



## Office of Guardianship and Elder Services

OFFICE OF PUBLIC GUARDIANSHIP  
Stacey Johnson, Manager

May 4, 2020

Dear Certified Professional Guardianship Board, Certified Professional Guardians, and stakeholders:

The University of Washington Continuum College (UWCC) has advised the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) that UWCC must put the Guardianship Certificate Program (the Program) on hiatus for the 2020-2021 school year. The year will be used to redevelop the Program to reflect the newly passed Uniform Guardianship, Conservatorship, and Other Protective Arrangements Act (UGA). The UWCC also plans to use this time to move to an exclusively online format to improve accessibility to students across the state. Providing greater accessibility to potential enrollees from all parts of Washington aligns with demographic trends and the need for entrants to the profession.

The AOC and the UWCC have been in discussions regarding the factors affecting the timeline for the redevelopment of the Guardianship Certificate Program. The UWCC previously planned on putting the program on hiatus for the 2021-2022 academic year. However, recent events and information have brought forth additional impactful considerations.

The effect of the COVID-19 pandemic has left uncertainty in the landscape of the 2020-2021 academic year. The social and economic impacts of the COVID-19 outbreak are unknown but expected to be significant. The potential for lower enrollment in the 2020-2021 academic year is substantial. UWCC informed the AOC that low enrollment would cause the UWCC to place the Program on hold for that particular academic year. While the future remains undefined for all at present, uncertainty is likely to decline over time.

The AOC made a 2020 session legislative request for Program redevelopment funding with input from the UWCC. The Program redevelopment funds request was premised on keeping tuition for the course at the current rate. The Legislature's appropriation for program redevelopment is only available in State fiscal year 2021 (July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021). Washington State vulnerable adult demographics strongly indicate a continuing need for guardianship services in the state. Maintaining an affordable professional certification course is a critical issue, and ties directly to this appropriation.

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The AOC is sharing this information about the 2020-2021 academic year hiatus with all stakeholders as it is understood that this decision impacts all of the guardianship community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stacey Johnson', with a stylized, cursive script.

Stacey Johnson, Manager  
Office of Guardianship and Elder Services