CONFERENCE OF CHIEF JUSTICES
CONFERENCE OF STATE COURT ADMINISTRATORS

Resolution 9

In Support of Point of Contact Positions in State Administrative Offices of the Courts to Improve Guardianship/Conservatorship Practices

WHEREAS, the National Center for State Courts estimated that there were approximately 1.5 million guardianship cases in the United States, and it is expected that this figure will grow based on the size of the aging population; and
WHEREAS, the Government Accountability Office and national media stories have drawn attention to the challenges courts face in adequately monitoring guardianships and conservatorships; and
WHEREAS, there is a growing nationwide demand for alternatives to guardianship/conservatorship that encourage supported decision making; and
WHEREAS, the Conference of Chief Justices and Conference of State Court Administrators have endorsed resolutions to encourage the collection of data on guardianships, conservatorships and elder abuse cases and in support of the Court-Appointed Guardian Accountability and Senior Protection Act; and
WHEREAS, the United States Department of Health and Human Services will be supporting a cooperative agreement under its Elder Justice Innovation Grants to establish, expand or enhance multidisciplinary efforts to improve a state’s guardianship/conservatorship system through Working Interdisciplinary Networks of Guardianship Stakeholders (WINGS) and similar entities; and
WHEREAS, the United States Administration for Community Living held the first federal conversation on guardianship/conservatorship—Exploring Efforts and Options to Improve Guardianship and Address Abuses—on May 4, 2016; and
WHEREAS, the state court administrative offices have designated Points of Contact to address key issue areas, such as child dependency and violence against women; and
WHEREAS, state court Points of Contact can serve vital roles in connecting the courts to resources and multidisciplinary collaborations to improve guardianship/conservatorship practices, including;
• Improving the collection and reporting of data on guardianships and conservatorships; and
• Identifying funding opportunities to develop and support court initiatives; and
• Leading and participating in multidisciplinary efforts, such as WINGS, to reform practices; and
• Enhancing outreach and collaborative partnerships to maximize resources and strengthen public trust and confidence in the courts; and
• Learning about innovative practices and experiences from colleagues in other states and territories; and
• Introducing technologies to the courts that will enhance monitoring and oversight; and
• Developing and implementing training programs for judicial officers, court staff and/or guardians and conservators on national standards and best practices; and
• Recognizing emergent issues, trends and innovative programs that will shape the courts’ efforts to improve guardianship/conservatorship practices;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Conference of Chief Justices and Conference of State Court Administrators encourages the state administrative offices of the courts to designate a Point of Contact position to improve guardianship/conservatorship practices.

Adopted as proposed by the CCJ/COSCA Elders and the Courts Committee at the CCJ/COSCA Annual Meeting on July 27, 2016.