

Thirteenth District Guardianship Clinic

Judge David Shoemake and Judge Gerald Martin are pleased to announce that the Thirteenth Chancery Court District which serves **Covington, Jefferson Davis, Lawrence, Simpson and Smith Counties**, will again sponsor a Guardianship Clinic on **Friday, March 1, 2019** for residents of the district.

What is a Guardianship Clinic?

Volunteer Attorneys will be present to assist persons in need of a guardianship with completing the necessary legal papers and pleadings to obtain guardianship over children who reside with the guardian (not their natural parents) or will reside with the guardian. Representatives from each chancery clerk's office will be present to receive and file the papers to open your case, assign case numbers and receive any payments which might be required. The chancery judges will be present to sign final Judgements in any cases wherein all necessary parties are present that day.

Who should seek assistance at the Clinic?

The clinic is designed to assist grandparents, uncles, aunts, and other persons who are caring for minor children but have no legal paperwork or other authorization to care for the children. In particular, it is designed to help those persons who have had children placed with them by the parents; CPS; DHS; or other agencies but who have no paperwork to seek or authorize medical treatment; no paperwork to satisfy school residency requirements; and/or no paperwork to prove their legal status as the custodian or primary care giver for said children.

What is the first step persons in need of assistance should take?

Anyone needing the services available at the Guardianship Clinic will be **required** to **register** and obtain certain information in advance of the clinic. He or she should contact the Court Administrators - Donna Walker at **601-765-8284** or Cindy Bray at **601-822-5017** and if necessary, leave a message so a call can be returned. Upon speaking with the Court Administrators, each person will be ask to leave a daytime telephone number and should expect to receive a call from Deborah Kennedy who is the District's staff attorney. Mrs. Kennedy will advise each person concerning the documents that need to be brought to the clinic and the persons who will need to participate in the process. Only those persons who are registered and assigned an appointment time will be served at the clinic.

What is the deadline for the Clinic?

Anyone wishing to participate in the guardianship clinic should make his or her initial phone call to the court administrators no later than **2:00 p.m. on Friday, February 22, 2019.**

What is the Cost to participate in the Clinic?

IT IS FREE to those who meet certain income requirements. The **legal services provided that day will be free to everyone.** Some participants might be required to pay filing fees or process serving fees. Everyone will be asked to provide certain financial information to determine if any fees or expenses will be required of each guardian and to determine if the guardian might be entitled to further legal assistance beyond that provided at the clinic.

WE LOOK FORWARD TO HEARING FROM YOU BY FEBRUARY 22 AND TO SEEING YOU IN MENDENHALL ON FRIDAY, MARCH 1, 2019.