



THE STATE  
*of* **ALASKA**  
GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

**Department of Administration**

LESLIE RIDLE, Commissioner

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Dear Representative Grenn:

During the Department of Administration overview before the House Finance Budget Subcommittee on January 23, 2018, we did not have immediate answer to two questions. Our responses are below:

*1) What is the court visitor program? How does it work?*

In all adult Guardianship and Conservatorship cases, a court visitor is appointed. A visitor is a neutral person trained or experienced in an area such as law, medicine or medical health care, education, rehabilitation, social work, etc., who is appointed by the court to make a thorough investigation, evaluation, and recommendation of all information relevant to the respondent's case. The court visitor does not represent any other party in a protective proceeding and makes a recommendation to the judge as to whether a guardianship or conservatorship is warranted, and if so, the type of protective appointment that is least restrictive and in the respondent's best interests. A court visitor will investigate by collecting all medical, psychological and financial records of the respondent and interviewing service providers and others with knowledge of the respondent or knowledge of the proposed guardian. The court visitor will summarize findings in a written recommendation to the Court.

*2) Was public broadcasting working and part of the process of alerting Alaskans during the recent earthquake and subsequent tsunami concern?*

Provided by the Alaska Public Broadcasting Commission: Yes, public broadcasting was very involved in providing alerts to communities affected by the recent Tsunami warning in Alaska. Most notably at the local level, stations in coastal areas broadcast the alerts as they received them from the National Weather Service. In Sitka, Homer, Kodiak, Unalaska, Juneau, and Anchorage, the local public stations were live on the air through the night with local voices, local news and locally verified information. Many public radio station general managers now serve on their community Local Emergency Planning Committees and are a part of the team in local emergency planning and notification.

Stations along the coast including KMXT Kodiak, KUCB Unalaska, KBBI Homer, KCAW Sitka, each had a team of people working to communicate evacuation orders to residents in low lying areas and to give information about where residents could shelter. KRBD Ketchikan, KCHU Valdez, KSDP Sand Point and other stations ran emergency alerts through the Emergency Alert System. News teams at Alaska Public Media in Anchorage and KTOO in Juneau were at their stations reporting on the regional and statewide effort even though their communities were not evacuating residents.

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss our agency programs with the subcommittee. If you have additional questions about the department's budget, please contact Cheri Lowenstein at 465-5655.

Sincerely,

Leslie Rider  
Commissioner