



Supreme Court of New Mexico

CHAMBERS OF
EDWARD L. CHÁVEZ
CHIEF JUSTICE

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March 6, 2009

RE: Adult Guardianships: Guardianship and Conservatorship Training Video

Dear Judge:

I am pleased to enclose a copy of a guardianship and conservatorship training video for new appointees. This video was developed by the New Mexico Guardianship Association ("NMGA") through a contract funded by the State of New Mexico DDPC Office of Guardianship. The video was professionally produced, and like the recently unveiled statewide jury orientation video, is narrated by television news anchor Tom Joles. The material is co-presented by Second Judicial District Court Judge Ted Baca, who presides over many guardianship and conservatorship cases. The video is a total of 32 minutes long and is comprised of four separate modules, which can be selected and viewed independently: (1) Guardianship; (2) Conservatorship; (3) Reporting Requirements; and (4) Resources.

The goal of the video is to better educate guardians and conservators about their duties, especially the obligation to timely report. A critical finding in the recent Guardianship Task Force Report is that there is no system in place in New Mexico that assures effective oversight and monitoring of all court-appointed guardians. An informal investigation revealed that most private guardians (appointees not contracting through the Office of Guardianship) do not file their annual reports. Together with the Handbook for Guardians and Conservators previously provided to you by the NMGA, this video provides an outstanding resource for family guardians and conservators, hopefully increasing compliance with annual report requirements. The video includes a Spanish caption option, and the Handbook is also available in Spanish. Additional copies are available from the contacts listed below. Although they may need further testing, on-line versions are available at both the NMGA and the New Mexico Office of Guardianship websites:

<http://www.nmgaresourcecenter.org/videos>
<http://www.nmddpc.com/office-of-guardianship>

Local community organizations and service providers will also be able to use the on-line version with their clients.

In the Second Judicial District, Judge Baca is currently working with staff to develop a standard method of requiring that new appointees view this training material. Viewing may occur at the courthouse, or the Guardian ad Litem or the Court Visitor can be required to certify that the video has been reviewed prior to filing the Letters of Acceptance. A record should appear in the court file that the video has been reviewed. Each judicial district may find that a different method is more efficient with its current resources to provide the training material and to require that it be used.

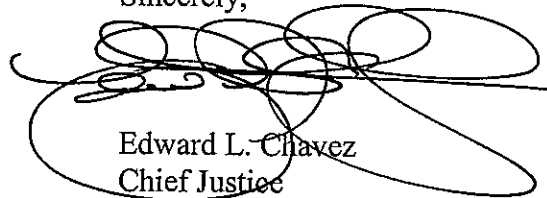
I encourage you to carefully review this valuable training tool and to incorporate it into your regular practice of appointing guardians and conservators. In addition, the Administrative Office of the Courts is working to develop an electronic system that can better track these cases and gather relevant data regarding annual report compliance rates. We will keep you up to date as we continue to strive to improve the quality of justice in New Mexico in a time of scarce resources.

For additional information, please contact either:

Frank Fajardo, Manager
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Gregory W. MacKenzie, President
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Sincerely,



Edward L. Chavez
Chief Justice

Enc.