



### DILIGENT SEARCH INSTRUCTIONS

In guardianship and conservatorship cases there are strict notice requirements. Some relatives of the ward and/or conservatee need to be served personally and some need to be served by mail. You must do a thorough search, and document each of those searches. Attached is the Due Diligence form, answer each of the questions, and be specific in your answers, attach copies of proof when available and explain when proof is not available. You will need to use a separate form for each party you cannot locate. If you absolutely do not know a relative you might need to hire someone to assist you. But first try out the procedures below.

#### **PHASE 1: SEARCH FOR THE RELATIVES:**

Carefully document your attempts to locate all relatives: On your notes, include the date, time and description of what you did by the following means:

1. Send a letter to the Relative's last known address (even if this is the current address of yourself). The letter must be sent Certified Mail, Return Receipt Requested, Restricted Delivery. **NOTE:** If the receipt returns with the Relative's signature, service should immediately be attempted at that address.
2. Contact any known friends and family members of the Relative. For example any phone numbers or addresses must be pursued by telephone call or letter. Document (write down) all contacts with friends or relatives, even if this step proves fruitless, since this information will be used on the Declaration of Diligent Search. When you speak to any friend or family member, ask them questions if they know where the Relative was employed, or if they know of other friends and/or family members and where you can locate them. Make sure to write down what you were told and the name and address of the person who provided you the information. Make sure to follow up on any information and document any follow-up interviews.
3. Contact employers or former employers of the Relative. Document who the employer is, their title and business names and the result of the interview. If they provide you with information on the Relative then repeat step 2.
4. Search telephone directories and county assessor's real and personal property indexes for the county where the Relative was last known to have resided and/or owned property. Obtain written documentation for all searches (such as a photocopy of the appropriate pages in a telephone directory). Make sure to follow up either by mail or by telephoning the persons listed to see if they are the Relative you are seeking.
5. Check voter registration records and document what you find. If you were able to locate information attach a copy and follow-up with that information.
6. Search the internet. You might try [www.zabasearch.com](http://www.zabasearch.com) or [www.privateeye.com](http://www.privateeye.com). On zabasearch.com you can sometimes get a telephone number and/or addresses and on privateeye.com they list possible relatives. Although the initial search is free, you will have to pay if you request a report. There are other sites on the internet you can use. Attempt to contact anyone that might be related to the Relative. Print a copy of the search results and write notes about what you have.
7. Contact the criminal justice agency (such as California Department of Corrections Locator Service at 916-445-6713). If there is a chance that the Relative is imprisoned in another state contact that State's Department of Corrections. Document everything thing that you are able to find.
8. Interview former neighbors, care facilities, medical staff of local hospitals or doctor's offices that the Relative might have used. Remember to document and follow-up on what you find.

If you do find the Relative in your search then you will need to get them served in the appropriate manner.