

RCW 11.130.430 Emergency conservator. (1) A person interested in an individual's welfare, including the individual for whom the order is sought, may petition for appointment of an emergency conservator for the individual.

(2) An emergency petition under subsection (1) of this section must state the petitioner's name, principal residence, and current street address, if different, and, to the extent known, the following:

(a) The respondent's name, age, principal residence, and current street address, if different;

(b) The name and address of the respondent's:

(i) Spouse or domestic partner or, if the respondent has none, an adult with whom the respondent has shared household responsibilities for more than six months in the twelve-month period immediately before the filing of the emergency petition;

(ii) Adult children or, if none, each parent and adult sibling of the respondent, or, if none, at least one adult nearest in kinship to the respondent who can be found with reasonable diligence; and

(iii) Adult stepchildren whom the respondent actively parented during the stepchildren's minor years and with whom the respondent had an ongoing relationship in the two-year period immediately before the filing of the emergency petition;

(c) The name and current address of each of the following, if applicable:

(i) A person responsible for care of the respondent;

(ii) Any attorney currently representing the respondent;

(iii) Any representative payee appointed by the social security administration for the respondent;

(iv) A guardian or conservator acting for the respondent in this state or in another jurisdiction;

(v) A trustee or custodian of a trust or custodianship of which the respondent is a beneficiary;

(vi) Any fiduciary for the respondent appointed by the department of veterans affairs;

(vii) Any representative payee or authorized representative or protective payee;

(viii) An agent designated under a power of attorney for health care in which the respondent is identified as the principal;

(ix) An agent designated under a power of attorney for finances in which the respondent is identified as the principal;

(x) A person nominated as conservator by the respondent;

(xi) A person nominated as conservator by the respondent's parent or spouse or domestic partner in a will or other signed record;

(xii) A proposed emergency conservator, and the reason the proposed emergency conservator should be selected; and

(xiii) A person known to have routinely assisted the respondent with decision making during the six months immediately before the filing of the emergency petition;

(d) The reason an emergency conservatorship is necessary, including a specific description of:

(i) The nature and extent of the emergency situation;

(ii) The nature and extent of the individual's alleged emergency need that arose because of the emergency situation;

(iii) The substantial and irreparable harm to the individual's property or financial interests that is likely to be prevented by the appointment of an emergency conservator;

(iv) All protective arrangements or other less restrictive alternatives that have been considered or implemented to meet the

individual's alleged emergency needs instead of emergency conservatorship;

(v) If no protective arrangements or other less restrictive alternatives have been considered or implemented instead of emergency conservatorship, the reason they have not been considered or implemented; and

(vi) The reason a protective arrangement or other less restrictive alternative instead of emergency conservatorship is insufficient to meet the individual's alleged emergency need;

(e) The reason the petitioner believes that a basis for appointment of a conservator under RCW 11.130.360 exists;

(f) Whether the petitioner intends to also seek conservatorship for an individual under RCW 11.130.365;

(g) The reason the petitioner believes that no other person appears to have authority and willingness to act to address the individual's identified needs caused by the emergency circumstances;

(h) The specific powers to be granted to the proposed emergency conservator and a description of how those powers will be used to meet the individual's alleged emergency need;

(i) If the individual has property other than personal effects, a general statement of the individual's property, with an estimate of its value, including any insurance or pension, and the source and amount of other anticipated income or receipts; and

(j) Whether the individual needs an interpreter, translator, or other form of support to communicate effectively with the court or understand court proceedings.

(3) The requirements of RCW 11.130.090 apply to an emergency conservator appointed for an individual with the following exceptions for any proposed emergency conservator required to complete the training under RCW 11.130.090:

(a) The proposed emergency conservator shall present evidence of the successful completion of the required training video or web cast to the court no later than the hearing on the petition for appointment of an emergency conservator for an individual; and

(b) The superior court may defer the completion of the training requirement to a date no later than fourteen days after appointment if the petitioner requests an extension of time to complete the training due to emergent circumstances beyond the control of the petitioner.

(4) On its own or on petition for appointment of an emergency conservator for an individual after a petition has been filed under RCW 11.130.365, the court may appoint an emergency conservator for the individual if the court makes specific findings based on clear and convincing evidence that:

(a) An emergency exists such that appointment of an emergency conservator is likely to prevent substantial and irreparable harm to the individual's property or financial interests;

(b) The individual's identified needs caused by the emergency cannot be met by a protective arrangement or other less restrictive alternative instead of emergency conservatorship;

(c) No other person appears to have authority and willingness to act to address the individual's identified needs caused by the emergency circumstances; and

(d) There is reason to believe that a basis for appointment of a conservator under RCW 11.130.360 exists.

(5) If the court acts on its own to appoint an emergency conservator after a petition has been filed under RCW 11.130.365, all requirements of this section shall be met.

(6) A court order appointing an emergency conservator for an individual shall:

(a) Grant only the specific powers necessary to meet the individual's identified emergency need and to prevent substantial and irreparable harm to the individual's property or financial interests;

(b) Include a specific finding that clear and convincing evidence established that an emergency exists such that appointment of an emergency conservator is likely to prevent substantial and irreparable harm to the individual's property or financial interests;

(c) Include a specific finding that the identified emergency need of the individual cannot be met by a protective arrangement instead of conservatorship or other less restrictive alternative, including any relief available under chapter 74.34 RCW or use of appropriate supportive services, technological assistance, or supported decision making;

(d) Include a specific finding that clear and convincing evidence established the adult respondent was given proper notice of the hearing on the petition;

(e) State that the individual subject to emergency conservatorship retains all rights the individual enjoyed prior to the emergency conservatorship with the exception of the rights not retained during the period of emergency conservatorship;

(f) Require the emergency conservator to furnish a bond or other security under RCW 11.130.445;

(g) Include the date that the sixty-day period of emergency conservatorship ends, and the date the emergency conservator's report, required by this section, is due to the court; and

(h) Identify any person or notice party that subsequently is entitled to:

(i) Notice of the rights of the individual;

(ii) Notice of a change in the primary dwelling of the individual;

(iii) Notice of the removal of the conservator;

(iv) A copy of the emergency conservator's plan and the emergency conservator's report under this section;

(v) Access to court records relating to the emergency conservatorship;

(vi) Notice of the death or significant change in the condition of the individual;

(vii) Notice that the court has limited or modified the powers of the emergency conservator; and

(viii) Notice of the removal of the emergency conservator.

(7) A spouse, a domestic partner, and adult children of an adult subject to emergency conservatorship are entitled to notice under this section unless the court orders otherwise based on good cause. Good cause includes the court's determination that notice would be contrary to the preferences or prior directions of the individual subject to emergency conservatorship or in the best interest of the individual.

(8) The duration of authority of an emergency conservator may not exceed sixty days and the emergency conservator may exercise only the powers specified in the order of appointment. Upon a motion by the emergency conservator, with notice served upon all applicable notice parties, the emergency conservator's authority may be extended once for not more than sixty days if the court finds that the conditions for appointment of an emergency conservator under subsection (4) of this section continue.

(9) Immediately on filing of a petition for an emergency conservator for an adult, the court shall appoint an attorney to represent the adult in the proceeding. An order appointing an emergency conservator for an adult may not be entered unless the adult respondent, the adult respondent's attorney, and the court visitor appointed under subsection (10) of this section have received a minimum of fourteen days' notice of the date, time, and place of a hearing on the petition. The petitioner must personally serve a copy of the emergency petition and notice of a hearing on the petition on the adult respondent, the adult respondent's attorney, and the court visitor appointed under subsection (10) of this section not more than two court days after the petition has been filed. The notice must inform the respondent of the adult respondent's rights at the hearing, including the right to an attorney and to attend the hearing. The notice must include a description of the nature, purpose, and consequences of granting the emergency petition. The court shall not grant the emergency petition if notice substantially complying with this subsection is not served on the respondent.

(10)(a) On receipt of a petition for appointment of emergency conservator for an individual, the court:

(i) Shall appoint a court visitor if an emergency conservator is sought for an adult; or

(ii) May appoint a court visitor if an emergency conservator is sought for a minor.

(b) Notice of appointment of the court visitor must be served upon the court visitor within two days of appointment by the petitioner. The court visitor must be an individual with training or experience in the type of abilities, limitations, and needs alleged in the emergency petition. The court, in the order appointing a court visitor, shall specify the hourly rate the court visitor may charge for his or her services, and shall specify the maximum amount the court visitor may charge without additional court review and approval.

(c) The court visitor shall within two days of service of notice of appointment file with the court and serve, either personally or by certified mail with return receipt, the respondent or the respondent's legal counsel, the petitioner or the petitioner's legal counsel, and any notice party with a statement including the court visitor's: Training relating to the duties as a court visitor; criminal history as defined in RCW 9.94A.030 for the period covering ten years prior to the appointment; hourly rate, if compensated; contact, if any, with a party to the proceeding prior to appointment; and apparent or actual conflicts of interest.

(d) A court visitor appointed under this section shall use due diligence to attempt to interview the adult respondent in person and, in a manner the individual is best able to understand:

(i) Explain to the adult respondent the substance of the emergency petition, the nature, purpose, and effect of the proceeding, the respondent's rights at the hearing on the petition, and the proposed specific powers and duties of the proposed conservator as stated in the emergency petition;

(ii) Determine the adult respondent's views about the emergency appointment sought by the petitioner, including views about a proposed emergency conservator, the emergency conservator's proposed powers and duties, and the scope and duration of the proposed emergency conservatorship; and

(iii) Inform the adult respondent that all costs and expenses of the proceeding, including but not limited to the adult respondent's

attorneys' fees, the appointed conservator's fees, and the appointed conservator's attorneys' fees, will be paid from the individual's assets upon approval by the court.

(e) The court visitor appointed under this section shall:

(i) Interview the petitioner and proposed emergency conservator;

(ii) Use due diligence to attempt to visit the adult respondent's present dwelling;

(iii) Use due diligence to attempt to obtain information from any physician or other person known to have treated, advised, or assessed the adult respondent's relevant physical or mental condition; and

(iv) Investigate the allegations in the emergency petition and any other matter relating to the emergency petition the court directs.

(f) A court visitor appointed under this section shall file a report in a record with the court and provide a copy of the report to the petitioner, the adult subject to the emergency conservatorship, and any notice party at least seven days prior to the hearing on the emergency petition, which must include:

(i) A recommendation regarding the appropriateness of emergency conservatorship, including whether a protective arrangement instead of conservatorship or other less restrictive alternative for meeting the respondent's needs is available, and if an emergency conservatorship is recommended;

(ii) A detailed summary of the alleged emergency and the substantial and irreparable harm to the individual's property or finances that is likely to be prevented by the appointment of an emergency conservator;

(iii) A statement as to whether the alleged emergency and the respondent's alleged needs are likely to require an extension of sixty days as authorized under this section;

(iv) The specific powers to be granted to the emergency conservator and how the specific powers will address the alleged emergency and the respondent's alleged need;

(v) A recommendation regarding the appropriateness of an ongoing conservatorship for an individual, including whether a protective arrangement instead of conservatorship or other less restrictive alternative for meeting the respondent's needs is available;

(vi) A statement of the qualifications of the proposed emergency conservator and whether the respondent approves or disapproves of the proposed emergency conservator, and the reasons for such approval or disapproval;

(vii) A recommendation whether a professional evaluation under RCW 11.130.390 is necessary;

(viii) A statement whether the respondent is able to attend a hearing at the location court proceedings typically are held;

(ix) A statement whether the respondent is able to participate in a hearing which identifies any technology or other form of support that would enhance the respondent's ability to participate; and

(x) Any other matter the court directs.

(11) An emergency conservator shall:

(a) Comply with the requirements of RCW 11.130.505 and the requirements of this chapter that pertain to the rights of an individual subject to conservatorship;

(b) Not have authority to make decisions or take actions that a conservator for an individual is prohibited by law from having; and

(c) Be subject to the same special limitations on a conservator's power that apply to a conservator for an individual.

(12) Appointment of an emergency conservator under this section is not a determination that a basis exists for appointment of a conservator under RCW 11.130.360.

(13) The court may remove an emergency conservator appointed under this section at any time.

(14) The emergency conservator shall file a report in a record with the court and provide a copy of the report to the individual subject to emergency conservatorship, and any notice party no later than forty-five days after appointment. The report shall include specific and updated information regarding the emergency alleged in the emergency petition, the individual's emergency needs, all actions and decisions by the emergency conservator, and a recommendation as to whether a conservator for an individual should be appointed. If the appointment of the emergency conservator is extended for an additional sixty days, the emergency conservator shall file a second report in a record with the court and provide a copy of the report to the individual subject to emergency conservatorship, and any notice party no later than forty-five days after the emergency conservatorship is extended by the court, which shall include the same information required for the first report. The emergency conservator shall make any other report the court requires.

(15) The court shall issue letters of emergency conservatorship to the emergency conservator in compliance with RCW 11.130.040. [2024 c 267 s 11; 2020 c 312 s 217; 2019 c 437 s 413.]

Effective dates—2020 c 312: See note following RCW 11.130.915.