

# How to Ask for a Court Visitor

## **WARNINGS!**

- *Use these instructions only if a Petition for Minor Guardianship has been filed. Do not use these instructions for Petitions for *Emergency* Minor Guardianship.*
- Your request for a court visitor should be made **before the 60-day hearing**.
- Due to COVID-19, most hearings are being done by phone or video. You should consult the King County Superior Court and the Ex Parte Department webpages for the most up to date information: <https://www.kingcounty.gov/courts/superior-court.aspx> <https://www.kingcounty.gov/courts/superior-court/ex-parte-probate.aspx>.

## **Talk to a lawyer, if you can**

These instructions have been developed by the King County Superior Court Family Law Information Center. They are not intended to be a substitute for legal advice. They provide only legal *information*. It's a good idea to talk to a lawyer before you file any forms.

If you **cannot** afford a lawyer, you can:

- Get a list of low-cost and free legal resources.  
<https://kingcounty.gov/~media/courts/superior-court/docs/family/facilitator/family-law-resources.ashx?la=en>
- Get help from the Family Law Facilitators office. You can get information about their services at <https://kingcounty.gov/courts/superior-court/family/facilitator.aspx>.

**Step 1: Fill out these forms.**

This form can be downloaded at: <https://kingcounty.gov/courts/superior-court/ex-parte-probate/Minor-Guardianships.aspx>

Form Name	Notes	Completed
<a href="#">Motion to Appoint Court Visitor</a>		<input type="checkbox"/>

This form can be downloaded at: <https://kingcounty.gov/~media/courts/Clerk/forms>

Form Name	Notes	Completed
<a href="#">Ex Parte via Clerk Coversheet</a>		<input type="checkbox"/>

**CHOOSE ONE of the following orders:**

This form can be downloaded at: <https://kingcounty.gov/courts/superior-court/ex-parte-probate/Minor-Guardianships.aspx>

Form Name	Notes	Completed
<a href="#">Order to Appoint Family Court Department for Court Visitor in Minor Guardianship</a>	A Court Visitor from the Family Court Department will provide only those services outlined in the court order. <b>Services are provided at no cost.</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**OR**

This form can be downloaded at: [www.courts.wa.gov/forms](http://www.courts.wa.gov/forms)

Form Name	Notes	Completed
<a href="#">Order Appointing Guardian ad Litem or Court Visitor</a>	Form number: GDN M 409 A registry of court visitors is maintained by the court. <b>Fees apply.</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Step 2: Request an Ex Parte via Clerk fee waiver if necessary.**

You must give the documents completed in Step 1 to the Clerk's Office, and a clerk will provide them to a commissioner in the Ex Parte department. This service is called Ex Parte via the Clerk, and there is a \$30 fee.

This fee can be waived if you cannot afford to pay it. To request a waiver, complete the forms available at:

<https://kingcounty.gov/~media/courts/Clerk/forms/ifp-clerk-fee-2021-att.ashx?la=en>.

**Step 3: Make copies of all documents from Step 1**

- **Original** set of forms is for the Clerk's Office
- Copy 1 you keep for your records
- Copy 2 is for the court visitor

**Step 4: Give original forms to the Clerk's Office.**

After all forms in Steps 1 and 2 have been completed, give them to the Clerk's Office: electronically, by mail, or in person. See <https://kingcounty.gov/courts/clerk/documents/ExParte.aspx#submission>.

The Clerk will present your documents to the Commissioner for you. After the Order is signed, the Clerk will file the necessary Step 1 documents in the court file.

Also, the Clerk will give you a copy of the signed Order; you choose how you want the Clerk to do that in the *Ex Parte via Clerk Coversheet*. (For example, email or in-person pick up.)

**Step 5: Notify the court visitor immediately.**

If a court visitor is appointed from the Family Court Department, email a copy of the *Order to Appoint Family Court Department for Court Visitor in Minor Guardianship* to [FCS@kingcounty.gov](mailto:FCS@kingcounty.gov).

If a court visitor is appointed from the registry, mail a copy of the *Order Appointing Guardian ad Litem or Court Visitor* to that person. You may also call the court visitor, who may agree to accept a copy via email.