



CIRCUIT COURT OF JACKSON COUNTY, MISSOURI  
FAMILY COURT DIVISION  
625 EAST 26<sup>TH</sup> STREET  
KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI 64108-2719

**POLICY & PROCEDURE**

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

Topic: **Policy No. 1030-04 -- GAL Standard 4 – General Duties and Responsibilities**

Effective Date: July 7, 2015

New:

Revised:

Rescinds:

Reviewed: X

POLICY:

The Office of the Guardian ad Litem (OGAL) will diligently advocate for the best interest of the child. In order to determine the best interests of the client, the assigned Guardian ad Litem (GAL) attorney or non-attorney staff, as directed by the assigned GAL attorney, shall conduct an independent investigation while representing the client. Continuing investigation is mandatory.

1. OGAL will fully participate in proceedings, including examining, cross examining, and subpoenaing witnesses.
  - a. When appropriate, OGAL will file petitions, motions, discovery, parenting plans, responses, and/or objections.
  - b. OGAL will interview people who have knowledge of the child.
  - c. When appropriate, OGAL will interview the child.
  - d. In conducting the interviews, OGAL will not communicate with a person who is represented by another lawyer, without express consent of said lawyer.
  - e. OGAL will consider the child's stage of development and sense of time in relation to age when communicating with child.
  - f. OGAL will have regular face-to-face contact with child.  
(See Policy No. 1010-11)
2. The Office of Guardian ad Litem and its employees shall **not** participate in any of the following activities:
  - a. Provide direct services to the child or the child's parents. Providing such services could create a conflict of interest and/or cause a child or family to become

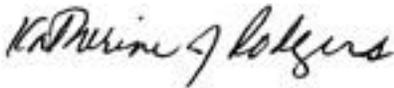
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dependent upon the OGAL. The OGAL may locate and recommend services for the child and family.

- b. provide counseling or therapy to a child or a parent,
- c. foster a friendship or "big brother/big sister" relationship with a child or parent by inviting the child or parent to their home, routinely entertaining the child or parent at movies or such, or giving money or gifts to the child or parents,
- d. supervise visits between the child and parent or third parties, except as ordered by the court,
- e. provide child care services for the child,
- f. make placement arrangements for the child or remove a child from a home,
- g. provide a "message service" for parents to communicate with each other.

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 26<sup>th</sup> Street, Kansas City, MO 64108.

REVIEW DATE: May 1, 2023



May 1, 2021

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

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Date

APPLICABLE STANDARDS:

Juvenile Officer Performance Standard: 1.11

CC: Deputy Court Administrator – Family Court Division