

DDPC FY22 Budget Summary

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The LFC and DFA recommendations differ by \$1,669,900. The primary reasons for the large discrepancy are: (1) depletion of non-recurring funds to pay for ongoing services; (2) rapidly growing need for guardianship services; (3) new DDPC programs and expenses.

Depletion of Non-Recurring Funds

- In FY20 and FY21, over \$500,00 per year was included in DDPC's budget from the Office of Guardianship (OOG) **fund balance**. The fund balance will be depleted by FY22.
- In FY20, OOG worked diligently to reduce and eliminate the guardianship services wait list. DDPC was unable to obtain supplemental funds in FY20 for the new cases and resorted to applying for an **emergency grant** from the State Board of Finance (SBOF) to pay for existing guardianship services.
- DDPC was also unable to obtain a base budget increase in FY21 and again seeks supplemental funding.
- The total general fund needed to replace nonrecurring revenue sources in FY22 is **\$681,800**.
- LFC's recommendation is insufficient to replace nonrecurring revenue sources.

Rapidly Growing Need for Guardianship Services

- Once a court orders a professional guardian for a protected person in an OOG case, OOG is **legally obligated to provide guardianship services** to the protected person. Failure to provide guardianship services would not endanger the protected person's life, but ultimately cost the State more to manage or mitigate the acute or emergency situations the protected person would inevitably face.
- DDPC has been accumulating a rapidly growing wait list since January 2020 and predicts the wait list will continue rising as the **pandemic sweeps the state** and the **aging population grows** significantly.
- DDPC estimates an additional **\$232,300** in FY22 to continue processing cases on the wait list.
- LFC's recommendation is insufficient to cover existing services OOG is currently legally obligated to provide, and will not allow OOG assign any new professional guardian cases to reduce the wait list.

New DDPC Programs and Expenses

- DDPC is seeking to create an **Office of the Special Education Ombud** to protect the educational rights of students through individual and systemic advocacy.
- The estimated cost to establish and maintain the Special Education Ombud program is **\$295,000**.
- DDPC is seeking to establish **OOG licensure of professional guardians and conservators**. Direct state oversight of guardianship services is critical to protect the rights of people under guardianship
- The estimated cost to establish and maintain the OOG licensing program is **\$285,000**.
- DDPC requires an effective **data and provider management system**. DDPC lacks the capability to compile, organize, or analyze historical data pertaining to guardianship services and protected persons. DDPC also uses a burdensome, time- and resource-consuming system to pay for guardianship services. The new data and provider management system will streamline provider payment and allow DDPC to access historical data, study trends, and make evidence-based policy decisions.
- The estimated recurring cost for the data and provider management system is **\$176,000**.