

**Thurston County Local Court Rules**  
**Publication for Comment**  
**June 2010**

**4. LOCAL SUPERIOR COURT GUARDIAN AD LITEM RULES**

LGALR 8     GUARDIAN AD LITEM REGISTRY

(a) **Maintenance of Registry.** The Family and Juvenile Court shall maintain and administer separate Guardian ad Litem (GAL) registries, for actions under title 26 RCW and for actions under title 11 RCW. ~~Each~~ The Title 26 registry shall be managed by a Registry Manager at Family and Juvenile Court.

(b) **Maintenance of Guardian ad Litem Files.** The Family and Juvenile Court shall maintain a file for each GAL listed on a current registry. The GAL's application form, writing sample, resume or curriculum vitae, and other records pertaining to the GAL shall be maintained in his or her file. These documents shall be available for public inspection.

(c) **Title 26 Registry Committee.** The Title 26 Registry Committee shall consist of the GAL Coordinator and two other individuals designated by the Presiding Judge at Family and Juvenile Court. The Registry Committee shall be responsible for approving any applicant's request to be placed on the Title 26 GAL registry, shall assure that an interview with GAL applicants is conducted and shall conduct an annual review of each GAL as set forth below in LGALR 11(b).

[Adopted effective September 1, 2007]

LGALR 9     GUARDIAN AD LITEM REQUIREMENTS

(a) **Initial Application Requirements.** New applicants may apply for placement on the GAL registry between January 1-31 of each year at any time. ~~Applications shall be reviewed on a scheduled fixed by the Court, but at least once a year.~~ To be qualified for consideration for placement on the GAL registry, in addition to statutory requirements, an applicant must:

- (1) Have a 4 year degree from an accredited institution of higher education;
- (2) Provide a current resume or curriculum vitae;
- (3) Complete the GAL application form provided by the GAL Coordinator;
- (4) Complete the Background Check Information/Authorization Form provided by the GAL Coordinator;
- (5) Provide a sample GAL report of 3 to 5 pages in length, double spaced based upon a fact scenario to be provided by the GAL Coordinator ~~writing sample that is 3 to 5 pages in length, double spaced;~~
- (6) Complete an interview as directed by the Registry Committee ~~with the GAL~~

Coordinator, if requested;

(7) If an attorney, be a member in good standing of the Washington State Bar Association; and

(8) Complete the requisite state and local GAL training courses as set forth in LGALR 10 (note: completion of the mentoring component is not required for application but is required prior to appointment to a case).

~~(b) Practicum. All applicants must provide proof of four completed guardian ad litem assignments for any Washington State Superior Court within the last five years or proof of successful completion of two supervised guardian ad litem assignments as follows:~~

~~(1) One guardian ad litem assignment done in conjunction with a mentor guardian ad litem that includes accompanying the mentor on all visits, attendance at all interviews, participation in preparation of a report and attendance at all court hearings. The mentor is the GAL of record and this assignment is without compensation to the applicant; and~~

~~(2) One guardian ad litem assignment done under the supervision of the same mentor guardian ad litem that includes more active participation on the part of the applicant, such as requesting documents, conducting interviews, and preparing reports under the supervision of the mentor. The mentor is the GAL of record and this assignment is without compensation to the applicant.~~

~~(c) Evaluation Protocols. The Court may develop protocols for evaluating initial cases handled by GALs new to the registry and providing feedback to the GAL.~~

~~(d) (b) Selection process. The GAL Coordinator Registry Committee shall review all information provided by the applicants, including the sample GAL report, and assure the conduct of interviews and reference checks as deemed appropriate. check references and conduct interviews as deemed appropriate, and make a recommendation to the Presiding Judge at Family and Juvenile Court whether the applicant should be added to the registry. After approval, the GAL Coordinator The Registry Committee shall inform each applicant in writing issue a letter to each applicant by March 31 of each year indicating whether the applicant's request to be placed on the GAL registry is accepted or declined.~~

~~(c) Annual Update. Any person who is currently listed on the GAL registry and who desires to remain on the registry shall provide an annual update by February 28 of each year by completing the annual update form and the criminal background check authorization provided by the GAL Coordinator, as well as providing an updated resume or curriculum vitae. The annual update form and updated resume or curriculum vitae shall be available for public inspection.~~

[Adopted effective September 1, 2007]

LGALR 10 CONTINUING REQUIREMENTS FOR TITLE 26 AND TITLE 11 RCW GUARDIANS AD LITEM

(a) Title 26 RCW Guardians Ad Litem

(1) *Continuing Training.* The court may periodically sponsor or approve training programs that title 26 RCW GALs are required to attend to maintain and improve their

level of proficiency. Local continuing training may be offered periodically and curriculum may include: instruction using examples of reports, pleadings, and fee agreements; bill procedure and format information; court procedures, information on local resources, and other topics from the State curriculum.

(b) (2) Annual Update. Any person who is currently listed on the title 26 GAL registry and who desires to remain on the registry shall provide an annual update by February 28 of each year by completing the annual update form and the criminal background check authorization, as well as providing an updated resume or curriculum vitae. The annual update form and updated resume or curriculum vitae shall be available for public inspection.

(b) Title 11 RCW Guardians Ad Litem

(1) Continuing Requirements. By February 28 in even numbered years, Guardians ad Litem shall provide an update to the Court on a form provided by the Court. The update shall include:

(A) Current resume;

(B) Signed criminal background check authorization;

(C) Proof of attendance at 8 hours of continuing education related to guardianship work during the past two calendar years;

(D) Disclosure of any complaints related to GAL work during the past two calendar years; and

(E) A Guardian ad Litem may be dropped from the Registry for failure to meet these requirements.

(c) Leave from the Registry. A Guardian ad Litem on a registry may notify the Court of periods in which he or she is unavailable to accept appointments.

[Adopted effective September 1, 2007]

LGALR 11. EVALUATION OF GUARDIAN AD LITEM WORK. (NEW RULE)

(a) **Case Evaluations.** When a GAL is discharged from a case, every attorney and self-represented party and judicial officer involved in the case is encouraged to submit an evaluation of the GAL on a form approved by the court. The completed evaluations will be returned to Family Court Administration. The GAL may review and respond to the evaluations in writing. Any responses shall be placed in the GAL's file. The purpose of these evaluation forms is to assist the court in maintaining a registry of qualified guardians ad litem.

(b) **Annual Evaluations.** The Registry Committee shall review the complete file of every GAL in February of each year.

(1) *Presenting Issues.* The Registry Committee shall determine if there are specific concerns from the evaluations that should be addressed with each GAL and shall issue a written report regarding any specific concerns. If a written report is issued, the GAL will have seven days to respond in writing to the report. The Registry Committee shall then conduct an in-person review with the GAL to discuss the report and appropriate remedial actions, if any, the GAL should take. The Registry Committee may (1) allow the GAL to remain on the registry with no further action; (2) suspend the GAL from the registry,

subject to the GAL completing requirements as set forth by the committee; or (3) remove the GAL from the registry. The GAL shall be notified in writing within seven days of the in-person review. In the event the committee recommends removal from the registry, the GAL shall have ten days to appeal the decision in writing to the Presiding Judge at Family and Juvenile Court. A written decision on the appeal, from the Presiding Judge, shall be issued within fourteen days of receipt of the appeal.

(2) *No Presenting Issues.* If no specific concerns are identified for a GAL, then a written report and in-person review is not required.

#### LGALR 12 TITLE 11 GUARDIAN AD LITEM REPORTS **(New Rule)**

Title 11 GAL reports addressing a Petition for appointment of a Title 11 Guardian shall be in the format approved by the Court and shall contain the information required by RCW 11.88.090(f).