

Volunteers do not necessarily have the time; they just have the heart
- Elizabeth Andrews

THE FACES OF VGP



They are alone in the world and in need of a helping hand. Please reach out YOUR hand today. VOLUNTEER and change the life of another.



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**NOT EVERYONE
HAS SOMEONE...**

VOLUNTEER GUARDIANS



A COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP
BETWEEN
MOBILE COUNTY PROBATE COURT
& VIA HEALTH, FITNESS
AND ENRICHMENT CENTER

Volunteer Guardian Program (VGP)

Each year, many citizens in Mobile County are declared by Probate Court to be unable to make decisions on their own. Since 2010, VGP has recruited, trained and matched hundreds of community volunteers to serve as Guardians for these special people. The VGP is seeking caring and committed volunteers to become a part of our program. VGP remains the only program of its kind in our state, and is the last line of defense for vulnerable citizens - with no appropriate family or friends - against homelessness and worsening quality of life.

YOU CAN BE A VOLUNTEER GUARDIAN

Our amazing Guardians include college students, homemakers, nurses, CNAs, social workers and retired Seniors. All are compassionate, caring and committed!

Requirements are to:

- Be 21 or older
- Have computer access
- Have transportation
- Have the ability to learn basic legal and medical information
- Have at least 4-6 hours per month to spare

OUR WARDS

The majority of our Wards (consumers) have been in VGP for more than three years.

- All are cognitively incapacitated and 80% are physically handicapped
- Ages range from 21 to 96, with the majority being senior citizens
- Most are classified as low income
- They are from a variety of ethnicities



WHAT IS A GUARDIANSHIP?

A Guardianship is a legal relationship in which a Guardian is appointed by Mobile County Probate Court to make decisions for those incapacitated/unable to communicate decisions concerning his/her health or safety.

GUARDIAN RESPONSIBILITIES

You will protect the Ward's rights and Dignity by:

- Making decisions related to basic needs (food and housing), medical treatments/care and end of life care
- Attending court hearings/filing paperwork
- Coordinating with other agencies to obtain access to needed services
- Shopping or taking your Ward shopping
- Attending doctors appointments if needed
- Visiting your Ward to make sure they are safe and healthy

You are *not* responsible for using your own funds or providing housing. You are *not* liable for Ward's actions or behaviors.

YOU HAVE OUR FULL SUPPORT

VGP staff serves as a resource for you, providing technical support, periodic education and training sessions and support meetings. You will have the full support of Mobile County Probate Court and other agencies. In addition, you will have volunteer lawyers, social workers, case managers and service professionals ready to help you during each action or decision-making situation.



HOW DO I GET STARTED?

These are the steps to take to begin your journey to care for others:

1. Complete our written application
2. Obtain a criminal background check, paid for by VGP
3. Complete the 2-hour orientation course
4. Be appointed by Mobile County Probate Court to serve as a Volunteer Guardian

Contact: VGP Coordinator Lynn Hudson at 251.470.5222 or lhudson@viamobile.org

* VGP HOTLINE: 251.219.8477 *

