



1104 England Drive
Cookeville, TN 38501

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

PUBLIC GUARDIANSHIP LEGAL COUNSEL APPLICATION

TO PROVIDE LEGAL SERVICES FOR THE PUBLIC GUARDIANSHIP PROGRAM UNDER STATE FUNDS

RFP ISSUED: February 3, 2026

SUBMISSION PERIOD: February 11, 2026 - March 13, 2026 (4:30 P.M. CST)

BID OPENING: March 16, 2026 at 3:00 P.M. CST at the office of the UCDD.

Bids will be scored within 17 calendar days and posted
afterwards at <https://ucdd.org/aaad/rfpa/>

AWARD PERIOD: July 1, 2026 - June 30, 2030

INTRODUCTION

In preparation of the Upper Cumberland Area Agency on Aging and Disability's (AAAD) four-year Area Plan (FY2027 – FY2030), applications to deliver legal services for the state funded Public Guardianship program are being accepted from February 11, 2026 until March 13, 2026 at 4:30 pm CST. The service delivery area includes: Cannon, Clay, Cumberland, DeKalb, Fentress, Jackson, Macon, Overton, Pickett, Putnam, Smith, Van Buren, Warren, and White Counties.

CORRESPONDENCE & QUESTIONS

All correspondence and questions concerning the RFP are to be submitted via email to kclarkson@ucdd.org. Questions should reference the section of the RFP to which the questions pertain and all contact information for the person submitting the questions. All emailed questions will be answered and posted on the AAAD website <https://ucdd.org/aaad/rfpa/> mostly within forty-eight (48) hours. In order to prevent an unfair advantage to any respondent, verbal questions will not be answered. These guidelines for communication have been established to ensure a fair and equitable process for all interested applicants.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION & TIMELINE

All applications must be typed and submitted electronically via email to UCRFPA@ucdd.org between February 11, 2026-March 13, 2026 (4:30 P.M. CST). Facsimile or mailed proposals will not be accepted. Late or incomplete proposals may not be considered for evaluation. Under no circumstances will this deadline be extended.

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Upper Cumberland Area Agency on Aging and Disability RFPA Overview

The Upper Cumberland Area Agency on Aging and Disability (AAAD) is accepting bids for legal services for the Public Guardianship Program, state funded, through the Tennessee Department of Disability and Aging (DDA). The service delivery area includes: Cannon, Clay, Cumberland, DeKalb, Fentress, Jackson, Macon, Overton, Pickett, Putnam, Smith, Van Buren, Warren, and White Counties.

All contract requirements will comply with the Tennessee Department of Disability and Aging Policies and Procedures manual (a copy of which is available upon request).

The right is reserved, as the interest of the AAAD may require, to reject any and all bids and to waive any formality in bids received. The AAAD reserves the right to make an award on all items or on any of the items and for an item quantity less than the quantity bid unless qualified by specific limitation of the bidder. The contract shall be awarded to the best evaluated responsible bidder that has submitted a bid which conforms in all material aspects to the RFPA and is scored by an evaluation team to be one of the best evaluated overall proposals. Responsible Bidder is defined as a bidder that has the capacity in all respects to perform fully the contract requirements, and the integrity and reliability, which will assure good faith performance.

The bidder is specifically advised that any person, firm, or other party to whom it is proposed to award a subcontract under this contract must be acceptable to and approved by the AAAD.

The contract dates will be July 1, 2027 thru June 30, 2030. Contracts will be issued on an annual basis and will reflect any updates to current policy.

The Service Provider shall not assign any part of this agreement, its obligations, or rights to any party, company, partnership, or corporation.

Purpose/Background of Public Guardianship for the Elderly Program

The Public Guardianship for the Elderly Program (hereinafter the “program”) was created under Tenn. Code Ann. § 34-7-103 to provide guardianship for the elderly and is administered by the Tennessee Department of Disability and Aging (DDA).

The purpose of this policy is to implement a statewide program that is available to adults age 60 and over who:

- (1) Are unable to make personal decisions regarding their health and safety, manage their resources;
- (2) Have no family member, friend, bank, or corporation willing and able to act on their behalf; and
- (3) Does not have adequate resources for the compensation of a private conservator to pay legal fees and court costs. This policy applies to the Tennessee Department of Disability and Aging and grantee agencies in each of the nine (9) development districts.

Public Guardianship Program Legal Counsel Request for Proposal Application

Applicant Organization Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Contact (Name): _____

Email Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____

Fiscal Contact (Name & #): _____

Date of Application: _____

I. COVER LETTER

Applicant must provide a cover letter signed by an authorized individual submitting the proposal on behalf of their agency.

Cover Letter – At a minimum, this letter must include the following:

- A statement that the accompanying application is in response to this application.
- A statement that the applicant is willing, if selected, to execute a contract with the grantee agency of the Area Agency on Aging and Disability (AAAD).
- A statement identifying the individual(s) authorized to finalize a contract with the grantee agency of the AAAD on behalf of the Applicant.

II. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE and INFORMATION

a) Provide a W-9

b) Indicate the status of your agency (Check all that apply):

- For-Profit Corporation
- Non-Profit Corporation
- Minority owned/operated
- Small Business
- Women owned/operated
- Faith-based organization
- Government
- None of the above

c) Place of Establishment: _____

d) Date of Establishment: _____

e) State where Licensed / Incorporated: _____

- f) Organizational Capacity (For single organization unit responsible for delivering proposed service(s)).
 - 1. Governing Body: *(Describe structure and responsibilities. Provide a list of the present membership of the Board of Directors or other governing body of the applicant. The list must include each member's name, address, sex, race and whether he or she is a person with a disability. Also include the method used for selecting and replacing board members.)*
 - 2. Organization Chart {for overall agency and single organization unit responsible for delivering proposed service(s).} (including governing body, if applicable)

III. LICENSES, CERTIFICATION, PERMITS, and ACCREDITATION

Provide copies of all required licenses, certifications, permits, and accreditation required by the state or federal governments, including the following:

- a) A copy of any licensures related to the proposed services (i.e., PSSA, etc.)
- b) Any required business license (i.e., 501(c), etc.)
- c) A copy of the Applicant's current Certificate of Insurances and Workers Compensation (i.e., Liability and Bond, etc.)

IV. HISTORY, EXPERIENCE, and MISSION

Provide the following information about the Applicant's history, experience, and mission:

- a) A brief history of the Applicant and its service delivery system for proposed Public Guardianship Legal Counsel
- b) The Applicant's mission statement, values, and guiding principles
- c) Describe organizational experience in working with older persons and/or adults with disabilities.

V. PERSONAL AND TRAINING

Provide the following information related to personnel and training:

- a) Identify the key personnel who will be involved with the program. Please make available upon request a resume for each of the key personnel.
- b) Identify the supervisory structure related to proposed service delivery.
- c) Describe the qualifications and required competencies for persons who will serve as direct service workers. Include job descriptions.
- d) Include the proposed training approaches and curriculum to be used to keep staff current in service delivery and best practices in services and supports.

VI. FINANCIAL CAPACITY

Provide the following documentation to show the Applicant's financial management capacity:

- a) If available, the most recently completed audited financial statements of Applicant

If an audited financial statement is not available, you must provide the following information:

1. IRS tax reporting forms / tax return is appropriate for the submitting organization.
2. A current written bank reference, in the form of a standard business letter, indicating that the applicant's business relationship with the financial institution is in positive standing.
3. Two (2) current written positive credit references in the form of standard business letters from vendors with which the applicant has done business, or documentation of a positive credit rating determined by an accredited credit bureau within the last six (6) months.

VII. ASSURANCES AND CERTIFICATIONS

By signing this application, the Applicant agrees:

- a) To certify that, under penalty of perjury, your provider organization has completed this Provider Application independent of any outside influence which may result in your receiving privileged information about this RFPA.
- b) To certify that this RFPA factually represents your administrative capabilities and proposed services, and that if your organization is approved, you agree to abide by the terms and conditions of the Provider Contract.
- c) To certify that if your organization is approved, you agree to contract with the AAAD for services at your usual and customary charges not to exceed the maximum charges outlined in this provider application.
- d) To certify that your organization is in compliance with the specific Service Description and Standards required by the State for each proposed service activity.
- e) To certify that your organization has written policies regarding the following:

• Personnel Policies	• Affirmative Action Policy
• Non-discrimination in Hiring Policy	• Confidentiality Policy
• Non-discrimination in Service Delivery Policy	• Civil Rights Compliance Policy <i>(Title VI and VII)</i>
• ADA Compliance Policy	• Certification Regarding Lobbying
• Drug Free Policy	• Prohibition on Illegal Immigrants Policy

- f) To certify that your organization has secured all required licenses, certifications, permits and accreditation (as required by the State and/or Federal governments).

VIII. SERVICE DELIVERY

- a) Provide a detailed narrative describing the applicant's service delivery plan and how all previously listed provider requirements will be met.
- b) Explain the organization's policy process for conducting and maintaining documentation on criminal background checks for staff involved in service delivery related to this application.
- c) Provide proposed hourly rate for legal services.

**PUBLIC GUARDIANSHIP LEGAL SERVICES APPLICATION
AUTHORIZATION FOR SUBMISSION**

Legal Name of Applicant Agency

Submits this application as part of its response to the Request for Proposal solicited by the AAAD. This application and all materials provided in response to the RFP will become part of any contract should the Applicant's proposal be selected.

Executive Director / CEO / President Applicant Organization

Date

Print Name of Executive Director _____

Chairman, Governing Body

Date

Print Name of Chairman _____

LEGAL SERVICES FOR THE PUBLIC GUARDIANSHIP PROGRAM SCOPE OF WORK

The Service Provider Shall:

1. For the purposes of this contract, services can be provided for disabled persons who are aged sixty (60) or older who have no family members or other person, bank or corporation willing and able to serve as conservator. Services may be provided to disabled persons who are younger than aged sixty (60), if the request is made through the court, the court has found on record no less intrusive alternatives, the disabled person have no family members or other person, bank, or corporation willing and able to serve as conservator, and the Tennessee Department of Disability and Aging approves the district public guardian to serve as conservator. Tenn Code Ann. § 34-7- 104(n)(1)
2. The Service Provider for the Public Guardianship for the Elderly Program shall comply with the administrative, program, and fiscal requirements contained in the Tennessee Department Disability and Aging, *Program and Policy Manual*, Chapter 9 and any relevant state laws, regulations and rules.
3. The Service Provider shall comply with all portions of Tenn. Code Ann.§ 34-7-101 *et. seq.* governing guardianship and the provisions of Tenn. Code Ann. § 34-3-101 *et. seq.* governing requirements of conservatorships.
4. The Service Provider shall provide legal services to the UCDD's Public Guardianship for the Elderly Program with the following overall duties and responsibilities:
 - a) Represent the UCDD's PG program as the attorney of record regarding matters of conservatorship.
 - b) Prepare petitions, motions, orders, pleadings and notices related to clients of UCDD Public Guardianship Program.
 - c) Provide legal advice to UCDD Public Guardianship staff regarding Tennessee law as it relates to Conservatorships, including but not limited to, authority and responsibility of the Fiduciary, individual rights and rights of interested parties.
 - d) Make Court appearances on behalf of UCDD Public Guardianship program in all county district service areas.
 - e) Perform records research and view client's assets where necessary to determine value.
 - f) Provide professional liability insurance with sufficient coverage limits, including malpractice insurance.
 - g) Provide to UCDD and/or State at any time all pertinent documents, reports petitions, motions, orders, pleadings and notices related to client.
 - h) Submit timely information and documentation in advance to the UCDD Public

Guardianship Program to allow for monthly reporting due to the State on the 15th day of each month.

- i) Keep and maintain documentation of all contact and services provided with or on the behalf of the client.
 - j) Maintain and retain records for a period of five (5) years plus current year.
 - k) Comply with all state laws relating to mandated reporting of abuse, neglect, and/or exploitation of clients.
 - l) Observe strict confidentiality policies and procedures when handling all matters related to clients.
5. The Service Provider agrees to serve as legal counsel for the Public Guardianship Program for the Elderly Program, and shall:
- a) Provide all Program information, licenses and bonds necessary to properly and adequately represent the Program.
 - b) Provide all client file information necessary to properly and adequately represent the client, including but not limited to, orders of appointment, inventory, property management plans, accountings, motions, petitions, affidavits and general correspondence.
6. If the disabled person qualifies for SSI benefits, no charge will be made against the disabled person's estate for court costs or fees of any kind. The Service Provider and UCDD agree that if the client has the resources to pay for their own legal fees, then legal fees will be requested to be paid from the client's resources. In such circumstances the Service Provider will be responsible for filing all legal documents with the Court.
7. The Service Provider shall not act without UCDD's consent regarding the filing of motions, orders, accountings, inventories, property management plans, petitions and affidavits.

RFPA CHECKLIST

- Cover Letter
- W-9
- Audited financial statement or other requested financial information
- Business License/Business Status
- Valid certificate of liability insurance
- Service Delivery explanation, & Attachment 1 – Scope of Work, Timeline for implementation
- Policy for conducting/maintaining background checks

- History, Governing Body, Organizational Chart, Experience
- Mission Statement, Values/Guiding Principles

- Personnel – supervisory structure, qualifications/job descriptions, proposed training and curriculum
- Verification of Workers Compensation Insurance
- Signed Authorization for submission

*This Section is
completed by Area
Agency Staff only.*

RFPA EVALUATION AND SCORING

Applicant Name: _____

Name of Individual Scoring Application: _____

Date: _____

Total Points Earned: _____

RFPA Requirement	Points Possible	Points Earned	Comments
Documentation of all required licenses to provide services; organizational information provided	5		
Record of accurate and timely billing	1-3		AAAD Assistant Director can provide documentation of record
Staff Adequacy (Law firm has more than four attorneys on staff)	5		Sufficient qualified staff available (credentialed)
Law firm has been established at least 5 years	2-10		2 points for 5 years; 1 point for every 5 years thereafter (maximum 10 points)
Organization has provided services to a PG program for more than 1 year	1-4		1 point per year up to 4 years
Multiple county proposal	1 point per county		1 point per county covered in district
Counsel has worked with/on conservatorship cases	2		
Total			