



SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA
COUNTY OF SACRAMENTO

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Sacramento Superior Court and Lincoln Law School of Sacramento Implement Guardianship Assistance Program

Sacramento, CA—Sacramento Superior Court has partnered with Lincoln Law School of Sacramento to provide in-person courtroom assistance to individuals representing themselves in guardianship cases.

“This endeavor improves the public’s access to justice while providing law students with valuable hands-on experience,” said Presiding Judge Bunmi O. Awoniyi.

A guardianship is a legal arrangement in which a court appoints a family member or other interested person to make decisions for a minor whose parents have passed away or are unable or unwilling to care for the minor. A guardianship may also be to obtain legal status in the United States for an immigrant under 21.

In these cases, the person being cared for is called the ward, and the person appointed to care for them is the guardian.

Guardianship can involve making decisions about housing, medical care, legal issues, financial issues and services, and education. There are two types of guardianships:

- **Guardian of the person:** The guardian has the right to make legal decisions in the ward's life, such as where the child goes to school and their medical care.
- **Guardian of the estate:** The guardian manages the ward's resources.

In California, guardianship suspends a parent's rights but does not terminate them. The guardianship continues until the ward is emancipated, adopted, turns 18 (excluding legal status for immigrants), passes away, or until further court order.

Each Friday, Lincoln Law School student volunteers are available in Department 129 in the Probate Division at the William R. Ridgeway Family Relations Courthouse to help

litigants representing themselves complete the required forms to obtain the orders they need on the same day as their hearing. This allows parties to leave with orders in hand rather than having their hearings continued.

This new partnership between Sacramento Superior Court and Lincoln Law School of Sacramento has resulted in fewer delays for the litigants and children needing care and support, has reduced the caseload for the Court, and has provided law students with an opportunity to gain valuable experience.