

## ATASCOSA COUNTY JUDGES REPORT

The state legislature passed a bill last session requiring all guardians to be certified by the state before they can become a guardian. That took effect June 1, 2018. There are other legal requirements already in place by the State Estate Code and are still effective. They are also working toward developing a master file of all guardianships in the State Office of Court Administration. They will then exercise oversight on the maintenance of the guardianships enrolled by each county statewide. Because Atascosa has not ever done a comprehensive clean-up of inactive guardianships we have had a crew working on that for the last 3 months. My Court Visitors and some part-time students have been pouring over all open files and reviewing them for current annual filings. If they find they are not current they go in a separate stack where they are analyzed for status. Such as, is the ward deceased, is the ward a child that has aged out of the need (become an adult) or is the ward still in place but the guardian is delinquent in reporting. The Court Visitors are physically going to see the wards and check on their treatment and condition. The Court Visitor completes a form on this report that goes to me and then is filed in the guardianship case file. If the case needs to be closed (deceased, aged out, no need for guardianship anymore) I sign a court order closing them. I have signed hundreds and hundreds of these orders. We are going back to 1940, assuming all from that date are deceased or aged out.

Why is this important? Keeping current files with annual financial and medical updates is the only way the court (me) can determine that the ward is being cared for and their financial assets are preserved and properly accounted for. Without the legally required annual reports the case goes inactive. The court needs to know that every ward in Atascosa County is properly cared for.

Thanks for listening.

We want you to be proud of your County Government.