

# Video transcript: Guardianship and Decision-making for Vulnerable Adults

## About this audit

A guardian is a person who is legally appointed to make decisions for someone who can't make them themselves due to disability, such as intellectual impairment, mental illness or dementia.

The decisions might be about their accommodation, support services and healthcare.

The Office of the Public Advocate (or OPA) acts as a guardian of 'last resort' when there's no other suitable person to do this.

OPA also does investigations to find out if a person needs a guardian.

We examined if OPA's guardianship and investigation services promote and protect vulnerable adults' rights and interests.

## What we concluded

OPA provides crucial services for thousands of vulnerable adults each year. It does this in complex and challenging circumstances.

But it could do more to promote and protect these people's interests.

We found 3 key reasons for this.

### Key reason 1

First, OPA hasn't met its target timeframes to deliver services.

This means people may not always get the services they need in a timely manner.

It also makes it more difficult for OPA to understand what people want and make decisions that reflect this.

### Key reason 2

Second, there are gaps in OPA's record keeping, which limit its ability to oversee and report on the quality and timeliness of its services.

### Key reason 3

Third, there are gaps in how OPA plans, uses and oversees its resources, including its staff, IT systems and budget.

## What we recommended

We made 10 recommendations to OPA about improving how it plans and delivers services.

We also made 3 recommendations to the Department of Justice and Community Safety and OPA about improving their budgeting, recruitment and performance measures.

## More information

For more information please see the full report on our website.