

**16<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit of Missouri**  
**Family Court Division**  
**625 East 26<sup>th</sup> Street**  
**Kansas City, MO 64108**

**Implementation of the Guardian ad Litem Standards in Missouri Juvenile and Family Court Matters**  
**(September 1, 2011 Standards)**

In recognizing that Missouri children have the right to adequate and effective representation in juvenile and family court matters, the 16<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit of Missouri provides the following implementation plan of the guardian ad litem standards (hereinafter referred to as “The Standards”).

1. Dissemination. The standards will be disseminated through various methods including:
  - a. The 16<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit web site at [www.16thcircuit.org](http://www.16thcircuit.org)
  - b. The Family Court Division web site at [www.family-court.org](http://www.family-court.org)
  - c. The Eastern Jackson County Bar Association
  - d. The Jackson County Bar Association
  - e. The Hispanic Bar Association
  - f. The Kansas City Metropolitan Bar Association - Family and the Law Section
  - g. KCMBA Domestic Law Committee
  - h. KCMBA Juvenile Law Committee
  - i. Direct communication with the Family Court Division’s Office of the Guardian ad Litem
  - j. Direct communication with the Jackson County CASA Project
  - k. Direct communication with attorneys currently on the approved list
  
2. Selection/Appointment. The selection and appointment of guardians ad litem shall be made from a list of qualified attorneys maintained by the Deputy Court Administrator’s Office – Family Court Division. The list shall be published, updated as necessary, and posted to both the Circuit and Family Court’s web sites. Appointments from the list shall be made pursuant to local administrative orders of the Circuit and Family Courts and Local Rule 21.6.1.
  
3. Approved List. The list of approved guardians ad litem shall be maintained by the Deputy Court Administrator – Family Court and shall be available to all judicial officers and the public through posting on the Family Court and Circuit Court web sites. All attorneys who meet the minimum qualifications as outlined in the Standards and agree to comply with the Standards may be placed on the approved list of guardians ad litem (see Training and Reporting Requirements below). Guardians ad litem serve at the pleasure of the Court and may be removed from the approved list at any time if, in the judgment of the Family Court Administrative Judge, it is in the best interest of the Court to do so.
  
4. Training and Reporting Requirements. Guardian ad litem training must meet the training requirements of the Standards (Standard 14.0) and may be provided by any qualified entity approved by the Missouri Bar for providing continuing legal education. The sponsor shall also submit a request for local approval to the Administrative Judge of the Family Court. Reports by attorneys are:

- a. **Initial Report – For attorneys NOT currently on approved list.** When desiring to serve as a guardian ad litem, attorneys shall file an initial affidavit (see attached) with the Deputy Court Administrator, Family Court Division, 625 East 26<sup>th</sup> Street, Kansas City, MO 64108 indicating that they:
    - i. have completed eight hours of continuing legal education devoted to guardian ad litem training as required by Standard 14.0, or
    - ii. have completed at least six hours of guardian ad litem training within five years prior to September 1, 2011, or
    - iii. have served as a guardian ad litem in the State of Missouri within five years prior to September 1, 2011, **and**
    - iv. agree to comply with the Standards.
  
  - b. **Annual Reports: Beginning July 31, 2012 ALL attorneys** who are on the approved list shall file an annual affidavit (see attached) with the Deputy Court Administrator, Family Court Division, 625 East 26<sup>th</sup> Street, Kansas City, MO 64108. Form 1, “Missouri Minimum Continuing Legal Education – Attorney’s Annual Report of Compliance” may be used to satisfy this requirement by filing a copy (including both sides of Form 1) with the Deputy Court Administrator, Family Court Division, 625 East 26<sup>th</sup> Street, Kansas City, MO 64108. (NOTE: in the event that the course title is not obviously related to the GAL training required by the standards, the filing attorney shall include an explanation of the course in his or her affidavit.). Affidavits shall indicate that the attorneys:
    - i. were approved by the Court to serve as a Guardian ad Litem before September 1, 2011 (i.e. any lawyer having served as a GAL in Missouri within the five years prior to September 1, 2011, or who was on the 16th Circuit’s List of Approved GALs as of September 1, 2011), and did not complete any guardian ad litem training within five years prior to September 1, 2011, but have now completed eight hours of CLE devoted to guardian ad litem training, or
    - ii. were approved by the Court to serve as a Guardian ad Litem before September 1, 2011, but have not yet completed eight hours of CLE devoted to guardian ad litem training but WILL complete this training not later than September 1, 2012 (MUST SUBMIT ADDITIONAL AFFIDAVIT on or before September 1, 2012), or
    - iii. completed at least six hours of training within the five years prior to September 1, 2011 and have completed three hours of continuing legal education devoted to guardian ad litem training within the last year, **AND**
    - iv. have completed a training program in permanency planning.
5. The Family Court Division will review the implementation plan bi-annually upon change of the Family Court Administrative Judge, beginning January 1, 2012. In the event of changes to statutes, Supreme Court Rules, or Supreme Court Orders which may impact this plan, the plan will be updated as required by those changes prior to the next bi-annual review.