



The Guardian ad Litem Program Mission Statement

To ensure every trial court in the state has sufficient numbers of well trained, impartial, supervised, and supported volunteer Guardians ad Litem to achieve the following goals:

Juvenile Proceedings

Children in Need of Care and Supervision

To advocate on behalf of the best interests of children alleged to have been abused, neglected, or are beyond the control of their parents. The goals of the advocacy are to make certain these children and their families receive appropriate services in a timely manner; that case plans and court decisions are based on the child's best interests; and every child has a safe, stable, and permanent home within a reasonable period of time.

Delinquency

To advocate on behalf of the best interests of children and youth accused of committing delinquent or criminal acts. The goals of the advocacy are to ensure the minor understands his or her rights and the court proceedings; the child and family receive appropriate legal representation; and both child and family receive appropriate services to prevent reoccurring delinquent or criminal behavior.

Domestic Proceedings

Divorce, Parentage, Relief from Abuse, and Civil Union Dissolution Proceedings

To advocate on behalf of the best interests of involved children with the goal of assuring the parties and the court consider children's best interests and safety in decisions relating to parental rights and responsibilities and parent-child contact and to minimize the harm suffered by the child during the breakup of the family. The Guardian ad Litem acts as a buffer between the child and the adversarial nature of the judicial process.

Proceedings involving adults

To act as an independent advisor and advocate with the goals of safeguarding the adult's best interests, his or her legal rights, and to facilitate the adult's understanding and participation in the case.

NOTE: Guardian ad Litem appointments may occur in criminal cases for adults or minors.