

## Public Administrators and Public Guardians

Under 755 ILCS 5/13-1, each county in Illinois has a Public Administrator (PA) and Public Guardian (PG) to manage estates and safeguard the interests of individuals who lack suitable personal representatives. These officials play a vital role in ensuring that estates are administered responsibly, and vulnerable individuals receive necessary protection. Both PAs and PGs are appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate, and the length of one term is 4 years.

In counties with less than 1,000,000 people, compensation for PAs and PGs come from fees ordered by the court. For counties with more than 1,000,000 people, compensation starts at \$20,000 annually.

Except in Cook and DuPage counties, the same person serves as both Guardian and Administrator for the county. Individuals can serve more than one county.

**Public Administrators** handle the estates of deceased individuals who die intestate (without a will) and have no known relatives or representatives willing to act. Responsibilities include the following: collecting and preserving estate assets, identifying and notifying potential heirs, paying valid creditors, filing all required court and accounting documents, and appearing in court proceedings related to administered estates.

**Public Guardians** handle the care and estates of adults with disabilities who need guardianship services. Responsibilities include the following: making informed decisions regarding healthcare, living arrangements, and personal care; developing and implementing care plans appropriate to each individual's needs and preferences; managing financial assets and applying for appropriate benefits; and submitting regular reports to the court regarding individuals' status and care.

Many Public Guardians find the [Illinois Guardianship Association](#) to be a helpful resource and network.

Both positions are appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate. PAs and PGs are accountable for their actions, adhering to strict legal and ethical guidelines to prevent abuse and mismanagement.

### Qualifications

- Must be at least 18 years old;
- Must be a resident of the United States;
- Must not have any felony convictions involving minors, the elderly, or people with disabilities;
- Must not have a disability making them incapable of performing their duties.

Within 6 months of being appointed, each Public Guardian appointed by the Governor must:

- Be certified as a National Certified Guardian by the Center for Guardianship Certification.
- Complete a one-hour course on Alzheimer's disease and dementia.

Before assuming the role, every PA/PG must take and file in the court of each county in which the public/administrator serves (1) an oath to remain faithful to the U.S. Constitution in their duties, and (2) a bond payable to the People of the State of Illinois for no less than \$5,000 approved by the court on the condition of fulfillment of their duties. In fulfillment of the bond requirements, the PAs/PGs appointed by the Governor are covered by and may choose to file proof of the State's blanket bond for public officers, under the State's General & Auto liability self-insured plans rather than procuring an individual bond.

### How to Apply

Anyone interested in being considered for an appointment as a Public Administrator or Public Guardian must complete a [Gubernatorial Appointment application](#). Anyone who needs help with the process can also email [Lee.Waldman@illinois.gov](mailto:Lee.Waldman@illinois.gov) or call him at 773-848-6937.