



VOLUNTEER GAL ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Position Description

A *Guardian ad Litem* (GAL) is a volunteer appointed by the Court to advocate for the best interest of a child who is alleged to have been abused or neglected. In order to do this, the GAL must independently investigate the facts of the case, recommend a course of action to the Court, suggest programs and services to help the child, and monitor progress toward established permanency goals.

Example Duties

1. Interview all parties involved to determine the facts
2. Explore alternatives available for the child, such as placement and services, etc.
3. Submit reports to the court for each court hearing
4. Appear at court hearings to make recommendations to the court and provide updates on the child
5. Continue contact with the child regularly (at least monthly)
6. Continue contact with the family, social workers, and others to monitor court orders
7. Bring significant changes and events to the court's attention
8. Be a link for all parties involved (the family, DCF, schools and service providers, etc.)
9. Be a positive and consistent presence in the life of the child

Requirements and Expectations of a volunteer advocate or GAL

1. Complete application process and background check
2. Complete 30 hour pre-service training
3. Have regular access to a car
4. Be 21 years or older
5. Have basic computer skills
6. Maintain strict confidentiality
7. Commit to 2 years of service and stay with each assigned case until closed (~6 months to 2 years)
8. Participate in in-service training
9. Update Volunteer Coordinator monthly or as significant events occur