



## **OFFICE OF PUBLIC GUARDIAN RELEASES ANNUAL REPORT 2020**

The Office of Public Guardian has issued its 2020 Annual Report, outlining specific data regarding the number of wards, types of guardianship/conservatorship cases, and waiting list. Additionally, readers will find stories and observations by Associate Public Guardians and wards throughout the state on the impact of COVID-19 on their lives. The report strives to give a voice to the experiences of some of Nebraska's most vulnerable people. Despite the difficulties of the pandemic, it is evident that the oversight and commitment to care of these individuals has had positive results. As a direct result of Associate Public Guardian oversight and advocacy, wards have received testing, the appropriate level of care and monitoring, have qualified for experimental treatment, and have been hospitalized when needed. Lives have been saved. **The full report can be found [HERE](#).**

## **LUDDEN APPOINTED TO CGC BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

The Office of Public Guardian (OPG) is pleased to announce that Lisa Ludden, Associate Public Guardian in the Norfolk service area, was appointed to the Board of Trustees for the [Center for Guardianship Certification](#) (CGC) for a 1-year term. Ms. Ludden is a National Certified Guardian and has been with the OPG since April 2017. The Center for Guardianship Certification's mission is to enhance the quality of guardianship services by providing examination and certification of guardians and fiduciaries. The OPG values its relationship with the CGC as well as the [National Guardianship Association](#) (NGA). The OPG's Guardian/Conservator Education course includes the NGA's Standards of Practice and Code of Ethics. The course also includes the core competencies required by the Center for Guardianship Certification for national certification. More information about Ms. Ludden's appointment can be found [HERE](#).

## **WINTER HOLIDAY CARD DRIVE DONORS - THANK YOU!**

In late fall 2020, the Office of Public Guardian (OPG) issued an all-call for expanded greetings to their nearly 280 wards isolated by COVID-19 during the winter holiday season. Judicial Branch employees across the state responded in droves with holiday cards, treats, and gifts. The OPG was able to distribute something to every person served in December 2020. Associate Public Guardians delivered the gifts the week of Christmas, and the ward's reactions were heartwarming. OPG wards and staff alike truly appreciate that members of the Judicial Branch are thinking of them during this trying time.

## **COVID-19 VACCINE UPDATE AND RESOURCES**

With the distribution of vaccines for COVID-19 underway, the Office of Public Guardian has worked diligently with medical teams and pharmacies to facilitate vaccinations for OPG wards. Many of the individuals served by the OPG qualify for vaccination during Phases 1A and 1B. The Office of Public Guardian follows best practices for medical decision-making, which includes reviewing vaccine information, considering a ward's medical history including prior reactions to vaccines, review of consent forms by OPG Legal Counsel, and maintaining communication with wards and facilities throughout the process to monitor for adverse reactions. The OPG regularly reviews guidance from the [Centers for Disease Control, Health and Human Services, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid, Nebraska DHHS](#), and the [National Guardianship Association](#). Every guardian should review all available information and do their due diligence before providing informed consent for COVID-19 vaccinations.

## **PRIVATE GUARDIAN RESOURCES**

For a full listing of resources and support available to private guardians, visit our [website](#). Refresh your knowledge with our free [webinars](#). Finally, follow us on [Facebook](#) for regular updates, resources, and information.