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Guardian Ad Litem Board

http://mn.gov/guardian-ad-litem/

Small Agency Profile

Mission:

The mission of the State Guardian ad Litem (GAL) Board is to provide a well-trained, highly effective guardian ad litem to advocate for the best interests of abused, neglected and maltreated children who come before Minnesota's Juvenile and Family Courts.

Statewide Outcome(s):

Guardian Ad Litem Board supports the following statewide outcome(s).

Strong and stable families and communities.

Context:

In supporting the statewide outcome of strong and stable families and communities, the key issues listed below are continually addressed by the GAL Board.

- The program provides a guardian ad litem for every abused, neglected or maltreated child as required by federal and state law.
- The guardian ad litem performs three primary duties: gathering information on the child; making recommendations to the court; and, advocating for decisions in the best interest of the child.
- Cultural, educational and special needs of children are addressed in individual cases.
- The program assists the court with custody cases especially cases where the parties have no money and are representing themselves.
- Guardians ad litem are adequately trained for the cases to which they are appointed.

The priorities of the State Guardian ad Litem Board are to:

- Deliver qualified guardian ad litem services for each child as required by law.
- Obtain the resources needed to ensure quality guardian ad litem services statewide.
- Encourage new approaches that may lead to early settlement of cases.

The agency's primary customers are the children we represent, the courts we serve, and the Minnesota citizens represented by the Minnesota Legislature.

The State Guardian ad Litem Board is 100 percent state funded.

Strategies:

The State Guardian ad Litem Board addresses the key issues identified above by utilizing the following strategies:

- Providing information to the court about what has happened to the child and the child's current situation.
- Making recommendations to the court about what the child needs to be safe; what services and treatment should be ordered for the family; and what permanent plans would be in the best interests of the child.
- Advocating for each child so the child obtains a safe, nurturing and permanent home as quickly as possible.
- Ensuring that the guardian ad litem is an independent voice that is not influenced by any other party's interests or position.

The State Guardian ad Litem Board contributes to the statewide outcome of strong and stable families and communities by giving abused and neglected children a strong and independent voice in our court system and working to provide better outcomes for children.

The key partners the State Guardian ad Litem Board works with are judges, county attorneys, parents' attorneys, family law attorneys, foster parents, county social service agencies, schools, tribes and communities.

Results:

In order to assess whether the key issues are being addressed and the strategies working, the State Guardian ad Litem Board utilizes the following: stakeholder surveys, file reviews, and performance reviews using information from the parties in the case.

The factors driving the performance trends include:

- Numbers and types of case filings in juvenile and family courts.
- Social services agencies' resources that impact decisions regarding child protection cases.
- Lack of available services and resources for children and families.
- Growing immigrant communities and relations with Minnesota's Native American and other diverse communities.
- Increased cases where parents do not have money to pay for attorneys or services for the family.

Performance Measures	Previous	Current	Trend
Compliance with federal and state laws to appoint a guardian ad litem.	99%	99.91%	Stable
Cases promptly assigned to a guardian ad litem.	84% assigned within 3 days	83.4% assigned within 3 days	Stable
The work of the guardian ad litem is significant in making the best interest decisions in juvenile and family law cases.	NA	85% agree or strongly agree	Not applicable
Concerns and/or complaints about guardians ad litem are addressed in a prompt and professional manner.	NA	82% agree or strongly agree	Not applicable

Performance Measures Notes:

The program case management system provided the information for the first two performance measures. The GAL board is currently in the process of completing its first stakeholder survey which provided the information for the third and fourth performance measures.

Guardian ad Litem Board
Current, Base and Governor's Recommended Expenditures
(Dollars in Thousands, Biennial Totals)

	General Funds	Other State Funds	Federal Funds	All Funds
Current Biennium Expenditures (FY 2012-13)	$24,134	$4,546		$28,680
Current Law Expenditures (FY 2014-15)	$24,134	$1,060		$25,194
Governor's Recommended Expenditures (FY2014-15)	$25,170	$1,060		$26,230
$ Change from FY 2014-15 Current Law to Governor's Rec	$1,036	$0		$1,036
% Change from FY 2014-15 Current Law to Governor's Rec	4%	0%		4%

Guardian ad Litem Board
Sources and Uses
(Dollars in Thousands)

	Biennium FY14-FY15			
	General Funds	Other State Funds	Federal Funds	Total Funds
REVENUE		$1,060		$1,060
APPROPRIATION	$25,170	$0		$25,170
SOURCES OF FUNDS	**$25,170**	**$1,060**		**$26,230**
EXPENDITURES	$25,170	$1,060		$26,230
PAYROLL EXPENSE	$19,941	$0		$19,941
OPERATING EXPENSES	$5,166	$1,060		$6,226
OTHER FINANCIAL TRANSACTIONS	$33			$33
CAPITAL OUTLAY-REAL PROPERTY	$30			$30
USES OF FUNDS	**$25,170**	**$1,060**		**$26,230**

Guardian ad Litem Board

Governor's Changes

(Dollars in Thousands)

		FY 14	FY 15	FY 14-15 Biennium	FY 16	FY 17	FY 16-17 Biennium
Maintain Core Functions of the Guardian ad Litem Board							
The Governor recommends funding to maintain current guardian ad litem operations, including compensation increases for board staff and partial funding of anticipated cost increases for employee health insurance.							
Performance Measures: The program is expected to maintain close to 100% compliance with state and federal mandates to appoint a guardian ad litem.							
General Fund	Expenditure	347	689	1,036	689	689	1,378
	Net Change	**347**	**689**	**1,036**	**689**	**689**	**1,378**
Net All Change Items	General Fund	347	689	1,036	689	689	1,378
	Net Change	**347**	**689**	**1,036**	**689**	**689**	**1,378**

Guardian ad Litem Board
All Funds FTE by Program

Program	Current FY 2013	Forecast Base FY 2015	Governor's Recommendation FY 2015
Program: Gal	177.2	169.7	177.2
Guardian ad Litem Board	177.2	169.7	177.2

Guardian ad Litem Board
Revenue Summary
(Dollars in Thousands)

		Biennium FY14-15			
		General Fund	Other State Funds	Federal Funds	All Funds
Dedicated	ALL OTHER		1,060		1,060
	Subtotal		1,060		1,060
	Total		**1,060**		**1,060**