



The Volunteer Guardian Program at Central Ohio Area Agency on Aging

The Volunteer Guardian Program serves Delaware, Fairfield, Fayette, Franklin, Licking, and Pickaway counties.

800-589-7277
614-645-1928
614-645-3883
coaaa.org/vgp



Central Ohio Area Agency on Aging

**Volunteer
Guardian
Program**

Not Everyone has Someone



It is often assumed that everyone has family or friends who will assist them when they lose the ability to make their own decisions. The fact is, not everyone has someone willing to be responsible for decision making. In Central Ohio, there are a growing number of adults who have lost the ability to make reasoned decisions and are without anyone to assist them. In certain circumstances, volunteers who are trained and supported by professionals can help.

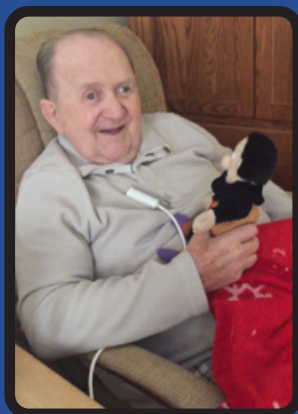
The Volunteer Guardian Program

The Volunteer Guardian Program (VGP) at the Central Ohio Area Agency on Aging recruits, screens, trains and supports people to be court-appointed “Guardians of the Person.” These guardians make medical and quality of life decisions for individuals who have no family able or willing to assist them and whose ability to make decisions is diminished. Volunteer Guardians do not handle money or have financial responsibility.

People served by VGP are adults who live in nursing homes or other group-care settings and have some type of mental impairment. Whatever the reason, their ability to process information has deteriorated; they are alone and they need your help.

Volunteer Requirements:

- Volunteers must be at least 21 years of age
- Have reliable transportation
- Provide five personal or professional references
- Attend an interview
- Undergo a background check
- Complete training



Training and Matching Process

The time between a volunteer applying to the program and a legal appointment can take several months. During this time, you will:

- be interviewed by program staff to determine eligibility to serve as a medical guardian as well as to explain guardian's role
- attend pre-service training that will prepare you for your role

When someone who needs a guardian and who also fits within the volunteer's goals is identified, a meeting will be suggested between you and that person at the facility where the person lives.

Once you have met and agree to accept a person as your match, an application for guardianship can be filed with the county probate court. Hearings generally are scheduled approximately six weeks from the filing of the application. A VGP case manager is with you throughout the process and supports you for the duration of your service.

Guardian Responsibilities

After you are matched with the right person for you, you will:

- Attend a brief hearing with the Probate Court to review your application to become guardian
- Develop a nurturing relationship with the person by visiting twice a month
- Participate in care planning, giving consent for medical treatment and other services
- Enhance the quality of your person's life by visiting
- Receive ongoing comprehensive support from the VGP team



Volunteer Support and Technical Assistance

To assist you in carrying out your responsibilities as guardian, you will receive:

- Six hours of pre-service training to prepare you for your role
- On-going support, training, and technical assistance from VGP staff
- Free continuing education opportunities

To be a Volunteer Guardian may seem like a huge responsibility, but experienced Volunteer Guardians will tell you it is the opportunity of a lifetime. Benefits to you as a volunteer include:

- Knowledge of nursing homes, medical procedures, hospitals and hospice.
- Interaction with a variety of professionals including doctors, nurses, therapists, and social workers.
- The satisfaction of enhancing the quality of life of another human being.

VGP IS PARTIALLY FUNDED BY:



Franklin County
Board of Commissioners
OFFICE ON AGING



The Volunteer Guardian Program is a member of the Ohio Guardianship Association & the National Guardianship Association and adheres to the NGA standard of practice.

