



CIRCUIT COURT OF JACKSON COUNTY, MISSOURI
FAMILY COURT DIVISION
625 EAST 26TH STREET
KANSAS CITY MO 64108-2719

POLICY & PROCEDURE

Issued by: Director of Office of the Guardian ad Litem – Family Court

Topic: **Policy No. 1030-05 -- GAL Standard 5 – Access Between GAL and Child, Remedial Plan for Contact**

Effective Date: July 7, 2015

New: Revised: Rescinds: Reviewed: X

POLICY:

The Office of the Guardian ad Litem (OGAL) shall have on going meaningful contact with the child in order to help formulate recommendations for the child’s best interest. The ongoing contact is necessary to establish a maintain a relationship with the client. Access to the client shall not be restricted or limited by any agency or person without good cause

1. OGAL shall ascertain the location of the child and initiate communication with the child. The assigned Guardian ad Litem (GAL) attorney and non-attorney staff shall update the information on the child’s placement on a regular basis.
2. When appropriate, OGAL will provide the child with the name, telephone number, address and email information of the OGAL.

PROCEDURE:

Pursuant to the Missouri Guardian ad Litem Standards, the Guardian ad Litem must maintain regular contact with the during the case. This requires that the Guardian ad Litem have meaningful contact with the child during the case.

1. OGAL must have personal contact with the client outside of court. This may include personal visits, telephone calls and electronic communication such as email or texting. Personal contact can take place at home, at the foster home or other residential placement, at school, in the attorney's office, at a treatment facility, at a detention center, a private meeting area at the courthouse, or other places conducive to personal and meaningful contact.

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2. At the current time there has not been sufficient contact with clients outside of court. The goal is that there shall be contact outside of court before each hearing.
3. In addition, there shall be other contacts between court hearings. The frequency and duration of the OGAL's contact with the client shall vary with the nature of the case, the age of the child and the needs of the child. The first preference is that someone from the assigned courtroom team (see Policy 1030-22) will be the person visiting the children.
 - a. OGAL shall have contact with each child under six (6) years of age every six (6) months.
 - b. OGAL shall have contact with each child between the ages of six (6) and eleven (11) years of age every four (4) months.
 - c. OGAL shall have contact with each child over eleven (11) years of age every two (2) months.
4. OGAL is in the process of determining what percentage of children are being visited as required by this policy. Once the baseline percentage is determined, the Director will set a goal to increase the percentage of children being visited as required by this policy until an acceptable percentage of 80% compliance is reached.

REVISIONS: The proponent for this policy is the Director of the Office of Guardian ad Litem. If you have recommended changes or want to report errors, send your suggestions to the Director of Guardian ad Litem, Family Justice Center, 625 East 26th Street, Kansas City, MO 64108.

REVIEW DATE: May 1, 2023



May 1, 2021

Kathy J. Rodgers
Director of Office of the Guardian ad Litem-Family Court

Date

APPLICABLE STANDARDS:

None

CC: Deputy Court Administrator – Family Court Division