

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN AND SENIORS

Hon. Connie O'Brien, Chairman
Hon. Kelly Meigs, Vice Chairman
Hon. John Wilson, R.M. Leader

February 7, 2013, 9:00 am

Thank you, Chairman O'Brien for the invitation to speak to your committee. I am District Magistrate Judge Ann Dixson, 1st Vice President and Legislative Chair of the Kansas District Magistrate Judges Association. I serve my elected county of Kiowa as well as the 16th Judicial District which includes Dodge City.

As this is a newly formed committee this year, I thought I would give you an overview of the types of case that the Magistrate Court presides over that are related to children or seniors.

CHILD IN NEED OF CARE:

I have been on the bench for 18 years and have presided over large Child in Need of Care (CINC) dockets in Dodge City for 14 years. These cases can be quite intense and hearings may have as many as 6 attorneys representing different parties and the child. It is not uncommon to have 20 or more people in the courtroom on each case. These may be grandparents, other concerned family members, Department of Children and Families caseworkers, contracting agency service providers such as St. Francis Family Services, Youthville, or others. There may also be drug or alcohol counselors, representatives of the school where the child/children attend, mental health case workers, and more.

The CINC cases are titled; In the Interest of: Childs Name. It is the Courts duty in these cases to look at what is in the best interest of the child, and that the child should have permanency within a reasonable time. Time is measured through the eyes of a child, so it is the goal to move toward a permanent solution/reintegration with the family within 12 months if at all possible.

SENIORS:

GUARDIAN AND CONSERVATORSHIP CASES:

There are several types of cases that can be filed with the court in the interest of senior citizens. The most common cases are Guardian or Conservatorship cases when a senior is no longer able to make life decisions for manage their own financial affairs. The Guardian and/or Conservator is appointed to manage these day to day decisions and are required to make a report and accounting to the Court once a year.

ABUSE OF SENIORS:

At this time, abuse of senior citizens is investigated by DCF and law enforcement agencies. Physical abuse of any person is a crime with guidelines of punishment if someone is convicted. Mental or emotional abuse is also investigated in the same way.

ABUSE OF FIDUCIARY:

DCF may also be notified of these allegations for investigation.

I stand for your questions:

**Ann L. Dixon
District Magistrate Judge
211 E. Florida
Greensburg, KS 67054
620-723-3317**