

The Public Trustee of Queensland – Our Role as Administrator



INTRODUCTION

Administrators for financial matters are appointed by the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal or the Court. An administrator's role is to make prudent financial decisions that best promote the adult's independence and quality of life. Administrators are required to account to the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal. This includes lodging a proposed financial management plan and providing statements of account as requested. The Public Trustee is often appointed by the Tribunal to assist Queenslanders by managing their financial affairs.

WHO ARE WE?

The Public Trustee of Queensland was established in 1916 to provide trustee services for Queenslanders. The Public Trustee has assisted Queenslanders with the management of their financial affairs for over 90 years. Currently over 7,000 clients are provided with this service. The Public Trustee is the largest and most experienced professional Administrator in Queensland. The Public Trustee has 15 regional offices in all the major population centres of the State.

OUR ROLE AS ADMINISTRATOR

The Public Trustee has extensive experience and expertise in acting as administrator. We provide our clients with access to the following services:

Trust Officer

A Trust Officer assists each client with the management of their financial affairs. The Trust Officer can be contacted directly either by telephone, facsimile, e-mail or in person by appointment. The Trust Officer is supported by a range of professionals to achieve the best possible outcomes for each client. This includes

experts in investments, financial planning, property management, taxation and legal matters.

Financial Management Plan

The Trust Officer will meet with the client and their support network to prepare a Financial Management Plan. The Financial Management Plan enables the Public Trustee to tailor services which ensure the client's lifestyle goals and support needs are taken into consideration. The Financial Management Plan also provides an opportunity for clients and their carers to contribute their views and needs. The client or their nominated contact person is presented with a copy of the completed plan.

Each client is assisted in developing a budget detailing all income and expenses as well as future capital expenditure. The budget supports the client's lifestyle to ensure their needs are met both now and into the future. The Trust Officer will work with the client to change the budget if the client's circumstances change.

Some clients also require financial planning advice. Where required, a Statement of Advice is prepared as part of the Financial Management Plan. The Statement of Advice takes into account the client's budget, assets and liabilities, lifestyle and financial goals as well as their immediate and longer term needs. The Statement of Advice ensures the client's money is invested to provide sufficient income and capital to promote their financial security and quality of life. The Statement of Advice is presented to the client or the nominated contact person prior to implementation and is reviewed at least once a year or earlier if required.

Payment of accounts and bills

We can pay some or all of the client's bills on their behalf. This includes accommodation, living expenses, insurance, medical and pharmaceutical expenses as well as property costs such as rates



and insurance. Such expenses are included in the client's budget to ensure that sufficient funds are available for payment.

Income and Investments

We help clients to receive their full income entitlements such as Centrelink benefits. Each client's taxation obligations are reviewed annually. In addition, our office also provides a range of investment products to ensure surplus funds are prudently invested.

Statement of Account

We provide annual statements of account showing all the income received by our Office, bills we have paid and the client's assets and liabilities. If the client has Public Trustee Investment products, quarterly statements are provided detailing the income earned.

Impartial and permanent

The Public Trustee is permanent and impartial. Unlike an individual, the Public Trust Office will not get sick, go on holidays or die. We will be there to provide services for as long as we are asked to do so. As an impartial Administrator we will always act only in the client's best interests. This means we ensure the client's money is spent for their benefit.

Disability Support Officer

Our Disability Support Officer provides specialised assistance and advice to Trust Officers on a range of issues. This includes government and non-government services, specialist medical equipment, home and vehicle modification and accommodation support services. The Disability Support Officer can also assist in identifying support services to assist clients. Our Disability Support Officer is available without charge to assist clients in maximising their independence and quality of life.

FEES

The Public Trustee charges fees for acting as administrator. The fees are based on the level of service provided to each client. However our services are provided to all Queenslanders irrespective of whether they can afford the actual cost of the services provided. See our fact sheet on fees and charges for more information.

LIMITATIONS ON WHAT WE CAN DO

An administrator cannot make personal or health care decisions such as where the adult will live and what services or health care they will receive.

The Public Trustee must act in accordance with the terms of the Tribunal's Order and the law as set out in the *Guardianship and Administration Act 2000*. This includes:

- restrictions on gifting or lending the adult's funds to other persons;
- ensuring the client has a balanced budget. This means the client cannot spend more than the income they receive unless sufficient capital exists to fund a deficit budget over their lifetime;
- being able to account for expenditure of funds. We may need original invoices or quotes to pay certain expenses;
- following the Prudent Person Rule in making investment decisions.

The Public Trustee may not be able to arrange certain professional services for a client if they cannot afford the cost. For example, taking legal action to protect a client's interests may be dependent on the client's ability to pay the costs of solicitors engaged to provide this service.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Our staff are available to discuss our services in greater detail. You can also call us to answer any questions you may have. Please call toll free on **1300 651 591**. You can also obtain further information on our Administrator Service, our investment products and our other services online at www.pt.qld.gov.au.