

ST. MARY'S COUNTY
ADULT PUBLIC GUARDIANSHIP REVIEW BOARD
ANNUAL REPORT – 2024

Introduction

The St. Mary's County Adult Public Guardianship Review Board (APGRB) was created through §14-401, et seq. of the Family Law Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland to make recommendations to the Court regarding the continuation, modification or termination of public guardianship of adults with disabilities who are citizens of St. Mary's County. Guardianship is held either through the Department of Social Services or the Department of Aging & Human Services. There were as many as five (5) adults under guardianship of the person through the Department of Social Services and eleven (11) adults under guardianship of the person through the Department of Aging & Human Services for the year.

Accomplishments and Activities

Since the 2023 annual report, the APGRB met twice (January 2024 and August 2024) to discuss the active guardianship cases. The APGRB meets twice a year to conduct a paper review of the guardianship cases and makes recommendations whether guardianship should continue, be modified, or terminated.

During the August 2024 review, the APGRB successfully reviewed all cases under the guardianship program and the Board recommended the continuation of guardianship for all cases.

Elections were held and the Board has a new chair, Dr. Joseph Devitis, effective at the January 2025 meeting.

Goals for 2025

One goal is to continue meeting semi-annually, in person, for the purpose of conducting a full review of the guardianship cases as presented by the Department of Social Services and the Department of Aging & Human Services. Board members will continue to offer their recommendations on all guardianship cases and will make decisions the Board determines are in the best interest of the persons under public guardianship.

Another goal is to continue working toward obtaining and maintaining a full complement of Board members, and encourage different members to assume the positions of chair and vice chair, during the selection/election process.

The Board president, or their designee, will request individual guardianship reports from the Department of Social Services and the Department of Aging & Human Services for each person currently under public guardianship. The reports will then be signed by the Board Chair, then forwarded to the Circuit Court for St. Mary's County, Maryland, for filing.

Membership

The membership of the APGRB is set by statute, all of whom are appointed by the Commissioners of St. Mary's County. Membership for the year 2024 is as follows:

1. Lori Jennings-Harris – Vice Chair (Representative of a Local Commission on Aging – Department of Aging & Human Services)
2. Dr. Jennifer Willoughby - (Psychologist)
3. Sherry Pierce - (Registered Nurse)
4. Kathleen M. Werner - Reporting Secretary (Lawyer)
5. Dr. Rene` Grace - Chair (Physician)
6. Robin Johnson (Person with a Physical Disability)
7. Rose Miller – (Lay Individual)
8. Jennifer Neff (Professional Representative of a Local Department - St. Mary's County Department of Social Services)
9. Dr. Joseph DeVitis (Lay Individual)
10. Vacant (Professional in the Field of Disabilities)
11. Randall Ferguson (Professional Representative of a Local Non-profit Social Service Organization)

December 2024