KANSAS GUARDIANSHIP PROGRAM

BUDGET DOCUMENT

FY 2028

September 15, 2026

Mr. Adam Proffitt, Director of the Budget
Division of the Budget
State of Kansas
900 SW Jackson Street, Suite 504
Landon State Office Building
Topeka, Kansas 66612

Dear Mr. Proffitt:

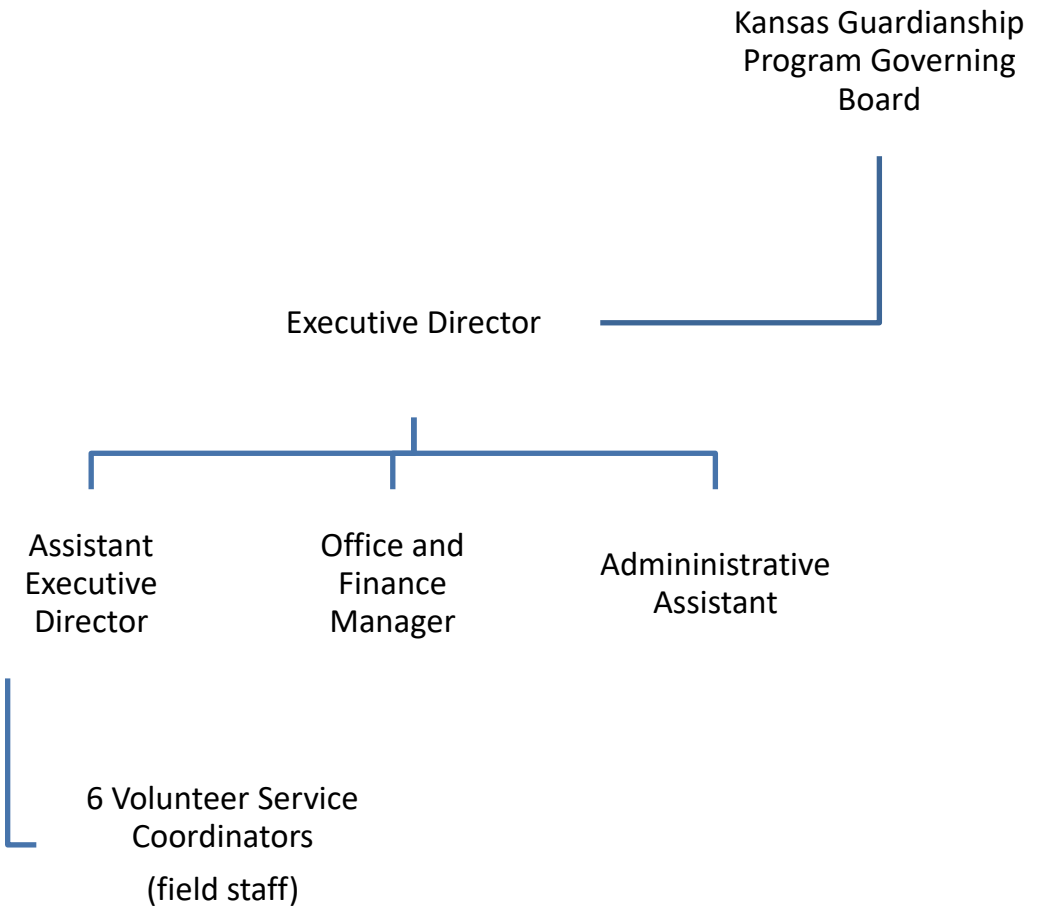
Enclosed for your consideration is the **Fiscal Year 2027 and 2028** budget document for the Kansas Guardianship Program. It has been prepared pursuant to the instructions from your office.

Please let me know if any additional information is needed.

Sincerely,

Nancy J. Mayberry
Executive Director

Kansas Guardianship Program Organizational Chart



AGENCY MISSION

To assure that adults who are without family or financial resources and who are identified through Adult Protective Services, Department for Children and Families (DCF) and Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services (KDADS) state hospital social workers as in need of a court appointed guardian or conservator will have available a qualified, trained, and caring volunteer to serve as their legally appointed guardian or conservator.

AGENCY PHILOSOPHY

The KGP strives to advocate and protect the rights of persons with disabilities in ways that recognize the interdependence of all individuals and encourage respect for the rights and dignity of all Kansans. We maintain that, if a guardianship or conservatorship is imposed, the person should be assured the benefits of positive efforts by the guardian or conservator - efforts and relationships that will assure the person of someone to act as an advocate and protector.

PROGRAMS ESTABLISHED TO ASSIST WITH AGENCY MISSION

1- The Kansas Guardianship Program

STATUTORY HISTORY:

The Kansas Guardianship Program was initiated in 1979 under the administration of Kansas Advocacy and Protective Services, Inc. In 1995, the Kansas Legislature established the program as a public instrumentality through passage of 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. The purpose of the program is to recruit volunteers to serve as court appointed guardians or conservators for those eligible persons adjudicated by the court in need of this level of protection and advocacy.

In 1987, the Legislature passed H.B. 2906, which was signed into law by the Governor. This measure provided that the State would serve as surety on the bond of any conservator serving in the Kansas Guardianship Program. The purpose of the action was to save the cost of purchasing private conservator bonds required by statute to protect the growing number of persons served by the program. Current statutory reference - KSA 59-3069 (g).

In 2004, the Legislature passed H.B. 2902, which was signed into law by the Governor. This measure added court-appointed guardians and conservators who contract with the Kansas Guardianship Program to the definition of "employee" in the Kansas Tort Claims Act. This allows the program volunteers to be protected in cases of negligence or acts of omission. Current statutory reference - KSA 75-6102(d) (4).

The 2006 Kansas Legislature approved additional funding for the KGP to increase the stipend paid to volunteers serving as guardians and conservators from $20 to $30 per month.

The 2019 Kansas Legislature approved additional funding for the KGP to increase the stipend paid to volunteers serving as guardians and conservators from $30 to $40 per month.

The 2025 Kansas Legislature passed H.B. 2359, and it became effective January 1, 2026, modernized Kansas guardianship and conservatorship law by adopting the Kansas Uniform Guardianship, Conservatorship and Other Protective Arrangements Act (KUGCOPAA) and the Uniform Adult Guardianship and Protective Proceedings Jurisdiction Act (UAGPPJA). The law strengthens due process protections, emphasizes less restrictive alternatives, encourages limited guardianships and conservatorships when appropriate, and increases oversight and accountability while promoting the rights, autonomy, and self-determination of persons subject to guardianship or conservatorship. Current statutory reference – KSA 59-30,101 et. seq.

AGENCY WIDE OVERVIEW OF CURRENT YEAR ESTIMATE AND BUDGET YEAR SCENARIOS

BUDGET YEAR INFORMATION:

FY 2027: $1,608,100 - This level of funding allows for the program to provide the volunteer stipend to serve up to 1165 wards or conservatees.

FY 2028: $1,575,155 - This level of funding allows for the program to provide the volunteer stipend to serve up to 1201 wards or conservatees.

Reappropriation-FY 2027

A reappropriation amount of $80,685 from FY 26. The FY 2026 reappropriation reflects unexpended State General Fund dollars that will be used to support ongoing program operations and future expenditures of the Kansas Guardianship Program. Contributing factors include a temporary rent reduction granted in exchange for carpeting and painting funded by KGP after 25 years of occupancy, with rent returning to normal in FY 2028, and increased future travel costs resulting from KGP's FY 2026 decision to align reimbursement rates with those established by the Kansas Department of Administration, as KGP's rates had previously been significantly lower.

Enhancement Package-FY 2028

The Kansas Guardianship Program (KGP) requests an enhancement of $150,000 to increase the monthly volunteer guardian and conservator stipend from $40 to $50 per month. This increase will help offset the growing demands placed on KGP volunteers and support the recruitment and retention of qualified individuals willing to serve some of Kansas' most vulnerable adults. KGP relies on more than 700 dedicated volunteers across the state who serve as court-appointed guardians and conservators for adults who have no available family members or other suitable individuals willing to assume these responsibilities. These volunteers provide ongoing oversight, advocacy, decision-making, monitoring of services, and regular visits to individuals under guardianship or conservatorship.

The current stipend of $40 per month was approved by the Kansas Legislature in 2019 and represented the first increase since 2006. Since that time, inflation and increased expenses associated with volunteer service have significantly reduced the value of the stipend. Volunteers routinely incur transportation, communication, and administrative costs while carrying out their court-appointed duties.

In addition, the responsibilities of volunteer guardians and conservators have continued to expand. Volunteers are required to provide monthly reports to KGP regarding the status of the individuals they serve and must complete annual court reports and accountings. Recent statutory and procedural changes have increased the amount of documentation, tracking, and reporting required by Kansas courts. Volunteers are spending additional time gathering information, completing forms, maintaining records, and ensuring compliance with court requirements. These responsibilities are critical to protecting vulnerable adults but require a substantially greater commitment of their time than when the stipend was last increased in 2019.

Recruiting and retaining volunteers remains one of KGP's most significant challenges. The population of individuals requiring guardianship and conservatorship services continues to grow, while volunteers are being asked to manage increasingly complex responsibilities. A modest stipend increase would recognize the additional workload, help offset volunteer expenses, and demonstrate the State's continued commitment to supporting these dedicated citizen volunteers.

AGENCY GOAL:
To provide that qualified, caring, and trained persons are available throughout the State who will volunteer to serve in the capacity of court appointed guardians or conservators for those program eligible persons in need of this level of protection and advocacy, and who do not have family members capable or willing to assume such responsibilities. All such persons are identified by DCF adult protective services or KDADS state hospital social workers and referred to the KGP after all other alternatives have been exhausted. Legal services are provided through the State to petition to the court for the trial to determine impairment. Individuals served may be considered the adult wards of the State.

OBJECTIVE #1:
To provide that volunteers are available to serve as court appointed guardians or conservators of adults adjudicated as impaired and in need of a guardian or conservator.

Strategies for Objective #1:

1. To recruit, screen and train volunteers to serve newly adjudicated individuals determined by the court to need a guardian or conservator.

2. To recruit, screen and train volunteers to serve as successor guardian or conservator for those individuals whom the current KGP guardian or conservator is no longer willing or able to serve in this capacity.

3. To provide ongoing training, technical support, and information systems for the volunteers throughout the duration of the guardianship or conservatorship service.

4. To require and review monthly written reports from the guardian or conservator regarding the status of and services provided to the ward or conservatee.

5. To provide monthly $40 stipends to offset out-of-pocket expenses for the volunteers serving as guardian or conservator.

6. To provide notice and review of the annual court required guardian report regarding the personal status of the ward, and the conservator accounting regarding the status of the conservatee resources.

7. To meet the increased demands for services and supports as more individuals are residing in community living because of downsizing State hospitals and closure of large bed institutional settings.

8. To evaluate satisfaction with the information, training, support, and assistance provided to the volunteers serving as guardians or conservators.

9. To evaluate periodically the satisfaction with information/training provided to groups or persons other than KGP volunteers.

Performance Measures: Objective #1	**FY 2025 Actual**	**FY 2026 Actual**	**FY 2027 Estimate**	**FY 2028 Estimate**
Percentage of adults identified in need of a court-appointed guardian or conservator who receive guardianship or conservatorship services in the FY	92%	91%	93%	92%
Number of volunteers providing guardianship or conservatorship services in the FY	711	689	700	720
Percentage of volunteer recruits who make applications to become a KGP volunteer and complete initial screening and training in the FY	70%	77%	85%	90%
Average cost per day per all adults served within FY	$3.43	$3.28	$3.50	$3.79

EXPENDITURE JUSTIFICATION

Object Code 100, Salaries and Wages:

Summary: This program is in one office and has 10 full-time positions working to provide an efficient and effective program to recruit, train and monitor volunteers to serve as guardians or conservators. Of the 10 full-time staff, the program is served by 6 volunteer service coordinators (field staff), 1 administrative assistant, 1 office and finance manager, 1 assistant executive director and the executive director. Positions are considered as unclassified-regular positions.

FY 2027 - $753,307 reflects funding for current positions.

This would allow the program to maintain adequate supports to existing volunteers and to recruit new volunteers for ongoing referrals for guardianships or conservatorships.

Cost indices provided by the Division of the Budget were used to compute all fringe benefits except for health insurance and KPERS. KGP uses the **KPERS local non-school rate** for salary calculations. Health insurance costs are calculated using the non-State Employee Health plan rates for employers.

FY 2028 - $760,659 in funding would continue the current level of staffing.

This would allow the program to maintain adequate supports to existing volunteers and to recruit new volunteers for ongoing referrals for guardianships or conservatorships.

Cost indices provided by the Division of the Budget were used to compute all fringe benefits except for health insurance and KPERS. KGP uses the **KPERS local non-school rate** for salary calculations. Health insurance costs are calculated using the non-State Employee Health plan rates for employers.

Object Code 200 – 290, Contractual Services

Summary: Program activities are undertaken to provide for the availability of qualified nominees for court appointed guardians or conservators for persons adjudicated in need of guardianship or conservatorship services. This is accomplished through maintaining activities to recruit, screen and train volunteers.

Following the legal appointment of the guardian or conservator, the KGP provides ongoing training, information/referral, monitoring and support to volunteers as they provide advocacy and guardianship or conservatorship services. With the diversity of issues and the complex landscape to navigate accessing services and supports for individuals, the comprehensive knowledge provided by KGP staff is essential.

Initial orientation and ongoing training---This ongoing training and support is critical for the retention of volunteers. Volunteers are willing to take on this considerable responsibility and the legal appointment of guardianship with the knowledge and assurance that KGP staff is available to provide training, monitoring, information, and support to a volunteer throughout the duration of the guardianship or conservatorship service.

Volunteer Longevity & Retention:
Approximately 70% of our current volunteers have committed five or more years to the program, with 46% having served for a decade or more. Volunteers accepting the legal and moral responsibility for another person is a significant matter and requires time and commitment to provide the care and oversight a person may need.

- **Longevity:** Volunteer longevity is significant from two perspectives. These commitments are manifested through long-term relationships which frequently extend to 10 or more years and offer the person a sense of protection and security.

- **Retention:** Volunteer retention provides the KGP with a valuable resource for potential guardian nominees from within the existing volunteer pool as new referrals are received by the program.

- **Communication Expenses:** These include phone and mailing costs, essential to build and maintain a network of volunteers statewide.

- **Printing Costs:** Printed materials are needed to provide training, written information and resources to potential volunteers, service providers, consumer groups, professional groups, family members and others about Kansas Statutes on guardianship and conservatorship and the KGP. This includes funds for printing an informational brochure about the KGP used in recruitment of volunteers, a training handbook for volunteers, a guide to guardianship and conservatorship statutes, an assessment instrument to determine the need for guardianship and conservatorship, and other related monitoring documentation.

- **Office Expenses:** Funds are used to cover the overhead expenses of rent and utilities, ensuring that the office in Manhattan remains welcoming and operational. This support helps maintain professional space where our employees can work effectively and continue to serve our community with dedication. With staff spread across the state, the office offers a designated meeting spot and drop-in area for interested citizens to visit in the event they need information or referrals.

- **Office Equipment Maintenance:** The budget covers repair and maintenance costs for office equipment, ensuring all tools stay in good working order. This investment helps prevent disruptions and keeps operations running smoothly.

- **Travel and Subsistence:** Funding supports statewide travel for recruiting, screening, training, and monitoring volunteers. It also covers travel for delivering information and training to service providers, family members, and others.

- **Volunteer Stipends:** Volunteers receive a modest monthly stipend to help cover out-of-pocket expenses for regular visits, phone calls, and communications with providers of supports and services, facility staff, medical providers, case managers and others.

- **Miscellaneous Costs:** The budget also includes fees for an annual independent audit, subscriptions, insurance premiums, and other related expenses.

Note: Object Code 260, Fees (Other Services - Detail)

1. This object code includes the stipend expenditure for volunteers serving as guardians or conservators.
2. It includes computer support services and database access fees also.

Current Service FY 2027 $834,193 - The contractual services funding will cover office space rental, travel, subsistence, communications, and other related business expenses needed to recruit and train new volunteers. Additionally, it will support the ongoing training and monitoring of current volunteers, maintain existing stipends, and allow the program to provide stipends for volunteers serving 1,145 wards or conservatees.

FY 2028: $795,356 - The contractual services funding will cover office space rental, travel, subsistence, communications, and other related expenses necessary for recruiting and training new volunteers. It will also support ongoing training, monitoring, and assistance for current volunteers, ensure the maintenance of existing stipends, and enable the program to provide stipends for volunteers serving 1,165 wards or conservatees.

Object Code 300-390, Commodities

Summary: The program expenditures for commodities are for general office supplies and related professional supplies.

Current Service FY 2027: $12,600 in funding will maintain the level of office and professional supplies to meet the goal of recruiting and supporting volunteers who serve as guardians or conservators.

FY 2028: $11,000 in funding will maintain the level of office and professional supplies to maintain basic office activity.

Object Code 400, Capital Outlay

Summary: The program expenditures for commodities include the purchase of computer equipment, phone systems, file cabinets, desks, copy machines, and other commodities expenditures $500 or more.

Current Service FY 2027: $8,000

$ 8,000 in funding will allow for updates to the technology infrastructure and back-up computer software

FY 2028: $8,141

$8,141 in funding will allow for updates to the technology infrastructure and back-up computer software