is in effect. The conservatee retains all rights not specifically restricted by the court, and in addition, retains certain rights specified by California law. (See Chapter 10 for a list of rights and good cause for denial).

What if I can no longer serve as conservator? How do I put this or other issues before the court?

If you can no longer serve effectively as private conservator, the best procedure is to write a short letter to the court. State your name and address, the conservatee's name and address, the court case number, and the reasons why you can no longer continue as conservator. For good reasons, the court may put the case on calendar and order the Public Guardian to look into the matter and report back to the court. However, you must continue to carry out your duties until relieved by the court.

To put this or other issues before the court:

Write to:

Superior Court Department 95-A
1150 San Fernando Road
Los Angeles, CA 90065
Attn: Court Clerk

You may mail the letter or fax it to (323) 222-0958. You can follow up with a call to the Court Clerk at (323) 226-2924 or 2923 to check on the status. You may also call the Public Guardian's office or the attorney for the patient to discuss the problem in more detail if necessary. Whether you call or write, please have the following information available:

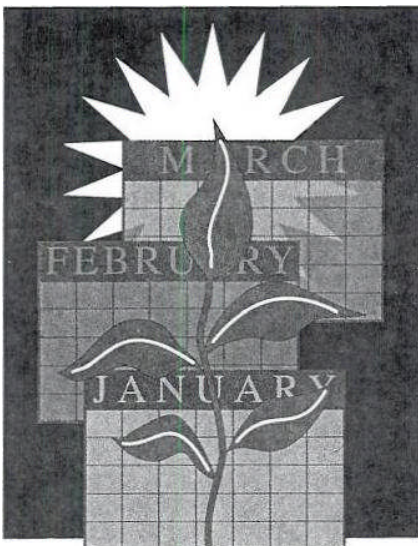
- Your name with the telephone number and address where you can be contacted.
- Name of the conservatee with his or her address, telephone number and court ("MP" or "ZE") number.

How long does conservatorship last?

One year, but it may be renewed annually.

Prior to the current law, persons with mental illness were held in state hospitals on involuntary commitments that gave them far less rights than today. To correct this, the current law was written to ensure that the mentally ill are allowed judicial review and the right to appeal involuntary mental health treatment. Part of the legislative intent of the current law was to end the inappropriate, indefinite and involuntary commitment of persons with mental illness. It is not the existence of mental illness itself that allows for involuntary treatment but that the illness is serious enough to endanger the well-being of the individual or others. Thus, under current law, the conservatorship automatically terminates in a year unless the conservator petitions the court to renew it and the court grants the petition. People under conservatorship regain their right to make their own decisions about their care and treatment if they are found by the court to be no longer gravely disabled or if the conservator does not petition the court to renew the conservatorship prior to the termination date.

If you intend to renew the conservatorship, you need to submit forms, a reappointment packet, to the court at least 30



days prior to the termination date to set up a court date. About 60 days prior to the automatic termination date, the court will mail you a notice. However, it is the conservator's responsibility to keep track of the termination date. Each time the conservatorship is renewed it must be shown that the conservatee is still gravely disabled. You must have your loved one's primary physician complete a

A conservatorship lasts one year, but may be renewed annually.

"Physician's Declaration" and file it with the Court with your renewal request. Also, a psychiatrist or psychologist's testimony may be required in court, usually when the conservatee contests the conservatorship, unless the testimony is waived by the conservatee's attorney. There is a copy of the physician's declaration form in Chapter 12. You may call the Clerk's office to obtain a reappointment packet. Their number is 323-226-2917. You may also go to the website www.lasuperiorcourt.org click on "Mental Health", and then click on "Forms".

Once the conservatorship terminates, it can only be re-initiated by a referral from a facility designated to do LPS evaluations and an investigation by Public Guardian (see pages 2-3). Once the conservatorship terminates, you may continue to help your loved one, but it is up to him or her to accept treatment voluntarily.

Even if the conservatorship terminates, can't I just submit the forms and re-establish it?

No! This is a misconception that causes difficulties for everyone involved with the conservatorship. **The conservatorship must be renewed before it terminates. It cannot be re-established after the fact.** There are several other related misconceptions:

- I am tired or I just can't handle the conservatorship any longer, so I'll let it lapse and the "state" will automatically take over. (Wrong. The state is not involved - the County is - and **it is not automatic.**)
- I did not receive the notice from the court that the conservatorship was about to terminate. I'll explain this to the court and the court will renew the conservatorship. (Wrong. It is the conservator's responsibility to know the renewal date and to contact the court when needed.)

-
- I submitted a Physician's Declaration stating my loved one was still gravely disabled, yet the conservatorship still terminated. Why? (The conservator must still petition the court and send notice by submitting all four forms of the re-appointment packet. Submitting the Physician's Declaration alone is not enough. In addition, the doctor's testimony may be needed if your loved one objects to the conservatorship. Finally, the court must find that the conservatorship is still necessary.)
 - It is obvious that my loved one is very ill and has been for years. He has never been able to care for himself and never will. Why does the court put me through all this red-tape just to do the obvious? (The conservatorship automatically terminates after one year to protect the client's right to a judicial review and to prevent indefinite and inappropriate detention and involuntary treatment - it's the law.)

CHAPTER 9

getting help

Resources and Where to Call

As conservator, you will encounter many situations requiring the help of others. Most of the situations will revolve around your loved one's health (physical and mental health), finances or living arrangements. In this chapter, we list the primary resources you'll likely need to carry out your duties as conservator.

Primary Resource

As discussed in prior chapters, your primary resource should be the doctor and other mental health professionals providing treatment for your loved one. They not only provide mental health treatment but can usually guide you to resources necessary to successfully implement the treatment plan, such as housing and financial help. If you need help in obtaining mental health treatment for your loved one, call the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health at 1-800-854-7771.

Financial Help

As conservator, you must ensure that the conservatee receives all of the financial benefits he or she is entitled to. If he or she is receiving benefits, such as Social Security or Veterans benefits, you'll have to let them know you are the conservator. You can become the payee for such benefits with their approval.

If your loved one is not receiving any benefits and is possibly eligible to some, you will have to contact the appropriate agency and apply for the benefits as conservator.

Benefits include cash assistance, health insurance and other considerations necessary to meet the personal care and health needs of your loved one.

The following information is only a brief introduction to the subject of benefits. The rules governing eligibility are lengthy and often complex. But don't delay applying for benefits! It is critical for the well being of your loved one.

SSA/Old Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance (OASDI)

Social Security is a federal program that provides benefits for covered workers and their families regardless of other income. Social Security provides four main kinds of benefits: Retirement, disability, survivor, and Medicare. Income from this source is often called SSA or OASDI (Old Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance) benefits. It is available for persons with qualifying work history or for their dependents.

Current laws prevent Social Security benefits going to any non-citizen not "lawfully present" in the United States.

Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

SSI is essentially a federal welfare program that provides cash benefits for low-income persons 65 and over and for blind and disabled persons of any age, including infants and children. The disability may be physical, mental or both. SSI may be your entire income, or it may supplement your income up to the SSI limit. It is not based on a qualifying work history.

To qualify for SSI a person must meet income and resource limitations and one of the following criteria:

- Age 65 or older
- Blind
- Disabled (meaning an adult is unable to work for at least a year. The disability may be physical or mental.)
- A child under 18 with a qualifying physical or mental disability
- Alcohol or drug dependent, with another qualifying disability, such as mental health problems

Applying for Benefits

To make applications for any Social Security benefits, obtain information, or ask general questions, call toll-free: 1-800-772-1213, from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. during the week.

You can obtain the address of your local Social Security office from the telephone directory under U.S. Federal Government or from the 800 number.

Medi-Cal

Medi-Cal is California's version of the federal Medicaid program. Medicaid provides health care insurance for persons receiving public assistance (welfare) or who have a low income and meet other requirements. Persons receiving cash welfare benefits, including SSI, are automatically eligible for Medi-Cal.

You can get Medi-Cal even if you have other health insurance such as Medicare. To apply for Medi-Cal, contact the County Department of Public Social Services (DPSS). You can find the local office in the telephone directory under Los Angeles County government or you can call 1-877-597-4777 for general information.

Note: Even though a person receiving SSI is automatically eligible to Medi-Cal, you may have to apply for Medi-Cal for your loved one while the SSI application is pending because it often takes months to process. Medi-Cal can also go back three months in its coverage from the month you apply, unlike SSI.

Medicare

Medicare is a federal health insurance program which provides benefits for eligible persons. Established in 1965, it is generally linked to a person's age or disability and work history. Unlike Medi-Cal, it is not based on financial need. There are several parts to the program: "Part A" is hospital insurance and "Part B" is medical insurance for physician care and many outpatient services. "Part D" helps pay for medications doctors prescribe for treatment.

Part A is free of charge for persons who:

- Are 65 or older and are eligible for Social Security or railroad retirement benefits
- Are federal employees who retire after 1982 with qualifying Social Security work history
- Have been receiving Social Security Disability Income payments for 24 consecutive months, regardless of age
- Are age 50 or older and are a disabled widow or widower who has received Social Security through a spouse for at least 2 years
- Have end-stage kidney disease, regardless of age

For low-income persons, the state may pay for the Medicare premium under the Qualified Medicare Beneficiary Program (Parts A and B) or under the Specified Law Income Beneficiary Program (Part B only).

Persons 65 or older and not eligible for Social Security benefits may purchase Medicare. However, they must be a U.S. citizen, or a legal resident who has lived in the U.S. continuously for at least five years.

Part A covers most hospital costs and certain others, such as:

- Hospice care for people who are terminally ill (patients must be recertified as "terminal" after 210 days of hospice care)
- Care in an approved skilled nursing facility for up to 100 days per benefit period, (Medicare will cover care in a nursing facility only if it is "medically necessary" and is preceded by a hospital stay of at least three days).
- Some skilled home health care if the person is homebound, the treatments are medically necessary, and the doctor orders them.

Part B is voluntary medical insurance. Everyone pays for Part B, unless Medi-Cal or some other source pays it. Part B pays 80% of "allowable" charges such as those for doctors, physical therapy, outpatient services, supplies, and tests. The beneficiary must pay the remaining 20%, a yearly

deductible of \$100 and a certain amount the doctor charges over the Medicare allowable charge.

Some doctors and other service providers accept "assignment" under Part B. This means that they will bill Medicare and they will accept Medicare's "allowable charge" and your 20% share as full payment. Ask the doctor if he or she will accept assignment. Every Social Security office has a list of doctors and other providers who will take assignment. You can also call Medicare at (800) 633-4227 or (877) 486-2048 (TTY/TTD) for this information. All doctors must submit claims directly to Medicare on behalf of Medicare recipients and cannot charge for that service. Providers of clinical lab work must accept assignment.

Anyone who has Medicare hospital insurance (Part A), medical insurance (Part B) or a Medicare Advantage Plan (Part C) is eligible for prescription drug coverage (Part D).

Medicare still may not cover custodial care (which is not skilled) in a nursing home or at home, some prescriptions, dental care, eyeglasses, hearing aids, routine check-ups, and certain other items and services. Be sure to clarify what is covered before authorizing treatment.

For additional information on Social Security and Medicare, contact the Social Security Administration. You can also access "The People's Guide to Welfare, Health and Services" on the internet at www.hungeractionla.org.

Other Benefits

There are many other benefits your loved one may qualify for, such as General Relief (GR) through the County Department of Public Social Services or Veterans Benefits through the federal Department of Veterans Affairs. There are also programs that provide "In-Home Supportive Services" for certain elderly or disabled persons and subsidized housing for certain homeless, elderly, disabled or low income individuals and families. There are too many potential resources, in fact, to list here but you can get help in determining what other benefits may be available by calling **Los Angeles County 211** - an information and referral service jointly provided by the County of Los Angeles and the United Way. They have skilled information specialists available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

For Los Angeles County 211, call toll-free:

All L.A. County Areas
TDD (for the deaf only)

Dial 211 or (800) 339-6993
(800) 660-4026

Note: For non-emergency situations, they suggest you call before 8:30 a.m. or after 4:30 p.m. for faster service.

Living Arrangements

Establishing appropriate living arrangements for the conservatee is an expectation the court has of the conservator. This can usually be done with the recommendation and assistance of the mental health professionals providing treatment.



There are different types of facilities, such as board and care homes, nursing homes, Institutes for Mental Disease and others.

Your loved one may live on his or her own or with family, if it is recommended and approved by the treating doctor. If the doctor recommends other living arrangements, such as a state hospital, board and care home or other facility, the treatment team should be able to help you locate an appropriate facility near your home.

Be aware that there are different types of facilities, such as board and care homes, nursing homes, Institutes for Mental Disease and others. These are licensed by the state and have certain admission criteria and certain responsibilities to those who live in them.

Advocacy/Special Help

Family conservators can get emotional support, constructive help and advocacy through the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (NAMI) and its local affiliates. In Los Angeles, call (310) 889-7200. For general questions about conservatorship, the legal process and for related guidance, you can call the Family Conservator Liaison at the Office of the Public Guardian of the Mental Health Department at (213) 974-0549. For general questions or concerns about mental health services in Los Angeles County as they affect your loved one, you can call the Family Advocates of the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health at (213) 738-3948.

Ready Reference Resource List

It is not possible to cover all the possible problems that might arise or to list all the resources that you may need to contact for assistance. In this chapter the key resources previously discussed and others are listed in this "ready reference" section. The primary therapist and the private resources with which you are familiar should be your first point of contact for most concerns.

General Information

Office of the Public Guardian

Katharine Van Dyke, Senior Deputy Public Conservator
(213) 974-0549

Living Arrangements and Placement Assistance

B&C Homes Referral Services, State Community Care Licensing, Adult Residential Care for Mentally III Adults

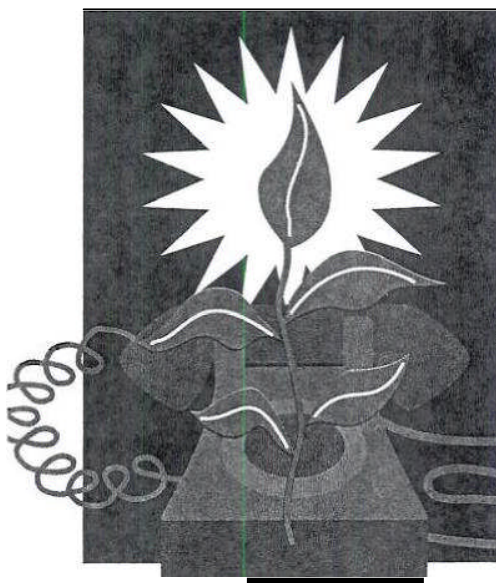
All L.A. County	(323)	980-4934
Facilities for Seniors		
North L.A. County	(818)	596-4334
South L.A. County	(310)	568-1807
Website: www.cdd.ca.gov/default.htm		

Mental Health Resources

Information and Referral Services (24 hours a day)	(800)	854-7771
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Financial Assistance

Social Security and SSI	(800)	772-1213
Veteran's Administration	(800)	827-1000
General Medi-Cal	(877)	597-4777
Medi-Cal Long Term Care (for nursing home patients)	(626)	854-4987



The primary therapist and familiar private resources should be your first point of contact.

Nursing Home Referral Services

CA Registry

(800) 777-7575

Advocacy, Support and Help

NAMI

(310) 889-7200

or (800) 950-6264

Call the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (NAMI) for information about the affiliate nearest you.

Family Advocates

(213) 738-3948

Department of Mental Health

Complaints

To report complaints against facilities for alleged inadequacy of care or suspected mistreatment of conservatees, call:

Nursing Home Complaints

Los Angeles County Department of Public Health

(626)569-3724

(800)228-1019

Board and Care Home Complaints State Community Care Licensing

Adult Residential Care for Mentally Ill Adults

All L.A. County

(323) 980-4934

Facilities for Seniors

North L.A. County

(818) 596-4334

West L.A. County

(310) 568-1807

Website: www.cclld.ca.gov/default.htm

Patient's Rights - to report violations of specific patients rights, call:

(213) 738-4888

Financial or Accounting Reports

For information on accounts or financial reports that must be filed with Superior Court contact the following: (Note: For conservators over the estate only).

Your Conservatorship Attorney:

Name _____

Phone _____

(213) 974-0549

Public Guardian Liaison

(323) 226-2932

Public Defender

Legal Matters

For assistance with conservatorship legal matters that concern the conservatee.

Los Angeles County Bar Association (213) 243-1500
(275 recorded messages on various legal topics, available 24 hours a day)

For referral to an attorney (213) 243-1525
(Monday through Friday, 9:00 am. — 4:45 p.m.)

Los Angeles County Public Defender (323) 226-2932

Other Useful Telephone Numbers**Superior County Department 95 (Mental Health Court)**

Court Clerk in Department 95-A (323) 226-2929

Court Clerk in Department 95-B (323) 226-2924 or 2923

Records clerk (323) 226-2917

General Information (323) 226-2908

Mental Health Counselor to Department 95 (323) 226-2911

Useful Websites

If you have access to the internet, you'll find thousands of websites. Many will provide useful information. Here are some that you should access to help you help your loved one and to help yourself. They also provide links to other helpful sites and useful information in different languages.

- Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health
dmh.lacounty.gov
- Los Angeles County (All services)
lacounty.gov
- Superior Court of California County of Los Angeles
(Mental Health Court, Department 95)
lasuperiorcourt.org/mentalhealth/
- National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (NAMI)
nami.org
- Social Security
socialsecurity.gov
- Medicare
medicare.gov
- DMH Network of Care
Go to dmh.lacounty.gov and click on DMH Network of Care or go to:
losangeles.networkofcare.org/mh

Other Helpful Websites

CHAPTER 10

rights of the conservatee

Persons with mental illness have the same legal rights and responsibilities guaranteed all other persons by the Federal Constitution and laws and by the Constitution and laws of the State of California, unless specifically limited by federal or state law or regulations.

It is the intent of the California State Legislature that persons with mental illness shall have rights including, but not limited to the following:

- A right to treatment services which promote the potential of the person to function independently. Treatment should be provided in ways that are least restrictive of the personal liberty of the individual.
- A right to dignity, privacy and humane care



Persons with mental illness have legal rights, including a right to dignity, privacy and humane care.

-
- A right to be free from harm, including unnecessary or excessive physical restraint, isolation, medication, abuse or neglect. Medication shall not be used as punishment, for the convenience of staff, as a substitute for program, or in quantities that interfere with the treatment program.
 - A right to prompt medical care and treatment
 - A right to religious freedom and practice
 - A right to participate in appropriate programs of publically supported education
 - A right to social interaction and participation in community activities
 - A right to physical exercise and recreational opportunities
 - A right to be free from hazardous procedures

Rights Conservatees Have While in Placement in a Facility

- To wear his/her own clothes; to keep and use his/her own personal possessions, including toilet articles; and to keep and be allowed to spend a reasonable sum of his/her own money for canteen expenses and purchases
- To have access to individual storage space for his/her private use
- To see visitors each day
- Other rights, as specified by regulations

These rights may be restricted or denied by the professional person in charge of the facility when they have good reason to believe any of the following conditions exist:

- That the exercise of the specific right would be injurious to the patient/resident

-
- That there is evidence that the specific right, if exercised, would seriously infringe on the right or others
 - That the institution or facility would suffer serious damage if the specific right is not denied
 - That there is no less restrictive way of protecting the interest specified in above three items

The reason used to justify the denial of a right to a patient/resident must be related to the specific right denied. A right shall not be withheld or denied as a punitive measure, nor shall a right be considered a privilege to be earned.

CHAPTER 11

duties of the conservator of the estate

This is a general description of the duties as described in the handbook for probate conservators published by the Judicial Council of California. The Mental Health Court provides guidelines for you to follow. An attorney is usually advisable.

The conservatee's income and assets are known as the conservatorship estate, which you are to manage. As conservator, you must protect and manage the conservatee's assets for his or her benefit. The court also may authorize you to use these assets for the benefit of the conservatee's spouse or other relatives such as minor children.

In general, you must:

- Locate and take control of the assets and make sure they are adequately protected against loss
- File an inventory of the assets for the court
- Collect all of the conservatee's income and other money due, and apply for benefits the conservatee is entitled to
- Make a budget for the conservatee
- Pay the conservatee's bills and expenses on time and in line with the budget you have set up

Duties and Timeline

Day 1

You are appointed conservator of the estate.

Day 30

You must qualify to serve as conservator of the estate by obtaining a bond, if it is required. (The court will inform you if required.)

Obtain your Letters of Conservatorship and use certified copies of these Letters to notify the conservatee's banks, creditors, stockbrokers, and others (such as Social Security or the Veterans Administration) that you are authorized to act on the conservatee's behalf.

Day 60

Determine what the assets and income are.

Day 90

Prepare an Inventory and Appraisal of the conservatee's assets. File it with the court within 90 days after your appointment.

1 Year

You must file an accounting of the estate with the court one year after your appointment as conservator of the estate.

Actions to Take

- Set up a simple, accurate system for keeping records of conservatorship income and expenditures
- To protect and manage the conservatee's finances:
 - Take control of the conservatee's assets
 - Collect income due to the conservatee
 - Make a budget for the conservatee to live on
 - Pay the conservatee's bills with the conservatee's money

-
- Invest the conservatee's money in an insured bank account
 - Protect the conservatee's assets
 - Keep good records of income and expenditures

Persons and Agencies to Notify of Your Appointment as Conservator of the Estate

- The conservatee's employer, if the conservatee is working
- Banks, savings and loans, credit unions and other financial institutions
- Stockbrokers
- Companies in which the conservatee owns stock
- Insurance companies and agents
- All companies and banks where the conservatee has charge accounts, credit cards, or a bank cash machine card
- Government agencies, such as Social Security, from which the conservatee receives payment
- Retirement plans
- People who owe the conservatee money
- People the conservatee owes money to
- County recorders in every county where you think the conservatee may own real estate
- The post office if you want the conservatee's mail to be forwarded to your address
- Anyone involved in a lawsuit by or against the conservatee

CHAPTER 12

forms you will need

As conservator, you are responsible to keep various agencies and the Mental Health Court, Department 95A, informed of the status or changes involving your conservatee. Included in this booklet are some forms you may complete and send in or use as a guide to the information you need to submit. The following describes these forms.

Department of Motor Vehicles Notification (for the Public Guardian)

The court usually revokes conservatee's driving privileges (Welfare & Institutions Code chapter 5357 [a]). This is one of the legal "Disabilities" spelled out in the order of conservatorship. If the court revokes a conservatee's driving privileges, the Public Guardian's office uses this form to automatically notify DMV that privileges were revoked and whether a private conservator or Public Guardian is appointed as conservator.



Included in this booklet are forms you may photocopy, send in, or use as a guide.

Department of Motor Vehicles Notification (for the Private Conservator)

The court restores driving privileges when conservatorship is terminated. The court can also restore a person's driving privileges while they are still on conservatorship. You can write the Superior Court, Department 95A, 1150 N. San Fernando Road, Los Angeles, CA 90065 and attach a letter from the conservatee's doctor saying that their mental state or their medication has not made them unsafe to drive.

It is your responsibility to inform DMV when the court has restored driving privileges, and you may use this form to do so. Complete it and send it with the order restoring the driving privileges or terminating conservatorship to the address in the upper left corner.

Physician's Declaration/Cover Letter to Physician

This is one of the forms necessary to renew the conservatorship annually. It is to be completed and signed by the treating psychiatrist and also signed by another doctor, usually a colleague. With this form the psychiatrist lets the court know whether or not the conservatee is still gravely disabled and needs a conservator. This form should be mailed or delivered to the court on or before your court date for reappointment. This form is included in the packet of information sent to you by the court clerk about 60 days prior to the scheduled termination of conservatorship.

Change of Placement

You must notify the court whenever your conservatee moves or changes placement and this form is used to do that. Mark whether the change is more or less "restrictive" to the conservatee's freedom and the reason for the change. You should send the original to the court, Department 95A with two copies (or three if the placement is more restrictive) and keep a copy for yourself.

Forms and Samples

The following pages contain necessary forms and samples you will need. Please make copies as needed.

Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health
Department of Motor Vehicles Notification Form
(Sample form to be used by the Public Guardian only.)

Date _____

Case Name _____

DOB _____

To: Department of Motor Vehicles
Drivers Safety Review Unit
P.O. Box 942890
Sacramento, CA 94290-0001

Previous Address _____

Court No. _____ **License No.** _____

Social Security Number _____

Effective Date _____

Re: Driving Privileges

Name of Conservator _____

Dear Sir/Madam:

As Investigating Conservatorship Officer for the County of Los Angeles and in accordance with Welfare & Institutions Code 5357a we are notifying your agency of the following action taken by the Superior Court in the above referenced case.

- The Public Guardian was appointed Lanterman-Petris-Short Conservator for the above named person. The court imposed a legal disability revoking his/her privilege of possessing a license to operate a motor vehicle.
- Conservatorship for the above named person was terminated by the court and driving privileges have been restored.
- The conservatorship has not been terminated but driving privileges were restored by the court for the above named person.
- A private individual (above) was named Lanterman-Petris-Short Conservator for the above named person. The court revoked the privilege of possessing a license. Should the court terminate the private conservatorship or restore driving privileges for these type cases, it is the responsibility of the private conservator to notify the DMV.

Very truly yours,

Deputy Public Conservator

Department of Motor Vehicles Notification Form

(This form is to be utilized by Private Conservator.)

Date _____

Case Name _____

DOB _____

To: Department of Motor Vehicles

Previous Address _____

Drivers Safety Review Unit

P.O. Box 942890

Court No. _____ **License No.** _____

Sacramento, CA 94290-0001

Social Security Number _____

Effective Date _____

Re: Driving Privileges

Name of Conservator _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Dear Sir/ Madam:

- Conservatorship for the above named person was terminated by the court and driving privileges have been restored.
- The conservatorship has not been terminated but driving privileges were restored by the court for the above named person.

Very truly yours,

Private Conservator

**Private Conservator
Request for Conservatorship Evaluation**

Date _____

Name and Address of Physician

Re: _____
Conservatee/Patient Name

Dear Dr. _____

This is to request your assistance in re-establishing conservatorship for the above referenced individual. If you believe the patient continues to be in need of conservatorship in order to provide for his or her basic needs, please complete the attached Physicians Declaration to assist the Judge hearing the case make a determination. Return the Declaration to me for filing with the Court.

If you believe the patient is no longer in need of involuntary treatment in order to have his or her basic needs met, please let me know as soon as possible.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Private Conservator (signature)

Print Name

Address

City, State, Zip

Conservatorship Re-Evaluation Physician Declaration

(This form to be completed by private conservator and treating physician.)

PART I-Completed by the Conservator

Court Case # _____

Name and Address of Conservatee _____

Age _____

Sex M F

Birth date _____

PART II-Completed by the Treating Physician

Date of Evaluation _____ Previous Diagnosis _____

Please **legibly** complete the following four areas of interest to assist the Judge making a decision as to whether or not the above-referenced person should continue to have a Conservatorship:

1. Is there a mental disorder? Yes No Please give a **diagnosis** and explain the symptoms in lay language:

2. Can the individual provide for basic needs, (food, clothing, shelter), in an unsupervised setting? Yes No Why? State facts in lay language:

3. Do you feel this individual is capable and willing to accept voluntary treatment?
 Yes No Why? State facts in lay language:

4. Does this individual have the capacity of knowingly and intelligently accepting or refusing to accept prescribed medication? Yes No

I declare under penalty of perjury, under the Laws of the State of California, that the foregoing is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Executed on _____ at: _____, California
Date *City*

Signature of first (1st) Evaluator

Signature of second (2nd) Evaluator

Type Name of first (1st) Evaluator

Type Name of second (2nd) Evaluator

Private Conservator Notice
Conservatee's Change of Placement

(This form is sent to Superior Court)

Name of conservatee _____

MP# _____ **or ZE#** _____

Dates of conservatorship:

Granted _____ **Terminated** _____

Name and address of conservator:

Office use only.
Distribution
Original: Superior Court, Dept. 95
Copies: 1. Attorney for the conservatee 2. L.A. County Dept. of Mental Health, Patients' Rights Division (for more restrictive placement only.) 3. Your file

Court ordered powers of placement: #4 #5 #6 #7

Previous Address

Name of Facility _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____ Telephone _____

New Address

Name of Facility _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____ Telephone _____

Change is: More restrictive Less restrictive No change Not applicable

Reason for change in placement: _____

Conservatee's Attorney of Record: _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____ Telephone _____

A C K N O W L E D G E M E N T S

This booklet was developed and written by Christopher A. Fierro, Deputy Director (Retired) for The Public Guardian from 1989-2008. He in turn gave thanks, first, to Dr. Marvin J Southard for his support and continued focus on the family; to Ken Ikemoto, Assistant Division Chief, Katharine Van Dyke, Senior Deputy Public Guardian, Sarah Gelberd, M.D. and John McCauley, Principal Deputy County Counsel, for their helpful suggestions; and most importantly to the thousands of family members who serve as conservators and in NAMI groups, for their strength, perseverance, and willingness to share their experiences.

Connie D. Draxler

Deputy Director

Office of the Public Guardian

Questions? Comments?

We welcome your comments and suggestions in an effort to keep this booklet current and helpful. Call or write to:

Connie D. Draxler

Deputy Director

Office of the Public Guardian

320 West Temple Street - 15th floor

Los Angeles, CA 90012

(213) 974-0407 FAX (213) 687-4539

Email: cdraxler@dmh.lacounty.gov

Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health
550 S. Vermont Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90020

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