

GAL CODE OF CONDUCT

It is important that you are familiar with the GAL Code of Conduct which defines the conduct expectations and requirements of a Guardian ad Litem. You will be asked to sign a copy of this document at the end of training indicating that you understand and are willing to abide by this code of conduct.

Standard 6. Code of Conduct

The Program requires all staff and volunteers to follow a Code of Conduct and to read, sign and date a copy of the Code of Conduct on an annual basis.

Guardian ad Litem Staff and Volunteers shall:

1. Diligently represent and be guided solely by the best interests of the child(ren);
2. Hold confidential all information obtained in the course of service as a guardian ad litem, as required by law and Program Standards;
3. Report any new incident of child abuse or neglect to his or her supervisor and the abuse hotline;
4. Monitor the child regularly, including visiting the child once every month at a minimum, unless an alternative visitation schedule has been approved according to Program guidelines;
5. Work within the team model concept as stated in the Program Standards, while respecting each advocacy team member's contribution to the progress of the case and following all team decisions made on behalf of the best interests of the child;
6. Maintain at a minimum, monthly contact with each advocacy team member and comply with all Program standards and guidelines that relate to court reports and required case documentation;
7. Obtain approval from his or her supervisor before submitting any document to the court or other parties;
8. Notify the Circuit Director if the guardian ad litem (GAL) or any member of the GAL's family becomes involved in a case with allegations of child abuse or neglect;
9. Advise the Circuit Director if he or she is charged with or convicted of a criminal offense; if the staff or GAL is an attorney, he or she must advise the Circuit Director if he or she becomes the subject of a complaint registered with the Florida Bar;
10. Only take actions in the best interest of the child that remain within the scope of a GAL's roles and responsibilities;
11. Uphold and comply with all of the Program's standards and guidelines as well as any local circuit program guidelines;

12. **NOT** practice, condone, facilitate or participate in any form of discrimination on the basis of race, color, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, ethnicity, marital status, political belief, mental or physical handicap or any other preference, personal characteristic, condition or status;

13. **NOT** accept a fee for services as a GAL while serving as a GAL for the Program; and

14. **NOT** engage in ex parte communication with the judge.

*Following Program guidelines, each Circuit Director has the authority to dismiss a GAL volunteer for any violation of this Code of Conduct or Program Standards.

Volunteer Guardian ad Litem
(Please print or type full name)

Date

Volunteer Guardian ad Litem
(Signature)

Deborah Moore
Circuit Director